



# Text in the City® Newsletter

**Andrea Alvarado**  
Writer/Editor  
818.903.8194

[www.textinthecity.org](http://www.textinthecity.org)  
[andrea@textinthecity.org](mailto:andrea@textinthecity.org)

## SPOTLIGHT

### MOVING SALE

Saturday, February 28



4223 Murieta Avenue  
Sherman Oaks 91604  
**One day only** – furniture,  
glassware, pottery, linens,  
jewelry, books & more.  
8AM to 3PM  
**NO EARLY BIRDS!**

••

## GET INVOLVED!



We can't do this alone. We  
need your voice! Let's show  
what Americans can do when  
we work together.

Join our meeting on ...  
**Sun., March 8 at 3PM**  
8839 Nestle, Northridge  
Please RSVP at  
[andrea@textinthecity.org](mailto:andrea@textinthecity.org)



**Did you know** that before we had freeways we once had a mass transit system that connected L.A., Orange, Ventura, San Bernardino and Riverside?

### The Birth and Death of the Big Red Cars

The first streetcar system in L.A. dates back to 1874, when Judge Robert Widney convinced his neighbors (in the vicinity of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Hill Streets, then considered the sticks) that they needed a convenient way to get to the business section of the city. Supplementary cars were developed and a portion of the L.A. system along Pico Boulevard was electrified in 1887. Various horse-car and cablecar systems were eventually acquired by the Los Angeles Consolidated Electric Railway.

Henry E. Huntington established the Pacific Electric Railway Company in 1901 to sell and develop vast tracts of real estate. He began buying land in growing areas not yet reachable by existing public transportation, and bought up and expanded the transportation network.

Cont'd on page 2

## We want you...

We're living through difficult times. We, the people, are the lifeline to our country. The foundation has begun with Obama as our President. Let's build upon that foundation.



You are welcome to join us at my house for a Neighborhood Watch meeting on March 8. Neighborhood Watch isn't all about preventing crime although this is one of our focuses. It is about getting back to basics and bringing communities together for a common goal. It's listening and learning to what we can do together to make our society a better place to live. If we keep paying it forward, it will make the country better, then the WORLD!

The invitation can be found at my website  
[www.textinthecity.org](http://www.textinthecity.org). Want to help, contact me.

## All We Need is Love Month

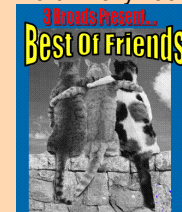


*We can all  
help - Call*  
818.402.6586

This organization has provided over 35,000 donated blankets, comforters, towels and other soft bedding, plus pet items that include food, treats and toys.

[www.operationblanketsoflove.org](http://www.operationblanketsoflove.org)

**Saturday, February 21, 2009 – 8PM**  
The Mayflower Club, 11110 Victory Blvd,  
North Hollywood ♥ 818-769-9805



Grab your buddies and join the 3 Broads and their friends in a dazzling reprisal of their best numbers!  
\$15/at door ♥ \$12.50 with reservations.



# Text in the City® Newsletter

## SPOTLIGHT

### ELEVATE HOPE FOUNDATION (EHF)



Providing abused and abandoned children therapy through music and the arts.  
[www.elevatehope.org](http://www.elevatehope.org)



## HER STORY



### Her Story: A Timeline Of The Women Who Changed America

[www.herstoryatimeline.com](http://www.herstoryatimeline.com)  
One-of-a-kind history of women's achievements. Perfect for your daughters, nieces, cousins, mother, aunts and any woman on the path to success.  
At [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or at [above website](http://abovewebsite.com).

Cont'd from page 1

One of the first orders of business was to unify their fleet color, painting over the yellow cars and the green of the Los Angeles Pacific to the standard PE red. This period marked the birth of the "Red Car."



The trolleys traveled through the San Fernando Valley to the foothills of the San Gabriels, through Hollywood, along the coast of Santa Monica, Venice Beach, Redondo Beach and back to L.A. via Culver City. From Santa Monica to Newport's Balboa Island, and inland as far as San Bernardino and Redlands, and they went to Pasadena, Busch Gardens, San Pedro, Long Beach and east to Santa Ana. People used the lines for work, recreation and sightseeing.

The "World's Greatest Electric Railway System" hit its peak in the mid-20s. The 900 wood and steel cars ran in trains traveling at 40-50 miles an hour, and covered 1,150 miles of track. It was during this time that PE also opened a short subway in downtown Los Angeles. As automobile traffic increased, PE passengers declined in number, travel time increased, and in the 1930s, revenues fell.

World War II brought a brief resurgence in popularity to rail travel; in fact ridership hit an all-time high in 1944. Although rail traffic rose briefly during World War II,

it resumed its downward slide when the war ended. By the 1950s it was clear that the automobile had become the premier means of travel in L.A. and by 1958 the previously sold PE lines were taken over by the Metropolitan Transit Authority, and the rail abandonment continued. Finally, on April 9, 1961, the last Red Car, carrying old timers, rumbled down the Long Beach line, the same line the PE first built in 1902, marking the end of an era.



The demise of the Red Car system had several causes. The PE was ill even before it was murdered...the PE could not match the speed, convenience or flexibility of the automobile, but its death was orchestrated.

A well-organized auto-freeway lobby had, since the 1920s, actively opposed public subsidies for transportation. Giant corporations with a stake in cars and buses – General Motors, Standard Oil, Firestone Tire, Phillips Petroleum, and Mack Truck Manufacturing Company – organized a dummy corporation, National City Lines, to buy up and dismantle mass transit lines throughout the country, including the Red Cars. They were convicted in Federal court and fined \$37,007 for violating the Sherman Antitrust Act, but by then it was too late for the Red Cars.

Some cars were sold in South America, and others were junked. Today, amid growing congestion and the rising mantra of "back to basics," memories of the Red Cars hold great appeal.