

Palisadian-Post

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VIEWPOINT

Why I've Bought the *Palisadian-Post*

By ALAN SMOLINISKY
Palisadian-Post Owner

During the summer of 2008, my girlfriend Caroline and I started discussing our future together. We were in our late 20s, established in our careers and had already adopted a dog together named Molly Jolie-Pitt. We were ready to take the next step.

Our parents on both sides have been happily married for over 40 years. We had a lot to live up to. Before we proceeded, we bought a book from Katie at Village Books on Swarthmore called "1,000 Questions to Discuss Before Getting Married." Over the next several months, we plowed through it section by section, having extremely honest and sometimes difficult discussions on religion, politics, family, money and many other topics. In the "Home Life" section, the questions were related to where and how to establish a home. I realized that I needed to disclose a non-negotiable item. We had promised each other when we started the book to not hold anything back, no matter how uncomfortable. I proceeded to tell Caroline that there was only one place in the entire world that I was willing to live and that I insisted we would have to spend our entire lives there until the day we died. If she didn't agree, I knew I had a huge problem. That place was Pacific Palisades.

I explained to Caroline that I live and breathe Pacific Palisades. It is my favorite place on earth. I was born and raised here. I attended Methodist Preschool, moved on to Palisades Elementary, followed by Village School and later Palisades High School (class of 1998). My first job came at age 15, when I made pizzas at Domino's Pizza (now Palisades Pizza). My parents still live in the Palisades. My mother Carol organized the Mr. and Mrs. Palisades contest for nearly 20 years until her retirement last year. Our family's favorite day of the year has always been the Fourth of July, and my father Mario has run in the 10K race every year since it began (he finished first this year for his age group among Palisadians). As a kid, I had my birthday parties at Barrera's (now Beech Street), Greg's Grill (now Café Vida) and Jacopo's (now Il Piccolo Ritrovo). I spent my summers at St. Matthew's day camp and on the beach at Jr. Lifeguards. I played Little League baseball at the park, AYSO at Will Rogers and Paul Revere, basketball at the YMCA and later four years of varsity tennis at PaliHi.

After Pali, I attended USC, where I received my degree from the Thornton School of Music.



Alan Smolinisky

Rich Schmitt/Staff Photographer

While at USC, I started spending a lot of time with my landlord, Brian Chen. He had a small student housing business, and ended up becoming my mentor, partner and best friend. We decided to start building apartment buildings around USC and later around UC Santa Barbara. Our company grew like wildfire; we went from one employee housing 80 students, to 42 employees on two campuses housing over 2,000 students. The business expanded beyond our wildest imagination. After being approached by several publicly traded Real Estate Investment Trusts, we decided to explore selling the entire student housing business. After almost 10 years of working 18-hour days and sleeping on the couch in my office many nights, we sold the entire student housing business and moved to a shoebox-sized office in Santa Monica in early 2009.

From a very young age, I have been a huge fan of newspapers. With a lot more time on my hands, I began to rediscover my passion. One daily paper was not enough to satiate my hunger for newspapers. One by one, I subscribed to

more papers. Currently, I spend 4-5 hours each day reading four daily newspapers cover to cover, seven weekly papers and two bi-monthly papers, in addition to a few autobiographies and biographies per year. I read every book Michael Lewis writes and every book written about Warren Buffett and Charlie Munger. Each morning, my driveway is covered in newspaper bags. I love holding the paper in my hands and strongly prefer it to reading online. I joke that I will be the last man in America still receiving printed newspapers in his driveway each morning.

One of my favorite quotes on reading is by Charlie Munger who said, "In my whole life, I have known no wise people who didn't read all the time—none, zero. You'd be amazed at how much Warren (Buffett) reads—at how much I read. My children laugh at me. They think I'm a book with a couple of legs sticking out." As for the *Palisadian-Post*, I haven't missed an issue since I first learned to read. My parents have been subscribers for over 40 years and the *Post* is without a doubt my favorite newspaper. That's why, when I came upon the opportunity to purchase the *Palisadian-Post*, I had to buy it.

As the new owner of our town's only newspaper, my plan is to continue the journalistic excellence the paper has maintained for the last 84 years, delivering vital and entertaining news about our incredible community. My plan is to own this newspaper for as long as I live. I fully understand the great responsibility that comes with owning the town's main source for news and events. I accept this responsibility with great excitement and pride. While the newspaper business faces many challenges, and knowing full well that I will have to make difficult decisions, I promise you that this must-read paper will continue to arrive in your mailbox every Thursday.

Fortunate for me, Caroline said that she too loved the Palisades and would be thrilled to spend the rest of her life here. We married in July 2010, had our son Charlie in September 2011 and are expecting a baby girl in May. We are currently finishing construction of our dream home in the Huntington Palisades, where we plan to live out our lives with our children, dogs and newspapers.

We welcome your ideas and your input. Please feel free to stop by our office, or just stop me on the street while I'm walking the dog and simultaneously reading the paper. I look forward to a wonderful adventure, together with you, our loyal readers.