

THIS AND THAT



A Tiny Bluff Heights Neighborhood Story

By Maria Kootsikis, Pharm.D.

This story is not tiny in importance or significance as measured by the amount of happiness it brings. Because it's the holidays, I hope this story causes you to smile, slow down a bit, enjoy the holiday season, and consider paying it forward by conducting a random act of kindness.

Several years ago, I was shopping at our local Ralph's on Orizaba and 4th Street. When I got home, I immediately realized I didn't have my wallet. I called Ralph's thinking I might have set it down as I was packing my groceries into my backpack in the self-check-out lane. "No," the store manager replied, "no one turned your wallet in." I retraced my steps because I thought that maybe, just maybe, I would find it on the sidewalk because it fell out of my pocket. Again, I couldn't find it.

That evening I spoke to a neighbor, telling her about how I lost my wallet. She told me a story about losing her wallet somewhere in Bluff Heights about 20 years ago. She went to bed that evening very upset, only to wake up to find someone had placed her wallet on her front porch. Nothing was taken; all her credit cards and cash were there. She did not know who found and returned it.

I thought, "That's a wonderful story, and in our wide universe of happenstance, could it happen again?" Even though I hoped it would, I immediately put the thought aside. I can't explain why, but for some reason, I didn't cancel my credit cards and instead put them on hold.

I woke up the next morning, stepped outside, and found my wallet placed on our rocking chair on the porch. As I'm unable to personally thank the person who anonymously returned the wallet, this tiny story is written as a big thank you with the hope that this wonderful act of random kindness continues in the neighborhood.

Maria Kootsikis and her husband, Paul Montalbano, are retired clinical pharmacists living the wonderful retired life in Bluff Heights. You might see them walking their beloved Cheeto.