SFVACC Promotes Encino Mural Restoration

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ENCINO ENTERPRISE

Volume 5, Issue 101 | A Compendious Source of Information | August 1, 2024

NEWS IN BRIEF

National Night Out on August 6

Join your local LAPD at National Night Out on Tuesday, August 6, from 6 to 10 pm at the Randall D. Simmons Park (6731 Wilbur Ave), located at the corner of Vanowen St. and Wilbur Ave. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live and work. They will have activities for children, free refreshments, and will be showing the movie *Trolls* as soon as it gets dark. If you have any questions, contact West Valley's Community Relations Office at (818) 374-7687.

Encino Neighborhood Council Back to School Movie Night August 10

The Encino Neigborhood Council will be holding a Back to School Movie Night on Saturday, August 10, at 6 pm at Encino Park (16953 Ventura Blvd). The movie being screened is *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem* which will begin at 8 pm. The Encino Neighborhood Council will provide refreshments, ice cream and activities for the kids! Bring your picnics, blankets and low lawn chairs and grab a spot for your family. Parking is available on local streets and at the Encino Community Center.

Following Newsom's Recent Order, Homeless Won't Be "Criminalized"

Following Governor Newsom's executive order to be more aggressive in dismantling homeless encampments, the county Board of Supervisors this week reaffirmed its commitment against "criminalizing" homelessness. This motion adheres to a "Care First, Jails Last" approach stressing that individuals displaced by anti-camping ordinances will not be arrested and put in county jails. "Arresting people for sitting, sleeping, or lying on the sidewalk or in public spaces does not end their homelessness, and will only make their homelessness harder to resolve with a criminal record and fines they can't afford to pay," the motion states. "Moving people from one community to another does not resolve their homelessness." The County Board of Supervisors further called for a report back to the board in the following months of measures that will be taken to prioritize a humane approach, increase community outreach programs such as Inside Safe and stress partnerships with local municipalities.

Encino on High Alert as Home Burglaries Continue to Escalate

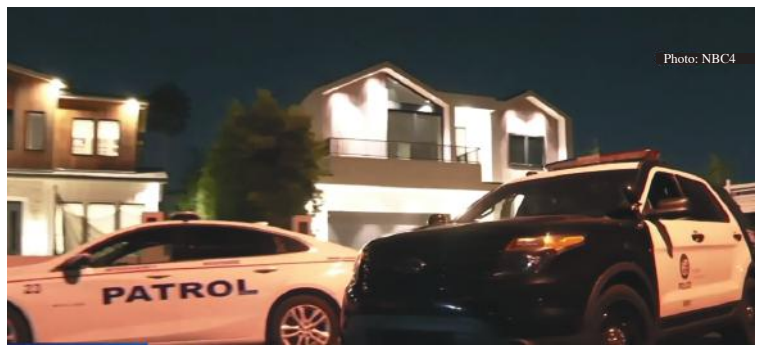
Residents are on edge as a string of ongoing burglaries has occurred in Encino in the last few weeks.

Burglars hit a home on Rubio Avenue, another home in the same night in the 16000 block of Morrison Street, a home in the 4900 block of Edgerton Street that was hit twice and a home in the 4000 block of Ballina Drive. According to Assistant Chief Blake Chow, the LAPD has recorded a 40% increase in residential burglaries in Encino.

Most recently, an alert neighbor helped scare off a group of would-be thieves around 10:30 pm this past Tuesday in the 5400 block of Auro Avenue in Tarzana. Julian Harper-Smith, who has lived in the neighborhood for more than 30 years, saw the suspects on a sophisticated surveillance system he set up at his home. "It was just three guys hopping a neighbor's wall … I grabbed my paintball gun and I brought a flashlight just hoping that would scare them off," Harper-Smith said. "So, I just put my flashlight down and just gave them a couple paintball shots to the back of the car just to tell them to 'stay away.'"

LAPD is investigating the string of burglaries, but at press time has no suspect information. Though there is no confirmation that the crimes are related, the pattern and timing seem to suggest this could be the sign of an organized crime ring.

Neighbors and law enforcement believe that the burglars are staking out houses to scope out what residents' habits are - when they leave for work or pick up children from school. However, in half of the cases, the residents have either been home when the burglaries occurred or walked in on the thieves mid-burglary. While none of the residents have been injured thus far, the burglaries are certainly become more brazen and more frequent.



Police and security personnel report to a home invasion in Encino.

According to Assistant Chief Chow, the LAPD has recorded a 40% increase in residential burglaries in Encino.

One woman told KTLA News that she has seen random cars cruising her neighborhood and said that she could join Neighborhood Watch, call the police, do everything she could, but that, "Los Angeles' soft on crime policies are failing law-abiding citizens."

However, a Neighborhood Watch could be a critical step to understanding your neighborhood, those that reside there and making yourself more attentive to anything that is outside of the norm. Encino Neighborhood Council President Josh Sautter spoke to the local Senior Lead Officer and representatives from Councilmember Raman's office when burglaries were first rampant in Encino. Sautter states, "I asked them for the best ways to protect against burglaries, and their answer was both surprising and sensible: know your neighbors and create a neighborhood watch...I've made it a point to get to know every single person on my block. I know their names, their professions, the names of their kids and dogs, and even when their gardeners and pool cleaners come. This intimate knowledge means we can quickly identify anything suspicious and look out for each other's safety…This sense of connection and community is the key to preventing burglaries. Criminals thrive on fear, so we must cultivate the opposite."

Certainly, there is a sense of unease in Encino as burglaries continue to dominate the news with seemingly no answers from law enforcement as to who these individuals are or how they are getting away with repeat attacks. In response, the Los Angeles Police Department has increased surveillance, including helicopters that will provide extra patrols of the area during the times most of the recent burglaries have occurred and mounted officers who have been seen riding through the neighborhood.

Anyone with information on the incidents, or helpful security footage that may led to potential suspects, is urged to call LAPD.

CALENDAR

There are better ways to get acquainted.

As a local business, you're always looking to meet new contacts and find ways to grow your business. The Sherman Oaks/Encino Chamber of Commerce offers easy, fun and useful ways to make new connections and find new resources. Got a problem? Need some help?

We're here to get you what you need to succeed. Call us today at 818-906-1951 or email us at hello@shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

Learn what we can do for you.

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Concert and movie lineup subject to change.

Community Calendar

* Join the Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce for their "Lunch Break Live" on Thursday, August 8, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm at Pineapple Hill Saloon (4454 Van Nuys Blvd). This networking event costs $30 for members and $45 for non-members. RSVP at shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

* The Encino Neighborhood Council will be holding a Public Safety Committee meeting on Monday, August 12, at 6:30 pm. For more info, visit encinonc.org.

* The UCLA Mobile Eye Clinic will be visiting the Encino Tarzana Library on Friday, August 9, from 8 am to 2 pm. Services include free vision screening, ophthalmic examinations, refraction tests, diagnosis of potential or existing eye disorders and free eye glasses giveaways. This is open to all ages, but space is limited. Registration is required. Sign up in person or call the Encino Tarzana Library at (818) 343-1983.

* Mark your calendars! The West Valley Warner Center Chamber of Commerce will be holding their Masquerade Installation Gala at Pinstripes on Saturday, August 24, from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. Celebrate the 2024/2025 Board of Directors, hear a special presentation from the LAPD and LAFD and dine and dance the night away. Tickets are $125 and go up to $175 after August 7. For more info, and tickets, visit woodlandhillscc.net.

* Is your child applying to college soon? The Encino Tarzana Library will be holding a Zoom on Wednesday, August 14, at 4 pm centering on how to write the perfect college essay. An instructor will reveal the secrets to crafting exceptional Ivy League admissions essays and share valuable strategies that will help you stand out in the competitive admissions process. Email ecalla@lapl.org to sign up for this program and receive the Zoom link.

* Nominations for the 66th annual Fernando Awards are now open and will close on August 9 at noon. Applications are available at fernandoawards.org. The Fernando Awards, which celebrate individuals making major contributions to the community, will be held on Friday, November 8.

* Westfield Fashion Square, in partnership with the American Red Cross, will be holding a blood drive on Thursday, August 8, from 10 am to 4 pm. The drive will take place on level one near Bloomingdale's. To schedule your life-saving appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

* The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society will conduct a bird walk on Sunday, August 4, from 8 am to 11 am at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area. Over 300 avian species have been reported to be along the route of this approximate two-mile tour, from the huge American White Pelican wintering in the wildlife lake to the tiniest of hummingbirds there year-round. The Sepulveda Basin is located at 17017 Burbank Blvd. For more information visit sfvaudubon.org.

* Curious about safety as a local Encino business owner? The LAPD Van Nuys division will be holding a retailers meeting on Wednesday, August 7, from 12 to 1 pm in their Community Room (6240 Sylmar Ave). Attend and talk to Burglary and Theft Detectives, as well as fellow retailers about business safety.

* Save the date! The Tarzana Community and Cultural Center has announced they will be holding their annual gala celebration on Saturday, October 5, starting at 5:30 pm. This year's theme is "An Enchanted Garden" and will include dinner, musical guests The Sonic Boomers, dancing, a silent auction and more! Tickets are $125 before September 1, RSVP at mytarzana.org.

COMMUNITY

People in the News

Sandy Rosenholz, above left, has been inducted as the President of the Rotary Club of Woodland Hills for 2024-2025. He is shown with Sheri Polak, a fellow Rotarian and former president of the club.

After a successful 38-year career in the pet supplies industry he transitioned into the senior care field in 2012. His company, Senior Resources, Inc. helps families with seniors make the right decisions about the care needed for their loved ones. He co-facilitates the successful Valley Senior Resources Network for the WVWCCC connecting seniors businesses to elder communities.

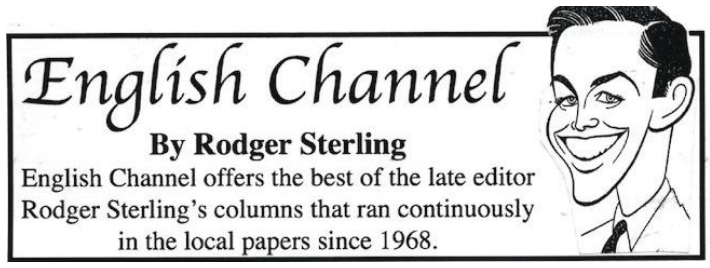
He is a board member for local non-profits and active member of many valley chambers of commerce. He and his wife Margie of 46 years live in Sherman Oaks. On weekends you can find them at the ball fields with grand twins Jordy and Drew or with the boys cleaning the streets and river beds of the valley.

As the leader of a large and active Rotary club he has presented his vision for this year as an action that provides "H.O.P.E."

The Rotary motto, "Service Above Self" is an action practiced by Rotarians all over the world. This year the club has initiated two new action committees to provide H.O.P.E. in the community. First they will provide for the elderly with their Senior Services Group. Second, they will bring services and events to their local heroes with the Veterans Services Group.

The Youth Avenues of Service will continue to find projects that help their younger community. One example is the second year of Cards From Kids Program which will provide over 10,000 holiday cards, drawn, colored and written by local students at schools and religious centers that will be delivered to the unhoused, sheltered, veterans, hospitals and senior communities. Vocational Services will increase its scholarship programs for high school seniors and trade school attendees. International outlook will again provide many needed programs of H.O.P.E. all over the globe. The club will pack food boxes, bring water projects and education programs to rural areas and provide relief during natural disasters. Community Services is working on food drives for nourishment, activities and toy drives for the sick and poverty level communities and bikes for kids in South LA at holiday time. The successful Coats for Kids program continues to provide school children that are in need of a warm jacket or coat during the winter months.

Rotary Club of Woodland Hills started in 1956. Its in-person meetings are at Pinstripes at the Topanga Mall on Wednesdays at 11:50 am-1:15 pm. If you want to provide H.O.P.E. come join them.



* You have to love all the Olympic commentary coming out this past week...No one gives better feedback on an Olympic athlete's performance than someone watching from the couch!

* Funny food for thought from the internet: To get a true representation of each country's athletic skill, the Olympics should randomly select citizens to compete like it's jury duty. Who's next on the balance beam?! Oh, its 39-year-old electrician Dale from Colorado - he does NOT look confident. Ha!

* John Christopher jokes that he likes the concept of fung shui because if he's having a bad day, he can just blame it on the dresser!

* Can anyone explain why bra is singular and panties plural?

* Thought for the week: Families are like fudge - mainly sweet but with a few nuts thrown in.

* Didja' hear about the guy who had amnesia and deja vu at the same time? He thinks he's forgotten this before.

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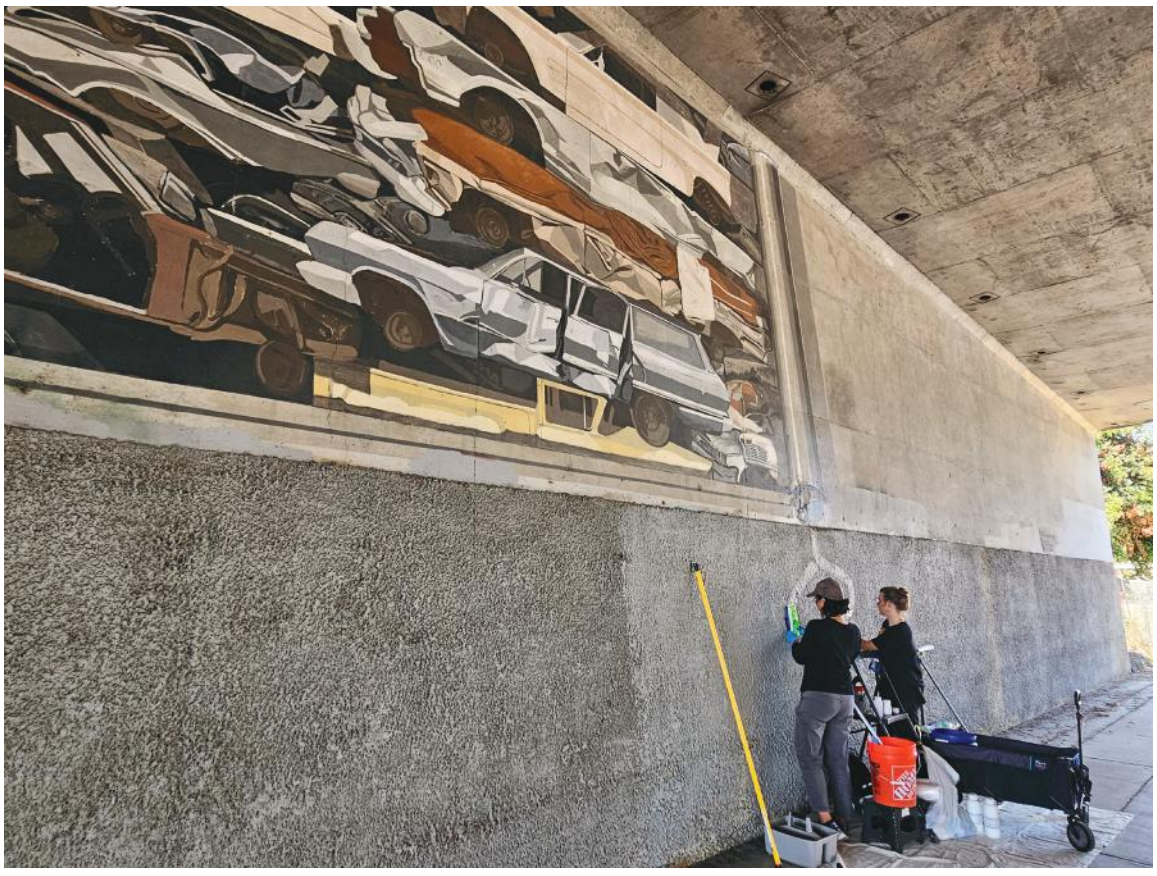

The restoration of the project begins.

The San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center's Encino Mural Restoration Project

Originally painted in 1975 by artist Sandy Bleifer, the mural "Can of Cardines" is the latest restoration project undertaken by the San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center (SFVACC).

According to the artist, the mural that exists on the wall of the underpass of the 101 freeway at the bottom of the Hayvenhurst exit "evokes the pervasive frustration of Valleyites connecting with the City by an often gridlocked freeway."

Bleifer, who received her B.A. in Fine Arts at UCLA in 1962 and worked as an Artist in Residence for the Beverly Hills Schools and Central High, as well as an art teacher, docent and publisher of curriculum materials in the arts, was one of many artists chosen for a Citywide Mural prjoect.

When the initial proposal of the mural was undertaken, Citywide Murals required that the artist paint a piece in the city where they lived, as well as receive community support for the project. Bleifer was already a local Valley resident and proposed three designs for the community to vote on, with the sardines concept winning the survey.

While the crux of the mural has stayed intact, it has not been immune to graffiti or LA City municipal paint over its 50-year history. This project, spearheaded by SFVACC and with aid from Councilmember Raman's office, seeks to remove these unwanted coatings and restore the mural with additional anti-graffiti coating.

The restoration team led by Kirsten Graves, Traci Lucero and Site & Studio Conservation, includes interns from the Inner Resources Mural Conservation Apprenticeship Project which trains the next generation of professional conservators.

After completion, the Office of Community Beautification from the City of LA will apply a protective clear coating to make sure this mural retains its clarity since murals all over the city are being spruced up to welcome visitors for the 2028 Olympics.

SFVACC has been a local institution for artists, workshops and performers since 2014 with the mission statement of "advocating art and culture through exhibitions, education, and philanthropy who are committed to promoting visual art by local, national, and international artists through virtual exhibitions, global outreach, and online courses enriching the lives of artists and others."

While the Cultural Center transitioned to a virtual space pre-COVID, they continue to host annual exhibitions for hundreds of national artists.

For those who would like to visit the mural, parking is available at the Park and Ride lot across the street at 5174 Hayvenhurst Ave. in Encino.

For those who would like to learn more about SFVACC, visit sfvacc.org.

To learn more about the artist, visit sandybleifer.com.

Below: Sandy Bleifer photographed in 1975 at the initial painting of the mural and the full mural "Can of Cardines" located in Encino.

What Makes an Effective PR Strategy?

by Miri Rossitto

As much as people want to think otherwise, image is everything. It's more so for businesses and brands who want to establish a positive public persona and manage their reputation. Here's where public relations (PR) steps in and becomes your BFF. To enhance your visibility, build trust, and foster strong relationships with various stakeholders, an effective PR strategy can make you shine. This includes:

Clear Objectives and SMART Goals

A successful PR strategy starts with well-defined objectives. Whether it's increasing brand awareness, managing a crisis, or launching a new product, clear goals provide direction and a framework for measuring success. And though you've heard this a billion times before, establishing specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals is key.

Understanding the Audience

We've said it before, and we'll say it again: KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE. It is vital to craft messages that resonate. Conduct thorough research to identify your target demographics, their preferences, and the channels they use. This allows for creating tailored content that speaks directly to their interests and needs.

Consistent Messaging

Consistency in messaging across all platforms helps in building a recognizable and trustworthy brand. Make sure your core messages align with your brand values and are consistently communicated through press releases, social media, interviews, and other channels. This strategy helps reinforce your brand identity.

Building Relationships with Media

Strong relationships with journalists, bloggers, and influencers are crucial for effective PR. Engage with the media regularly, provide them with valuable information, and be responsive to their needs. Building trust with media professionals can result in more favorable coverage and well-

(continued to next page)

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PR Strategy Continued

(continued from page 5)

positioned media exposure.

Leveraging Social Media

Social media platforms are your PR power tools. They offer direct access to your audience and provide opportunities for real-time engagement. Use social media to share news, engage followers, and manage your brand's reputation. Monitoring social media trends and conversations provides valuable insights.

Crisis Management Planning

Every business and brand faces the possibility of a PR crisis. Having a well-prepared crisis management plan to "break in case of emergency" makes a significant difference in handling such situations. Identify potential risks, prepare key messages, designate spokespeople, and establish a response protocol to address crises promptly and effectively.

Measuring and Evaluating Performance

Regularly measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of your PR efforts is a must. Use key performance indicators (KPIs) such as media coverage, social media engagement, website traffic, and public sentiment to assess your strategy's impact. This data-driven approach allows for continuous improvement and adjustment of your PR tactics.

Storytelling

Effective PR involves telling compelling stories that captivate and engage your audience. Whether it's a human-interest story, a behind-the-scenes look at your business, or customer success stories, storytelling can make your brand more relatable and memorable.

Engaging Content

Create high-quality, engaging content that adds value to your audience. Think blog posts, press releases, videos, podcasts, and infographics. Valuable content attracts attention and positions your brand as an industry leader and a trusted source of information.

Authenticity and Transparency

In an age of information overload and skepticism, authenticity and transparency are valuable commodities. Be honest and open in your communications, acknowledge mistakes, and show genuine concern for your audience. Authenticity builds trust and fosters long-term relationships.

An effective PR strategy is multifaceted and requires careful planning, execution, and evaluation. Remember, PR is not a one-time effort but an ongoing process that evolves with your business and the ever-changing media landscape. Stay adaptable, keep learning, and continuously refine your strategy to stay ahead.

Rossitto is CEO of Cowe Communications. Follow them on all social @CoweOfficial.

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Boar's Head Issues Recall

The U.S. Agriculture Department's Food Safety and Inspection Service has been investigating a deadly outbreak of listeria food poisoning of Boar's Head meat products. The company has recently recalled an additional seven million pounds of ready-to-eat products that could be potentially contaminated.

This recall includes meat intended to be sliced at delis and packaged meats and poultry that were made between May 10 and July 29. Items include liverwurst, ham, beef salami, bologna and other products made at the company's Virginia plant and distributed nationwide.

Boar's Head products have been tied to listeria poisoning that has killed two individuals and sickened approximately three dozen in 13 different states according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

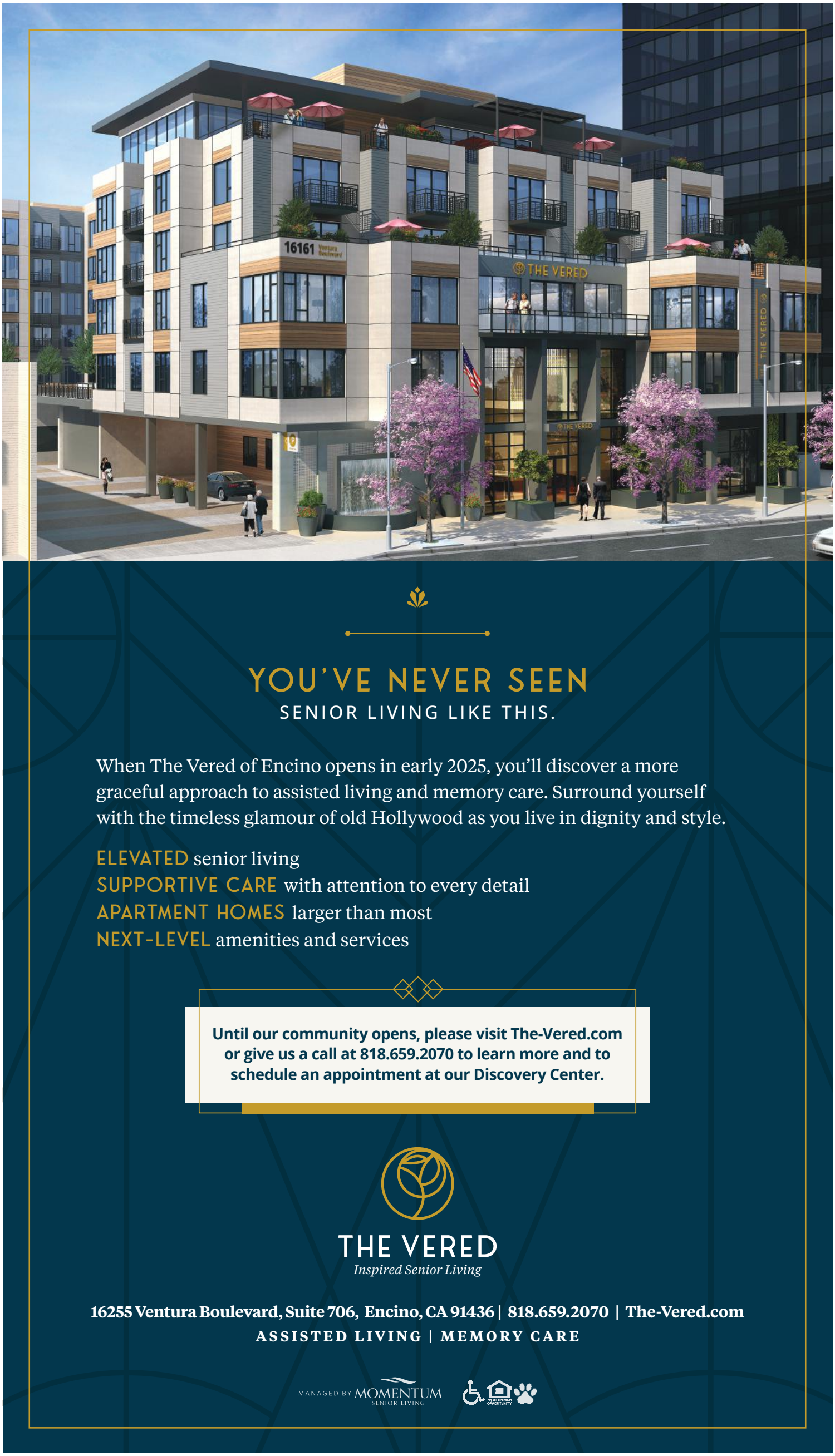
Symptoms of listeria infections typically cause fever, muscle aches, tiredness, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and convulsions. While reactions can occur quickly, they can also take up to 10 weeks after eating contaminated food to manifest. Listeria infections are especially dangerous for people older than 65, those with weakened immune systems and pregnant people.

In the case of this most recent Boar's Head outbreak, infected individuals included people aged 32 to 94, with a median age of 75 and one pregnant person who got sick, but retained the pregnancy. All cases reported were of individuals who had to go to the hospital due to severe symptoms.

Anyone in possession of potentially contaminated Boar's Head products should immediately throw them away or return them to the store where they were purchased for a full refund.

In addition, if you were in possession of contaminated products, health officials urge you to thoroughly clean and sanitize refrigerators to avoid possible cross contamination.

For a full list of contaminated Boar's Head products, visit fsis.usda.gov/recalls-alerts/boars-head-provisions-co--expands-recall-ready-eat-meat-and-poultry-products-due.



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Sweetener Linked to Higher Risk of Heart Attack and Stroke

A recent study in the European Heart Journal found that consumption of xylitol, a sugar alcohol commonly added to low-calorie sweeteners, may increase one's risk of heart attack and stroke.

"The very same people most likely to be targeted for taking sugar substitutes—those with obesity, diabetes, or metabolic syndrome—are the most vulnerable, [or are] most likely to suffer an incident CVD [cardiovascular disease] event," Stanley Hazen, MD, PhD, chair of cardiovascular and metabolic sciences and co-section head of preventive cardiology at Cleveland Clinic said. "By trying to reach for something healthy, the concern is one is inadvertently adding to cardiac risks."

While xylitol is promoted as a health-conscious alternative to sugar, research has shown a strong correlation between xylitol consumption and increased blood clotting. In the three-year study of more than 3,000 people in the U.S. and Europe of participants in their early-to-mid-60s, the results showed that people with higher levels of xylitol in their blood had an increased risk of a "major adverse cardiovascular event." In studying blood samples, people who drank xylitol-sweetened beverages had a much higher clotting ability than those who drank glucose-sweetened beverages. This study also mirrors one that took place with erythritol, a similar sugar alcohol.

A working theory as to why xylitol causes blood clots is the way in which the sugar alcohol interacts with the body's chemical receptors. Scientists believe that there is a chemical receptor on platelets that is triggered by the sweetener and leads to an unnecessary "robust response."

Though diabetics rely on xylitol because it doesn't trigger insulin release, it needs to be safely incorporated into ones diet since the clientele that typically relies on this substitute are the same individuals that may face the biggest risk using it.

"Clinical observation studies show significant [cardiovascular disease] risk associated with high xylitol levels in middle-aged and elderly subjects with significant cardiovascular disease risk," he explained. "[But] whether xylitol is associated with long-term increased risk in younger subjects, or those without significant comorbidities—obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol—is less clear."

While xylitol does not need to be eliminated completely, this study poses the question of how much can be safely incorporated into one's diet. It certainly varies per individual and is a conversation for those consuming it to have with their health care provider.

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Tired of Counting Sheep? Try Cognitive Shuffling

We've all been there, tossing and turning at night not able to successfully fall asleep. While counting sheep doesn't always seem to work, a social media "hack" may be the newest answer to capture some much-needed sleep. The idea of "cognitive shuffling" has recently become viral online as a method to catch some zzz's.

Cognitive shuffling is the idea that you distract your brain from deep thinking to random thinking. Instead of mulling over your to-do list or worries that may keep you up, you think of random images with no rhyme or reason. You could start thinking of yourself playing tennis in a top hat or getting a funnel cake at the fair. In doing so, your brain is mimicking the fleeting images that you typically have before falling asleep.

While counting sheep has long been a cliche, scientists believe it may require too much brain power in counting. On the flip side, cognitive shuffling scrambles your thoughts so that your brain can't try to make sense of things and interrupts the processes of evaluation and problem solving.

If thinking of various images is too silly, think of a word such as "sleep" and start with the letter s. Think of words that start with the letter s and visualize them, i.e a shark, before shifting to another s word. When you have exhausted the letter s, move on to the letter l, then e, etc. and hopefully you fall asleep.

Cognitive shuffling has shown to lead to falling asleep faster and better quality sleep. So, next time you find yourself unable to sleep, try picturing various scenarios in the same manner as flipping through a viewfinder.

When to Worry About that Mosquito Bite

With summer comes increasing temperatures and a rise of pesky bugs that oftentimes swarm those that spend these months outdoors. While mosquitos are the most prevalent culprit of bites during the summer months, most times those bites are an irritating nuisance, rather than a major health issue. However, when are mosquito bites something you have to worry about?

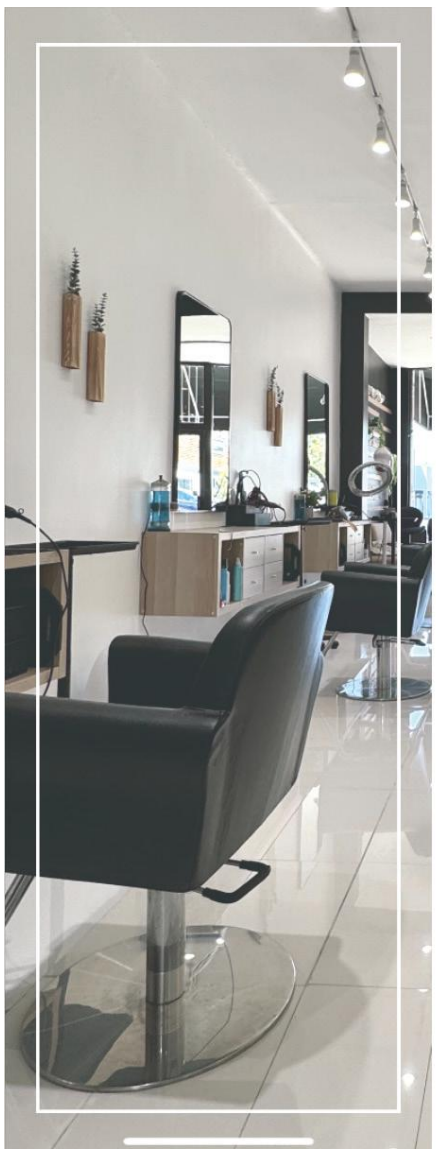
Mosquito bites, when inflamed, are usually around the size of a pea. If the bite becomes closer to the size of an avocado pit (or larger), you may suffer from skeeter syndrome which is a rare allergy to the proteins in mosquito saliva. This can lead to extremely painful and hot to the touch, itchy bites.

Once bitten, reaction to the bite usually appears minutes to hours after contact and will typically fade in approximately a week. However, if your bite becomes swollen or discoloration is spreading beyond the initial bite days after contact, it's imperative to go to an urgent care. These signs, as well as pus coming out of the bite, could indicate a bacterial infection that could spread if left untreated. This is made worse, and stems from, scratching the itchy bite and transferring germs inside of the wound. A good way to track progress of any bite is to draw an initial circle around the bite with a pen and if swelling or redness extends beyond the initial circle, to see a doctor.

It is also well known that mosquitos can carry viruses such a dengue, malaria and West Nile Virus. Approximately 2,000 infections of these types of diseases are reported each year by the Department of Health and Human Services, but many don't even display symptoms if infected.

While bites from diseased mosquitos won't look any different, they can cause nausea, vomiting, chills, fever and joint and muscle pain. As with any bite, it's imperative to monitor both the external and internal symptoms experienced in the following days.

While it can be difficult to completely protect yourself from mosquitoes, smalls steps like avoiding standing water, wearing bug repellent, and covering exposed skin with loose clothing can help prevent bites in the summer months.



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ENTERTAINMENT

Frank Sinatra Tribute at Museum of the San Fernando

Come on out to the Museum of the San Fernando Valley and enjoy your favorite Ole' Blue Eyes tunes performed by one of the country's leading impersonators.

Vaughn Suponatime has performed on the Tonight Show and Jimmy Kimmel Live, throughout Las Vegas, Merv Griffin's Coconut Club, and The Hollywood Palladium, Sinatra's "Twin Palms" Estate in Palm Springs and the "Compound" in Rancho Mirage.

On Thursday, August 8, from 5pmto8pm,TheMuseumofthe San Fernando Valley will stage a fundraising event to support museum programming with the Frank Sinatra tribute. The gates open at 5 pm and the show begins at 6:15 pm, with dancing and music until 8 pm. "We held this event last year and by popular demand, we are bringing it back this year. Frank Sinatra is beloved by so many and his music, as all music, returns each person to a favorite place and time. Please come on out to the beautiful Rancho and support your museum ofhistory,artsandculture,"said Michael Stevens, Vice President, Chair, Business Development, TheMuseumoftheSanFernando Valley.

Event tickets are only $10 per person and RSVP is required. Refreshments such as beer and wine samples, water and a paid coffee bar will be available.

To order tickets, visit TheMuseumSFV.org and click on link for event. For questions about the event or museum programs call (818) 347-9665.

The museum is located at 9015 Wilbur Avenue in Northridge. There is free parking on the grounds.

Valley Cultural Foundation Rolls Out Movies in the Park August 3

The Valley Cultural Foundation, presenters of the free summer Concerts in the Park, will roll out their free Movies in the Park series starting Saturday, August 3. Every Saturday night in August, movies will start at dusk (approximately 8 pm) at Warner Park, 5800 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Woodland Hills.

The schedule includes *Barbie* on August 3, *The Blind Side* on August 10, *Wish* on August 17, *Elemental* on August 24, and *Aquaman and The Lost Kingdom* on August 31. There will be food trucks in the park from 5 pm on.

For more information visit valleycultural.org or call (818) 888-0822. The movie programming is sponsored by Rosenheim & Associates and Kaiser Permanente.

Daisy Edgar-Jones, Glenn Powell and Anthony Ramos out storm chasing.

Twisters is the Summer Blockbuster Worthy of Getting Swept Up In

By Katie Sterling

It seems the well-known adage "everything old is new again" should be the unofficial tagline for a slew of recent blockbusters. The 80's and 90's are making a resurgence through sequels, remakes, and seemingly the studio's favorite method: a requel. Colloquially, a requel is a reboot sequel that revives the subject matter of a franchise or specific movie, but is not a remake or a linear continuation of that original movie's plot. Cue the dinosaurs, cue the ghosts, cue the fighter pilots, cue the natural disasters!

In the latest requel making waves, or shall I say winds, you've got every component of a summer blockbuster: action-packed, good-looking leads, a mindless yet wildly-entertaining plot, a big budget and a press tour as entertaining as the movie itself. Pop a plural on the original title and *Twisters* is a modern must-see with a nostalgic nod.

The opening sequence introduces audiences to scientist Kate (Daisy Edgar-Jones) who studies tornados in the hopes of calculating a way to tame their destructive power. But given that Mother Nature is quite a powerful, and unpredictable beast, a storm chase goes awry, leaving the majority of her team dead except for herself and Javi (Anthony Ramos).

Fast-forward five years and the trauma of it all sees Kate having left the world of storm chasing behind for a mundane life in New York City. It's only with a bit of coaxing from Javi, who needs her scientific expertise, does Kate realize her long-dormant twister-chasing passion is ready to resurface.

Back in Oklahoma, thanks to social media, storm-chasing has now become quite an endeavor. While Kate and Javi are focused on studying the twisters for science, others are chasing storms solely for entertainment value. Enter cowboy tornado wrangler Tyler (Glen Powell, dare I say, Hollywood's latest Golden Boy and for good reason). Tyler and his rag-tag team seem reckless and ridiculous on the surface, but is there more there than meets the eye? Layers people! Like a building storm, these people have layers!

To sum it up bluntly: this movie is fun. If you fault this movie, do you just hate fun?

Naturally, it wouldn't be a summer blockbuster without a little romance, and the will-they, won't-they chemistry is as thrilling as the storm chase itself. Audiences know they will, but it's the snarky interactions and slow burn that make it all worthwhile. Like most movies he's starred in recently, Powell absolutely steals the show and his boy-next-door charm, mixed with a Hollywood heartthrob look will have him leading blockbusters for the foreseeable future.

What follows is your typical blockbuster of big-budget CGI storms, baddies getting their comeuppance and an enemies to lovers trope all set to a country playlist that succeeds in transporting you to good ole' Oklahoma.

To sum it up bluntly: this movie is fun. If you fault this movie, do you just hate fun? It's a disaster movie – don't hurt your brain thinking too hard! *Twisters* is the epitome of a summer blockbuster and dare I say, one worthy of getting swept up in.

Nighttrek: What to See in the August Sky

By Neill Simmons

The highlight of August occurs on Monday the fifth. Look west 30 minutes after sunset at approximately 8:20 pm. The brightest planet, Venus, will appear low in the west. At the same time, the beautiful, thin crescent Moon will appear so close to Venus that it will look like the two heavenly bodies are touching. This phenomenon is called a "conjunction."

Many stargazers look forward to the month of August because this is when the Perseid Meteor Shower happens. The peak nights this year will be on the 10th, 11th, and 12th. A potential problem will be the brightness of the Moon until 10 pm when it will be low enough on the horizon to darken the night sky. The meteor shower will continue all night long.

Look east after 11 pm each night of August to see the ringed-planet Saturn. Notice its yellow tint due to atmospheric conditions. Saturn is very far from Earth at almost 830 million miles away. We can easily see it with the naked eye because of its massive size. After Jupiter, it is the second largest planet with a diameter of almost 75,000 miles. To give an idea of just how big Saturn is, 764 Earths can fit inside of it!

DAWN PATROL: On the early morning of August 10, set your alarm to 4 am to see the conjunction of Jupiter and Mars. They will appear to be so close to each other that astronomers call this a "Sky Kiss." At the same time and in the same area, a very bright star named Aldebaran will be visible. Aldebaran is 44 times as large as our Sun with a diameter of 38 million miles. This reddish, giant star is located in the constellation Taurus, The Bull. Look east.

August 19 brings us a "Super Full Moon." A Super Moon occurs when the Moon's elliptical orbit comes close to the Earth resulting in a larger than usual appearance. The August Full Moon is also known as "The Sturgeon Moon." This name comes from the giant freshwater fish that was an important food staple of Native Americans.

August has two of the greatest summer constellations. Look in the south after dark to see Sagittarius and Scorpius majestically positioned side by side.

The main stars in Sagittarius form a giant "teapot." With a dark sky, the Milky Way appears as steam coming from the spout. Looking at the Milky Way is looking at our galactic center. Next to Sagittarius is the constellation, Scorpius. It appears to be a giant letter "J" but if you look closely you can see the scorpion's claws reaching upwards. The giant red star, Antares, is located in the center and represents the scorpion's heart. Many star clusters are visible with binoculars in this constellation.

Many stargazers look forward to the month of August because this is when the Perseid Meteor Shower happens.

Many folks ask where is a good place near Los Angeles to see the night sky and some of the best places are at the beaches north of Malibu or by taking a drive up to Mt. Pinos by Frazier Park.

Ursa Major, The Big Dipper, is hanging by its handle with the bowl close to the horizon. Right above it is Ursa Minor, The Little Dipper, which is high in the north. Polaris, The North Star, is located at the end of the handle. Polaris is not the brightest star, but it is the only star in our sky that does not rotate and is always in the north.

Once a month, the Griffith Park Observatory partners with local telescope groups to share their telescopes and knowledge with the public. There's always something to see! Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 10, for this free event which begins at dusk.

When not stargazing, Simmons is a Wealth Advisor with LPL Financial. If you have any astronomy or financial questions, he may be reached at 818-936-2626 or neill.simmons@lpl.com.

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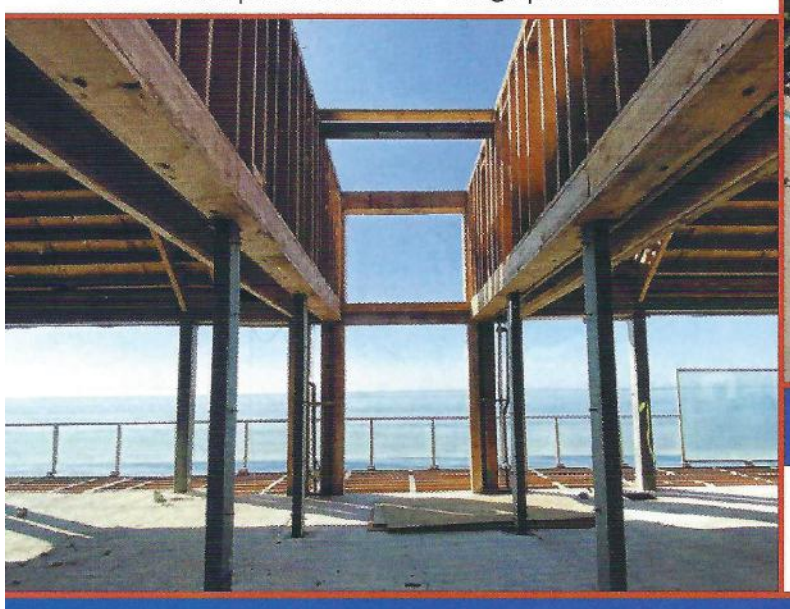

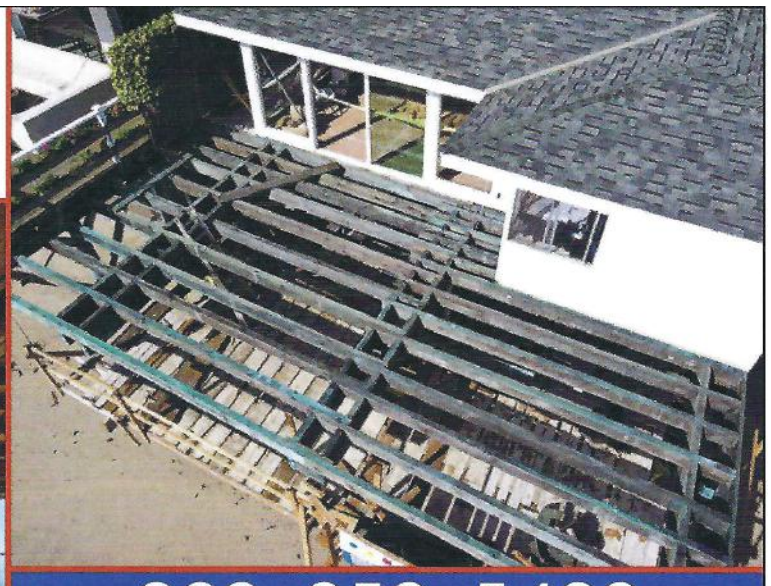

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