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ENCINO ENTERPRISE

Volume 5, Issue 109 | A Compendious Source of Information | December 5, 2024

NEWS IN BRIEF

Holiday Arts and Music Festival December 14

Get ready to kick off the holiday season with Valley Cultural Foundation's spectacular Holiday Arts and Music Festival on Saturday, December 14, from 1 to 5 pm at Warner Park.

Imagine your kids' faces lighting up as they meet Santa in person and snap a picture that's totally free! Plus, prepare for winter wonderland vibes with an awesome snow play area! For the little artists in your family, they've got a dedicated kids' arts and crafts zone and when you're ready to get your holiday shopping on, explore the treasure trove of local vendors offering unique gifts, while eating from delicious food trucks. So mark your calendar, bring your loved ones, and kick off this holiday season with the Holiday Arts and Music Festival!

Warner Park is located at Topanga Canyon Blvd. and Califa St. in Woodland Hills. For more information visit valleycultural.org.

Tarzana Comedy Night Live! Dec. 6

Humor is food for the soul! Join the Tarzana Community and Cultural Center for a fun night of standup comedy on Friday, December 6, at 7 pm. This show features nationally-known comedians Murray Valeriano, Graham Elwood and Dustin Chafin. Tickets are $20 and snacks and beverages will be available for purchase. Grab your tickets at mytarzana.org.

Storytime with Santa

Westfield Fashion Square will be hosting Storytime with Santa on Thursdays, December 5, 12 and 19, from 11 am to 11:15 am and Saturday, December 14, from 10 to 11 am with a special meet-and-greet with Mrs. Clause. Santa will share a magical holiday tale for 15 minutes and then after storytime, children are invited to stay and enjoy festive coloring activities and a touch of holiday magic to keep the fun going. Plus, make sure to reserve a time to get your photos with Santa! He'll be stationed on level one, near Sephora every day until Christmas Eve. Book your appointment at westfield.com/united-states/fashionsquare/events-detail/photos-with-santa.

Give the Gift of Reading that Lasts a Lifetime

The 18th Annual Cooper Reading Challenge, which was created to help instill the love of reading in children of the Boys & Girls Club of the West Valley, is under way. In the past 17 years, local individuals and businesses donated more than $100,000, providing the opportunity to more than 4,000 children to select, purchase and enjoy their own books through this program.

Each year, nearly 200 Boys & Girls Club children earn the privilege of selecting one or more books at Barnes & Noble bookstore in Calabasas, all funded through community donations.

During November, club children read age-appropriate books and wrote a review to qualify for a trip to Barnes & Noble. At the bookstore, each child will have $25 to spend on books for themselves or family members. Members of the San Fernando Valley business and civic community donate $25 for each child they want to sponsor. The children will visit the bookstore on December 4, 5, 9, 10 and 11.

"This program is about teaching children to love and value books and reading," said Encino resident Martin Cooper, President of Cooper Communications and Chairman Emeritus of the Boys & Girls Club of the West Valley.

"We are very grateful to those who have contributed to this program in the past and invite those who see the importance of literacy to support it this year. Reading is a lifelong gift; it illuminates the world, ignites the imagination and is a proven cornerstone of success," says Cooper.

To make a tax-deductible donation, go to bgcwv.org/Cooper-Reading-Challenge.

Cooper, center, with a group of readers at the bookstore.

Click on Cooper Reading Challenge and scroll down to fill out the requisite donor info.

Checks should be made out to the Boys & Girls Club of the West Valley/CRC and sent to Boys & Girls Club of the West Valley, 7245 Remmet Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91303.

Sponsors of the Cooper Reading Challenge include presenting sponsor U.S. Bank, and corporate sponsors SoCal Gas and First Bank.

End-of-Year Message from ENC President

Hello, Encino Neighbors!

As the holiday season approaches, I find myself reflecting on the past year - the challenges we've faced, the progress we've made, and the incredible community we continue to build together. When I became President of the Encino Neighborhood Council earlier this year, it wasn't something I initially sought. But when the opportunity arose, I felt compelled to step up, driven by a deep desire to make a difference in our neighborhood.

Throughout this journey, one message has been at the core of our efforts: the importance of connection. A more connected community is not only stronger but also better equipped to advocate for the issues that matter most to us—whether it's zoning, traffic, airport noise, or education. When we come together, we amplify our voices and ensure they are heard by decision-makers at every level.

Encino faces many complex issues, and building a unified community voice starts at the local level. That's why we've worked hard to encourage neighbors to connect and get involved. Community involvement doesn't have to be overwhelming - it can start small, with something as simple as attending a neighborhood event, joining a movie night, or engaging with our social media.

These small actions strengthen bonds within Encino and help us build relationships with city and state leaders. Together, we are creating bridges that ensure Encino's needs are represented where it matters most.

As we prepare to welcome a new year, I invite you to embrace one transformative goal: connection. In uncertain times, the greatest risk isn't just the challenges we face - it's apathy. It's easy to feel overwhelmed and disengaged, but I encourage you to resist that instinct. Instead, find a way to get involved that feels meaningful to you.

Join a local group. Attend a neighborhood meeting. Volunteer for a cause you care about. Democracies thrive when everyday people shape their communities, and our involvement matters—not only for Encino but for ourselves. Research has shown that civic

(continued to page 5)

CALENDAR

Community Calendar

* Due to the holidays, the Encino Neighborhood Council will be holding their General Board Meeting earlier in the month, on Wednesday, December 11, at 7 pm. The meeting will take place via Zoom. For the link, and more info, visit encinonc.org.

* The Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce will host a Holiday Sweater Mix & Mingle Toy and Toiletry Drive on Tuesday, December 15, from 5 to 7 pm. Come dressed in your favorite holiday sweater and bring a small something for a community drive. It can be an unwrapped toy for a child 12 and under or toiletries for the seniors at ONEgneration. Free to attend for chamber members and $30 for others. RSVP by December 13 at shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

* Kids aged 11 and older are invited to the Encino Tarzana Library on Saturday, December 14, at 3:45 pm for their next Art Lab session. This session will focus on crafting gift buttons and greeting cards for family and friends this holiday season.

* Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel will host a Drive-Thru Holiday Toy Drive benefiting the West Valley Food Pantry and Northeast Valley Health Corporation on Wednesday, December 11, from 4 to 6 pm. To participate, please drop off a new, unwrapped toy at ONEgeneration (17400 Victory Blvd.) RSVP at bit.ly/ToyDrive24.

* The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society will be holding their monthly free beginner walk at the Sepulveda Basin on Saturday, December 14, from 9 to 11 am. This walk is perfect for beginning birdwatchers, families with school-age children and people who want to visit the Wildlife Reserve. For details on the meet-up, visit sfvaudubon.org/event/free-beginner-walks-at-sepulveda-basin-2/2024-12-14.

* 'Tis the season for giving back and what better way to spread goodwill than by donating blood?! The American Red Cross, in partnership with Westfield Fashion Square, will hold a blood drive on Thursday, December 12, from 10 am to 4 pm. Book your appointment at redcrossblood.org.

* The Encino Neighborhood Council will hold their Public Safety Committee meeting on Monday, December 9, at 7 pm. For more info, visit encinonc.org.

* The West Valley Regional Library will be holding their Mystery Book Club on Wednesday, December 11, from 10:30 am to noon. This month's selection is *The Thin Man* by Dashielle Hammett. Email wvally@lapl.org with "Mystery Book Club" in the subject line for the Zoom link.

* Councilmember Blumenfield will be holding a Holiday Drive on Thursday, December 5, from 4 to 7 pm at Taxco Theater (7242 Owensmouth Ave). Mix and mingle, enjoy light refreshments and bring donations to benefit the less fortunate. Suggested items include new and unwrapped toys, socks, hygiene products, canned goods and gently-used jackets or blankets. RSVP at bit.ly/cd3holiday2024.

* Fa la la la la! As you do some last minute holiday shopping, enjoy carolers at the Encino Courtyard on Wednesday, December 18, from 4 to 7 pm. They will be singing Christmas and Chanukah songs.

* 'Tis the season of giving, and ONEgeneration is looking for volunteers to give a homebound senior a special holiday. Volunteers will be given a profile of a senior who receives delivered meals from ONEgeneration, along with a list of items they may need such as hand soap or slippers and some possible "luxury" items such as chocolate or books. ONEgeneration social workers will deliver the gifts and a blank thank you note for the senior to return with their meals and send on to you. To volunteer contact volunteer@ONEgeneration.org.

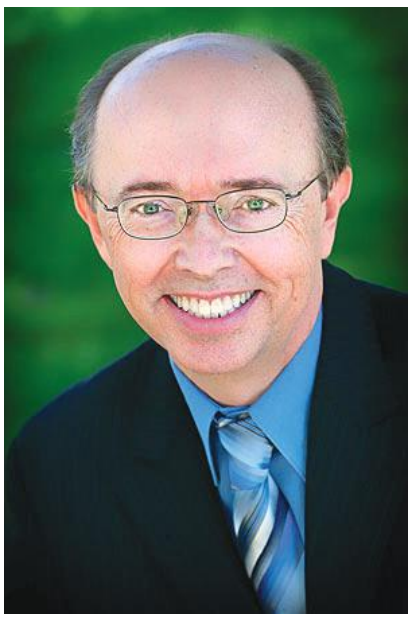
People in the News

The San Fernando Valley Branch of the California Writers Club will welcome author, storyteller, editor and writing coach, **Shawna Kenney**, at left, as the keynote speaker on Saturday, December 7, at 1 pm, with a Zoom presentation on the crucial information we all want to know: "How to Write a Winning Book Hook, Query an Agent and Find Your Place in the Publishing World."

During her presentation, which will also be shown live at CWC-SFV, Shawna will discuss how to approach agents and publishers with a completed manuscript, and whether they are even necessary for your particular project. She will teach how to leverage the heart of your story to get it into the world while also exploring today's plethora of publishing options.

Kenney has an MFA in creative writing. She is the author of four books, including the award-winning memoir *I Was a Teenage Dominatrix* and the oral history *Live at the Safari Club: A History of HarDCore Punk in the Nation's Capital 1988-1998*. Her arts journalism and personal essays have appeared in *The New York Times, Playboy, Ms. Pitchfork, Vice* and more. She teaches creative writing with UCLA Extension,

The in-person meeting will be held in the Saban Center at Motion Picture Television Fund, 23388 Mulholland Drive. In-person attendees do not need to register in advance. Members free. Guests pay $10 at the door. First visit free. Please arrive a few minutes early. All members of the CWC-SFV will receive a Zoom invitation to this presentation. Members of other CWC branches should contact host, Anat Wenick, by noon on December 6 at SFV.CWC@gmail.com for an invitation to register. Zoom guests may purchase admission at cwc-sfv.org by noon on December 6.



Paul Davis, left, will receive the Harmon Ballin Award from the Valley Industry and Commerce Association (VICA) on December 6.

Davis is the president of Paul Davis Insurance, specializing in helping people with Medicare Advantage, Medicare Supplements and Part D Prescription Drug Plans.

He is active in many nonprofits including ONEgeneration, New Directions for Youth, Valley Community Clinic, Valley Presbyterian Hospital, Mid Valley Police Council and more. He has received the Fernando Award, the Small Business Award from United Chambers, the CK Tseng Leadership Award and the Daily News Readers Choice Best Insurance Agent. The Harmon Ballin Award is given annually to an active VICA member who has made an outstanding contribution to the community through their long-term community service activities.

English Channel

By Rodger Sterling

English Channel offers the best of the late editor Rodger Sterling's columns that ran continuously in the local papers since 1968.

* Overheard at holiday time...a woman in the post office was buying stamps for her invites. "What denomination?" asked the postal clerk. "Oh, good heavens," she was heard to have uttered. "Has it come to this? Well, give me 50 Baptist and 50 Catholic ones."

* Did you hear one of Santa's reindeer now works for Proctor & Gamble? It's true. Comet cleans sinks.

* Why does Scrooge love all of the reindeer? Because every buck is dear to him!

* Why is Christmas like a day at the office? You do all the work and the guy in the suit gets all the credit!

* A guy's mother gives him two sweaters for Hanukkah. The next time he visits her, he makes sure to wear one. As he walks into the house, his mother frowns and asks, "What – you didn't like the other one?"

* The internet warns that a lot of people will be going out of town for the holiday season, which makes their homes ripe for theft. Security experts strongly suggest leaving one of your children behind to construct a series of elaborate booby traps to defend your house.

COME GET YOUR PICTURE WITH

Santa for only $25

I've had the joy of bringing Christmas magic to kids since 2013. I've been the Santa at the Westlake Promenade Mall for the last two years. I've done private parties, and I've been the Santa at Hidden Hills Community Center. This year I will be doing pictures at a Home in Woodland Hills. It has a major display with snow, lights to Music and a big screen TV in front of the house. Come out bring the whole family and get your picture with Santa. I am looking forward to seeing you.

Visit us on the web at specialtimewithsanta.com to see Santa's Availability.

MAKE SURE TO CHECK THE WEBSITE BEFORE YOU COME BECAUSE TIMES CAN CHANGE.

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From the Desk of Assemblymember Gabriel

This month, Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D - Encino) hosted the 4th Annual Valley Community Leadership Awards recognizing the achievements and contributions of 12 individuals and organizations who have positively impacted the San Fernando Valley.

Honorees included nonprofits, activists, small business owners, and notable civic and community leaders. Honorees were presented with special resolutions from the California Legislature acknowledging their service to the San Fernando Valley.

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, left, honored Boys and Girls Club of the West Valley for working tirelessly to provide safe, educational, and fun afterschool programming to youth in the West Valley.

Jesse Gabriel honored the Head of Westmark School, Claudia Koochek. The National Center for Learning Disabilities named Claudia Educator of the Year. Koochek has developed teacher training initiatives and collaborated with researchers to enhance local educational strategies.

The Assemblymember honored ICON CDC for their commitment to economic development in low-income communities in the San Fernando Valley. ICON CDC offers business workshops and one-on-one consulting services to assist entrepreneurs and small business owners in the region.

Other awardees include Rabbi Jon Hanish: Interfaith Community Leader & Rabbi at Kol Tikvah, Pastor Jimmy Reyes: Reseda Neighborhood Council & Pastor at Valley Vineyard Church, Stephanie Franklin: El Camino Real Charter High School Academic Decathlon, Lori Wheeler: Comisión Femenil, Jeffrey Mausner: Tarzana Neighborhood Council Animal Welfare Committee, Northeast Valley Health Corporation (NEVHC), Tisha Janigian: SHE IS HOPE LA, Pamm Fair: SEIU Local 720, Aida Abkarians:West Hills Neighborhood Council.

How to Invest Wisely During Uncertain Times

by Stacey McKinnon

Leading up to the 2024 election, one question dominated our client conversations: "How should we invest given the political situation?" What is interesting about this is that their political affiliation did not matter. No matter who won or lost, the question remained, but I suspect the real question was more deeply rooted.

Most people who invest are looking for three things: to grow their wealth, to protect their wealth, and to generate income. This may come from a desire to get ahead, make smart investments, capitalize on opportunities – or it could be rooted in a deep concern that everything they worked so hard to earn could decline in a recession or market pullback. In all cases, there is one truth– investing is emotional. As advisors, our job is to understand those emotions and design portfolios that both grow and protect wealth.

To do this, we must understand what is happening in the world around us. With so much uncertainty (e.g., politics, wars, market volatility, inflation), it could be easy for investors to become paralyzed. Here are a few examples of the unknowns:

·We do not know the policies and laws the administration will put in place over the next few years.

·We do not know if we will get more involved in wars overseas, and how that might impact our economy at home.

·Most of us are feeling the impact of soaring prices for goods and services but we know our companies can't afford to increase wages to match the increased costs of living.

·We watch the news on interest rates changing, not knowing if a decrease in rates will help or hurt our wallets. Some rate decreases have caused inflation to soar on, but also made investments like home mortgages slightly more attractive. On the opposite end, some rate increases have given us the opportunity to make more money on our cash, giving us a bit more peace of mind about investing "safely," but subsequently scared the market, causing our retirement accounts to decrease in value.

Given the uncertainty all around us, it could be tempting to take a "do nothing and wait" approach. Many investors adopt this strategy due to limited public investment options like cash, stocks, and bonds. However, these options are not the only answers.

Since the early 1990's, Morton Wealth has been obsessed with finding investments that do not behave similarly to the public markets. These alternative investments are generally focused on three main objectives: to create lower risk portfolios, generate more income, and invest in real assets. We have a dedicated research and due diligence team that reviews over 100 different private investments per year with the goal of bringing new opportunities to our clients regularly. Our aim is to source investments that should have low correlation to the stock and bond markets. This means that if the stock market crashes, these investments should still perform well for our clients by generating the income they need to "ride the wave" and allow the portfolio to go through cycle.

At this point, you may be asking, "What are these alternative investments?" Let me share a few examples:

·Niche private equity investing: Did you know you can invest in boat marina rental fees? In 2008, during the last market crash, boat owners continued to pay for their boat slips and investors who were entitled to a portion of those fees made a nice income stream. Investments like these are not correlated with the stock market and can provide stability during uncertain times. Like any investment, there are other risks associated with this strategy, but it is a different risk than stock market risk.

·Real estate: While it has become popular to invest in homes for Airbnb or investment income purposes, there is a vast real estate market outside of homes and duplexes. As an example, since the pandemic, there has been a greater need for warehouse space given all the Amazon packages being delivered across the world. We like to think of this type of investment as diversifying an investor's real estate "bucket" to more than just housing.

·Loans backed by real assets: Most public bonds are significantly impacted by interest rate movements. This means that bonds tend to move up and down, causing them to fail as the "safe haven" they used to be. Instead of investing in bonds, you can invest with a group that lends to companies and have that loan backed by real assets (like real estate, equipment, or inventory). That way, if the borrower defaults, they can re-sell the assets and pay their investors back. As an added benefit, these types of loans usually generate more income than public bonds.

There are a lot more of these examples out there (gold being one of them), and we are searching for them daily so that

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Message from ENC President Continued

(continued from page 1)

engagement fosters a sense of purpose and connection, combating the isolation and disconnection so many feel today.

Since stepping into this role, my focus has been to elevate Encino's presence and ensure our voices are heard. Together, we've achieved significant milestones:

• Expanded Representation: We welcomed Eric Kingsley, Board President of Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue, to our general board as a religious representative. His leadership broadens our council's perspective and strengthens our efforts to represent all of Encino.

• Revived Committees: Our Youth and Education Committees are thriving! Youth Representative Max Furberg is engaging the next generation, while Education Representative Geraldine Hernandez-Abisror is forging stronger connections with local schools and superintendents.

• Addressing Airport Noise: With the re-establishment of our Airport Committee, we're tackling concerns about increasing flight traffic over Encino, ensuring our community's needs are prioritized amid the expansion of Van Nuys Airport.

Our efforts have caught the attention of leaders like Mayor Karen Bass, Assembly Member Jesse Gabriel, Council Member Nithya Raman, and even Governor Gavin Newsom. These connections underscore the importance of our work and ensure Encino's voice is respected.

Looking ahead, there's much to be excited about:

• Public Safety Town Hall: Join us on January 15, 2025, for a forum on burglary prevention and home security featuring expert tips and resources.

• Encino Day Festival: In March, we'll gather at Encino Park for a celebration of live music, food, and activities that showcase the best of our community.

• Movie Nights Under the Stars: Our family movie nights will return in May and August, offering opportunities to relax and connect with neighbors.

As I reflect on this year, I'm deeply grateful for all we've accomplished together. Despite the uncertainties of the world, I am filled with hope for Encino's future. Every event, every conversation, every connection strengthens the fabric of our community.

Here's to a joyful holiday season and an inspiring year ahead. Thank you for being the heart of what makes Encino special.

Josh Sautter, Encino Neighborhood Council President

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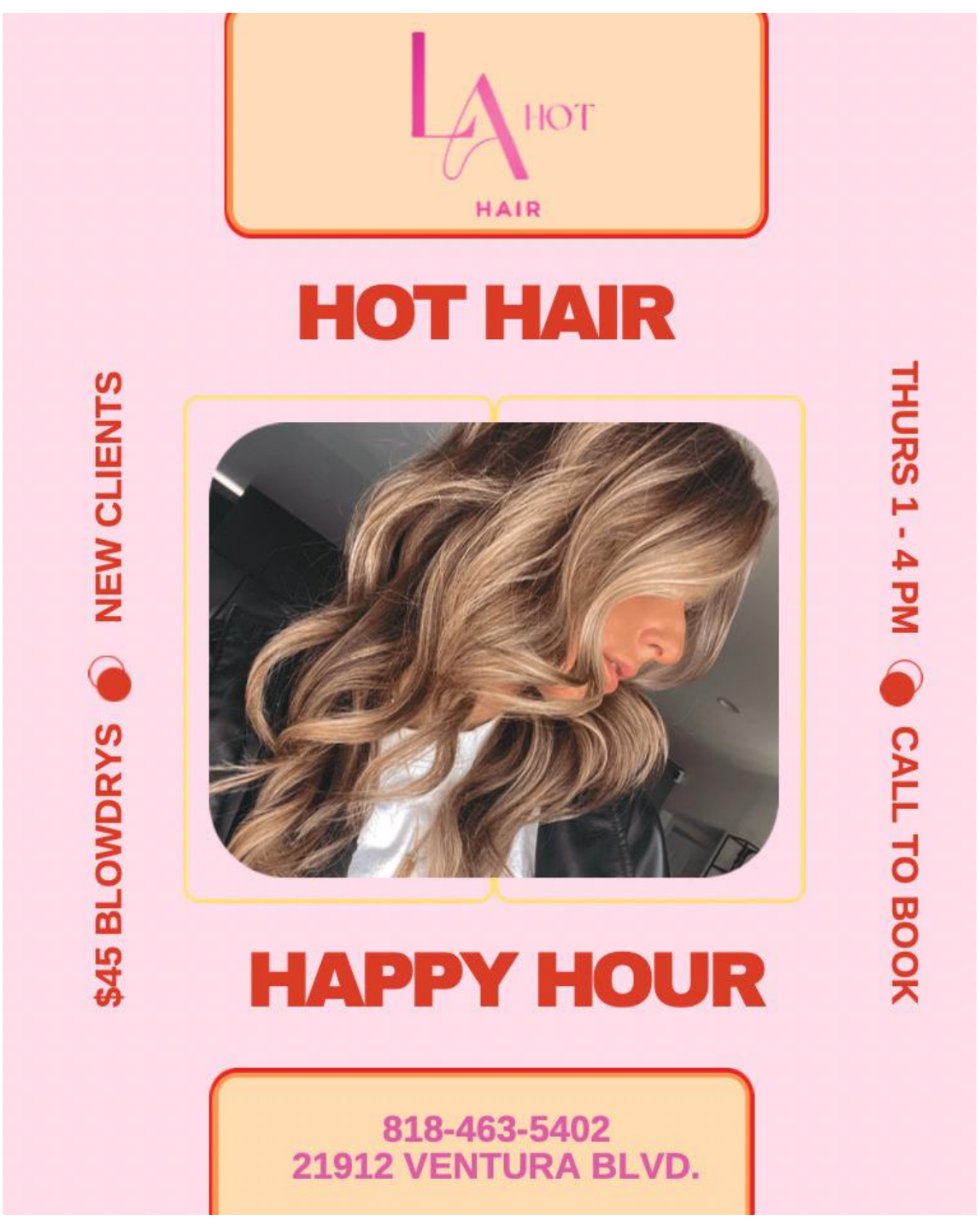
HEALTH



CicLAvia-The Valley to Take Place December 8

CicLAvia – The Valley, welcomes everyone of all ages and abilities to its 57th car-free open streets event along Sherman Way in the west San Fernando Valley to experience car-free open streets connecting Canoga Park, Winnetka, and Reseda.

Always free, CicLAvia participants just show up anywhere along the route at any time to enjoy this pop-up park for the day with one's favorite people-powered way, whether that's walking, jogging, biking, roller skating, skating, or simply spectating.

With three Hubs filled with plenty of activities and programs along the route, CicLAvia – The Valley will be both fun and engaging for all to enjoy. Hubs are walking zones (bike dismounts) and meeting points along the route with the Canoga Park Hub located near Shoup Ave and Sherman Way; the Winnetka Hub located near Winnetka Ave and Sherman Way; and the Reseda Hub located near Lindley Ave and Sherman Way. Hubs offer family-friendly activities, restrooms, free water refilling stations, free basic bike repair, bike parking, and first aid. Free pedicab rides are also available at each information booth.

Over the past 14 years CicLAvia has helped communities re-imagine a greener and cleaner Los Angeles, while also promoting equitable transportation options, healthier lifestyles, and closer connections to community.

Only people-powered vehicles are allowed; no electric scooters, electric skateboards, hoverboards, electric unicycles, motorcycles and other non-people-powered vehicles are allowed at CicLAvia.

For more info on the event, visit ciclavia.org/ciclavia_the_valley_24.

How to Invest Continued

(continued from page 5)

we can bring more investments to our clients in an effort to combat the uncertainty existing in the world around us. Our goal is to invest in more real assets– things we can touch/feel/see, that should provide clients with a safe haven and protect them from the unknown.

If you have goals that you want to achieve, like retirement, a child's education, new home, more vacations, or financial freedom, it will not come with a "wait and see" approach. While it can be overwhelming to invest in uncertain times, it is important to acknowledge your emotions and then decide whether those emotions are serving you well. If you want to take the path less traveled, you will have to look for real assets, do proper research, and invest in things that will hold value over the long term, despite the uncertainties in the world. Ultimately, we believe this strategy will lead to investments that grow, protect, and provide income to support families and lifestyles.

Disclaimer: Information is presented for educational purposes only and is not intended as investment advice. The investment opportunities discussed are only available to eligible clients and involve a high degree of risk. Each investment opportunity is unique, and it is not known whether a similar type of opportunity will be available in the future. Any investment strategy involves the risk of loss. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Stacey McKinnon, CFP®, is the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Marketing Officer and a Wealth Advisor at Morton Wealth, a financial advisory firm in Calabasas. She is passionate about financial education, acknowledging that most schools don't teach finance, which has caused our society to crave knowledge that helps them make better decisions for themselves and their families.

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- A streamlined member experience with coordinated care and personalized support that puts you first

UCLA Health Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO) has a contract with Medicare and enrollment in the plan depends on contract renewal. UCLA Health Medicare Advantage Plan includes Part D drug coverage. To enroll in UCLA Health Medicare Advantage Plan, you must have both Medicare Parts A and B and reside in the plan service area, Los Angeles County.

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Wishing you a very Happy Holiday Season and a healthy and prosperous New Year!

Sandy Rosenholz

California Continues to Monitor Bird Flu Outbreak

As of early November, there have been approximately 29 human cases of bird flu in California. While health officials have been equipping farmers with masks, gloves and goggles, this outbreak has proven difficult to accurately track. Bird flu was first detected in April, and while coordination was attempted with local health officials, the flu has spread to more than 270 dairies within the state and wastewater samples in LA County.

Thanks to COVID, the state is better equipped to handle a health emergency such as this, but California still struggles on how to accurately handle this type of outbreak. Public risk does remain low and there has been no evidence that the flu has spread between humans. If the bird flu does spread from human to human, it could present California with a worst-case scenario for a new pandemic.

While a legislative analysis stated that "It is difficult to overstate the level of unpreparedness exhibited by hospitals both in and outside of California in dealing with the 2020 outbreak of COVID-19," California Hospital Association spokesperson Jan Emerson-Shea said hospitals "continuously prepare to respond to all types of disasters, including outbreaks of transmissible viruses."

According to the Department of Finance, California cut approximately one-third of their funding for personal protective equipment and is cutting $40 million over the next four years from its $175 million disaster stockpile budget.

This respiratory disease has caused a multi-state outbreak in wild birds, poultry and other animals. While the flu has been mainly mild in humans, one teenager did find themselves in critical condition. Fifty-two people have been infected by the H5N1 virus, with dairy cattle being the source for 30 of those cases and poultry for 21. Twenty-nine cases have been identified in California, all related to exposure to infected cows.

What is cause for concern is the fact that the bird flu has been found for the first time in pigs. Pigs are animals that are also susceptible to the human flu, which could cause potential for the two viruses to co-mix, mutate and potentially pose more of a threat to humans. While there is no evidence of this as of yet, it is giving health officials reason to take this outbreak more seriously than usual.

Twenty-nine cases have been identified in California, all related to exposure to infected cows.

Symptoms of bird flu may include fever, cough, sore throat, eye redness, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches and headaches. According to the CDC website, "CDC is watching this situation closely and taking routine preparedness and prevention measures in case this virus changes to pose a greater human health risk."

Bird flu is not a food-borne illness, so you can not contract it from ingesting cooked food.

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Call (855) 227-3745 or go to LAJH.org

Nonprofit Los Angeles Jewish Health, formerly Los Angeles Jewish Home, is committed to excellence in senior care for all.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Festive Fun is Back at Holiday Road

Holiday Road is officially open for the festive season!

From the same team that brought you Nights of the Jack, Holiday Road transforms King Gillette Ranch into a winter wonderland walking experience filled with holiday cheer! There will be larger-than-life holiday displays, lights galore, carolers, countless candy canes, and appearances from Santa, Mrs. Claus and their elves.

New this year are lantern art installations with two massive scenes that you can stand in for a perfect holiday photo! Gather the family for a seasonal stroll and indulge in a night of merriment, festive cocktails and food!

Holiday Road runs now until December 28. Doors open at 4:30 pm and close at 9:30 pm. Designated time slots for entry start at 5 pm for every 30 minutes and end at 8 pm. Advanced ticket purchase is required, as well as parking passes. The entrance to the parking lot will close at 9 pm, with the entrance to the trail closing at 9:15 pm and food trucks and bars closing service at 9 pm. Prices start at $24.99 and increase depending on the date.

With a holiday market, face painting, a myriad of food and beverage options, live carolers and more, there is something for everyone!

For further details and tickets, visit holidayroadusa.com.

Once Upon A Mattress Arrives at Ahmanson December 10

On the heels of its critically acclaimed return to Broadway, *Once Upon a Mattress* makes its West Coast premiere in a new adaptation by Emmy Award winner Amy Sherman-Palladino (*The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, Gilmore Girls*), directed by Tony Award nominee and Drama League Award winner Lear deBessonet (*Into The Woods*) at Center Theatre Group's Ahmanson Theatre December 10 to January 5, 2025.

Two-time Tony Award winner Sutton Foster (*Anything Goes, The Music Man*) leads the Los Angeles cast, reprising her acclaimed Broadway performance as Winnifred the Woebegone, hailed by *The New York Times* as "perfectly goofy, and imprinted with an ebullient, joyful relish in the very act of performance."

An uproarious update of Hans Christian Andersen's "The Princess and the Pea," *Once Upon a Mattress* sets an unapologetic free spirit loose in a repressed kingdom, where Winnifred the Woebegone charms, delights, and dances her way to the top… of a stack of mattresses. Full of gloriously catchy melodies like "Shy" and "In a Little While," the musical first premiered in 1959.

SAG Award nominee Michael Urie (*Spamalot, Shrinking*) in the role of Prince Dauntless also stars in the LA production direct from the Broadway revival, alongside Ana Gasteyer (*Saturday Night Live, Wicked*) as Queen Aggravain.

Tickets start at $51.75 and the performance length is 2 hours and 15 minutes with a 15-minute intermission. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit CenterTheatreGroup.org.

Celebrate the Holidays at Universal Studios Hollywood

Universal Studios Hollywood unwraps holiday magic with exciting themed festivities taking place throughout the theme park this season! This includes a colorful holiday overlay at Super Nintendo World™ and the return of family favorites, "Grinchmas™" and "Christmas in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter.™" Holidays at Universal Studios Hollywood is included in the price of admission and starts on Friday, November 29, running daily through Monday, January 6, 2025.

Super Nintendo World will welcome guests to celebrate the holidays in the Mushroom Kingdom alongside Mario, Luigi, Princess Peach and Toad. A themed tree will greet guests for a memorable photo op and once inside the Mushroom Kingdom, the spirit of the holidays will shine bright with themed décor. Plus, for the first time ever, guests will be able to enjoy an array of holiday merchandise at select Super Nintendo World retail locations and seasonal treats at Toadstool Cafe.

Universal Plaza, located at the heart of Universal Studios Hollywood, brings its centerpiece Who-holiday festivities to life with the spirited "Grinchmas" Who-bilation. Who-cheer and Who-fun will come to life in the whimsically vibrant town of Who-ville, complete with colorful décor, lively entertainment and festive activities.

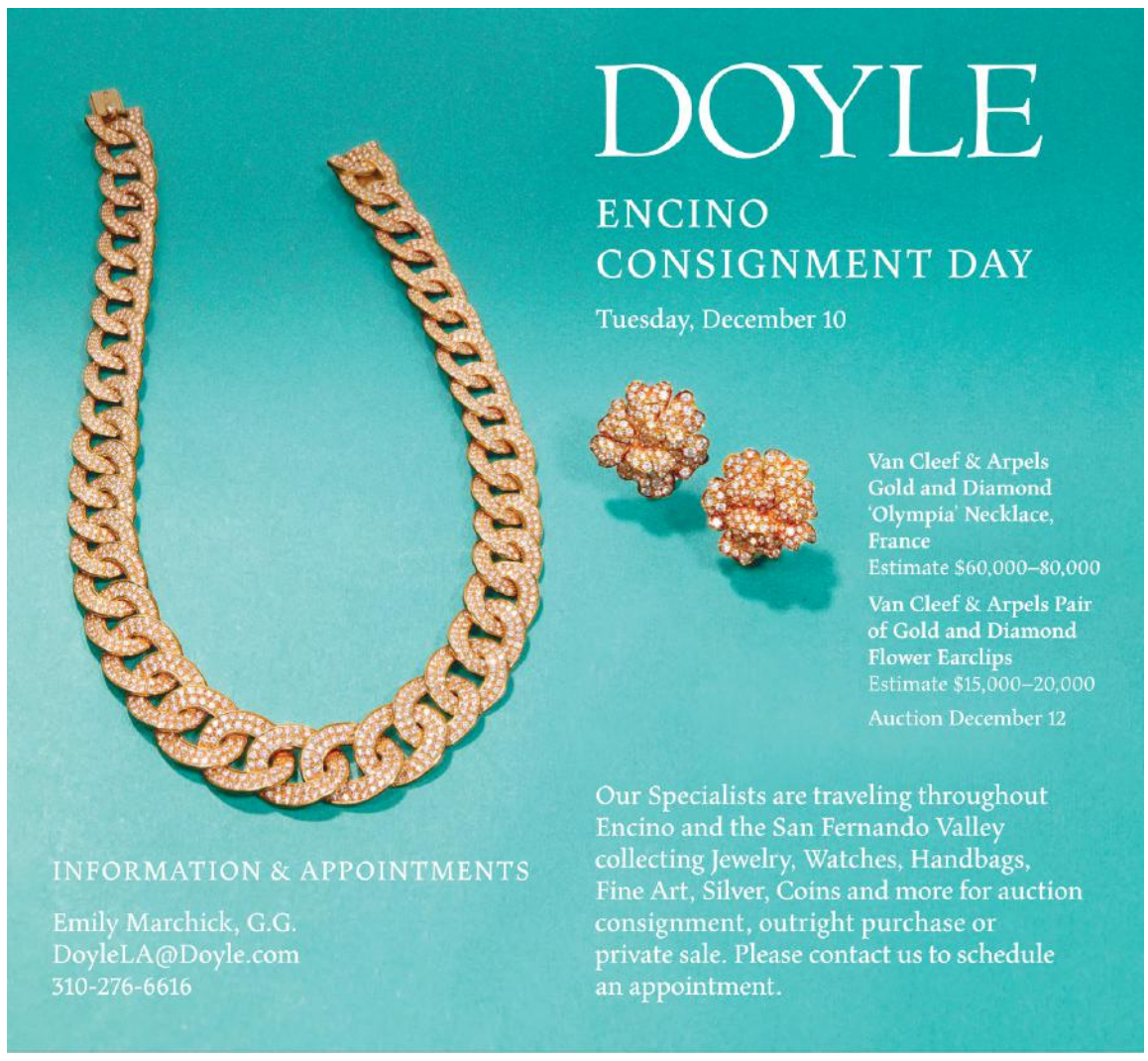
The sensational Who-inspired doo-wop singing quartet makes a grand return, bringing their legendary sounds and Who-liday cheer. Plus, a towering 65-foot-tall Grinchmas tree will stand whimsically at the heart of Who-ville, adorned with hundreds of vibrant ornaments and thousands of shimmering LED lights. This signature, topsy-turvy marvel will create a captivating focal point for the festivities as nightly tree-lighting ceremonies accompanied by a burst of cascading snow mark the evening.

Grinchmas activities will include photo opportunities with the Grinch™ and his faithful dog Max, story time with Cindy-Lou Who, who shares the story of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" with guests young and old, and a visit to the Who-ville post office to mail a joyous postcard sharing three good deeds. A selection of themed Who-tacular sweet treats and Grinchmas gear will also be available for purchase.

Hogsmeade™ village rings in "Christmas in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter," with jubilant décor and the Frog Choir's traditional holiday a cappella performances. A stroll through Hogsmeade wouldn't be complete without a cup of Butterbeer™ that guests can enjoy in a choice of hot, cold or frozen or the chance to indulge in seasonal holiday fare at Three Broomsticks.™

As twilight settles each evening, "The Magic of Christmas at Hogwarts™ Castle" will illuminate a mesmerizing light projection show that bathes Hogwarts™ School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in a spellbinding display of color and radiance. Accompanied by a captivating medley of music from the Harry Potter film series, this immersive experience will infuse the air with a symphony of festive sounds, creating a truly magical atmosphere.

The holiday celebrations extend to Universal CityWalk, as the iconic outdoor complex steps into the spirit and decks the halls with festive décor and a towering 40-foot-tall Christmas tree, adorned with over 200,000 sparkling LED lights. The excitement continues at 5 Towers with live bands, DJ performances and street performers bringing lively music to CityWalk on select nights, ensuring that the holiday spirit shines brightly throughout the season. Visit UniversalStudiosHollywood.com for more info and tickets.



ENTERTAINMENT

Soraya Announces "Jazz at Naz" Lineup

Lakecia Benjamin performs February 5 and 6 at The Soraya.

Long before the 2011 opening of The Soraya, CSUN Jazz Studies was a national standard bearer - winning awards and training the next generation of artists. Since opening its doors, The Soraya has furthered CSUN's profile with a nonstop procession of jazz greats performing in both The Soraya's Great Hall and its innovative Jazz Club.

Now, the annual Jazz at Naz festival has been recognized as one of the best winter jazz festivals on the West Coast as well as the jazz epicenter in LA. Jazz at Naz has showcased major debuts for emerging artists such as two-time Grammy winner Samara Joy and created a home for the world's jazz legends such as John Pizzarelli, Branford Marsalis, Dianne Reeves, Chucho Valdés, and Charles Lloyd, and turned the spotlight on influential crossover artists such as Bobby and Taylor McFerrin, Diana Krall, Jon Batiste, Gregory Porter, Herb Alpert and Lani Hall.

The Soraya's main stage with 1700 seats has become home to the Big Band sound with Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, Christian McBride, The Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra, Maria Schneider Orchestra, Vince Giordano & The Nighthawks, Buena Vista Social Club, and Delfeayo Marsalis' Uptown Orchestra.

Its pioneering Jazz Club, a unique and intimate setting for jazz performances complete with food and drink, is built on The Soraya's main stage and has featured a wide breadth of talent, including Terence Blanchard, Gerald Clayton, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Luciana Souza, Antonio Sánchez, Lisa Fischer, Booker T. Jones, and Vijay Iyer.

Since the inception of the festival, The Soraya's multi-camera live streaming expands availability for audiences around the world. The virtual streams feature behind-the-scenes content and backstage interviews with the artists, in addition to the concert.

The 2025 lineup kicks off Saturday, February 1, with Pacific Jazz Orchestra with Grammy Award-winning and two-time Tony nominated Broadway and West End star Eva Noblezada.

Alto Saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin and her quartert, Phoenix, perform at the Jazz Club on Wednesday, February 5 and Thursday, February 6.

Revered master of the upright bass Christian McBride and Ursa Major take the stage on Friday, February 7, and Saturday, February 8.

Jason Moran, pianist, will return for the fourth time and will play Duke Ellington with the CSUN Jazz "A" Band on Thursday, February 13.

Vocalist Kurt Elling will celebrate modern jazz act Weather Report with original band member and special guest Peter Erskine on Saturday, February 15. The double feature will also showcase L.A.'s own Yellowjackets.

Iraker brings to The Soraya two of its original band members, Chucho Valdés and Arturo Sandoval on Thursday, February 20.

All performances take place at 8 pm at The Soraya's Jazz Club, 18111 Nordhoff St., on the campus of CSUN. For tickets to Jazz at Naz visit thesoraya.org or

Cleaning Out For the New Year? Let Doyle Appraise Your Valuables

Organizing your life? Cleaning out for the New Year? Doyle Auctioneers and Appraisers is holding a special Encino Consigment Day on Tuesday, December 10.

Doyle is one of the world's foremost auctioneers and appraisers of fine art, jewelry, furniture, decorations, coins, Asian works of art and a variety of collectible items. With a team of seasoned professionals and a strong track record of successful sales, Doyle has built a reputation as a leading global destination for fine art collectors and sellers alike. Estate executors, fiduciary advisors, collectors and heirs trust them to provide fair market value appraisals and state-of-the-art auction services that adhere to guiding principles of integrity, expertise and service.

Their specialists are traveling throughout the San Fernando Valley collecting items for auction consignment, outright purchase or private sale.

Interested parties should contact Emily Marchick, G.G. for info and appointments at (310) 276-6616 or doylela@doyle.com. Visit doyle.com for more.

REAL ESTATE

Nighttrek: What to See in the December Sky

By Neil Simmons

The highlight of December is the planet Jupiter which will be at its brightest for the year. Jupiter rises after dark in the east. It is in the constellation Taurus the Bull. Make sure to look on Saturday the 7th, when it will be at its brightest. Jupiter is up all night long and sets in the west before the sun comes up. Binoculars will reveal Jupiter's four biggest moons - Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto.

Mark the 4th of December. This is when the beautiful, thin, crescent Moon will start to shine just after sunset in the west. The Moon will be joined by the planet Venus. Venus is bright and getting brighter with each night. Venus is the second planet from the Sun and is the hottest at 867 degrees F.

The ring planet Saturn is in the south each night of December. On Sunday night, December 8, the Moon will be in the same area as Saturn. Saturn is a gas giant. Its many bright rings are composed of mainly ice particles with a small amount of rocks and dust. Saturn has at least 146 moons but only 63 have official names. The Romans named the seventh day of the week, Saturday, for the planet Saturn.

Tuesday the 24th, Mercury is at its highest point in the west. Near this planet will be a bright red-orange star to help spot the little planet. Mercury is only slightly larger than Earth's Moon. Despite being the closest planet to the Sun, Mercury's surface temperature varies from -270 degrees as a low at night to 790 degrees during sunlight. Mercury has no moons.

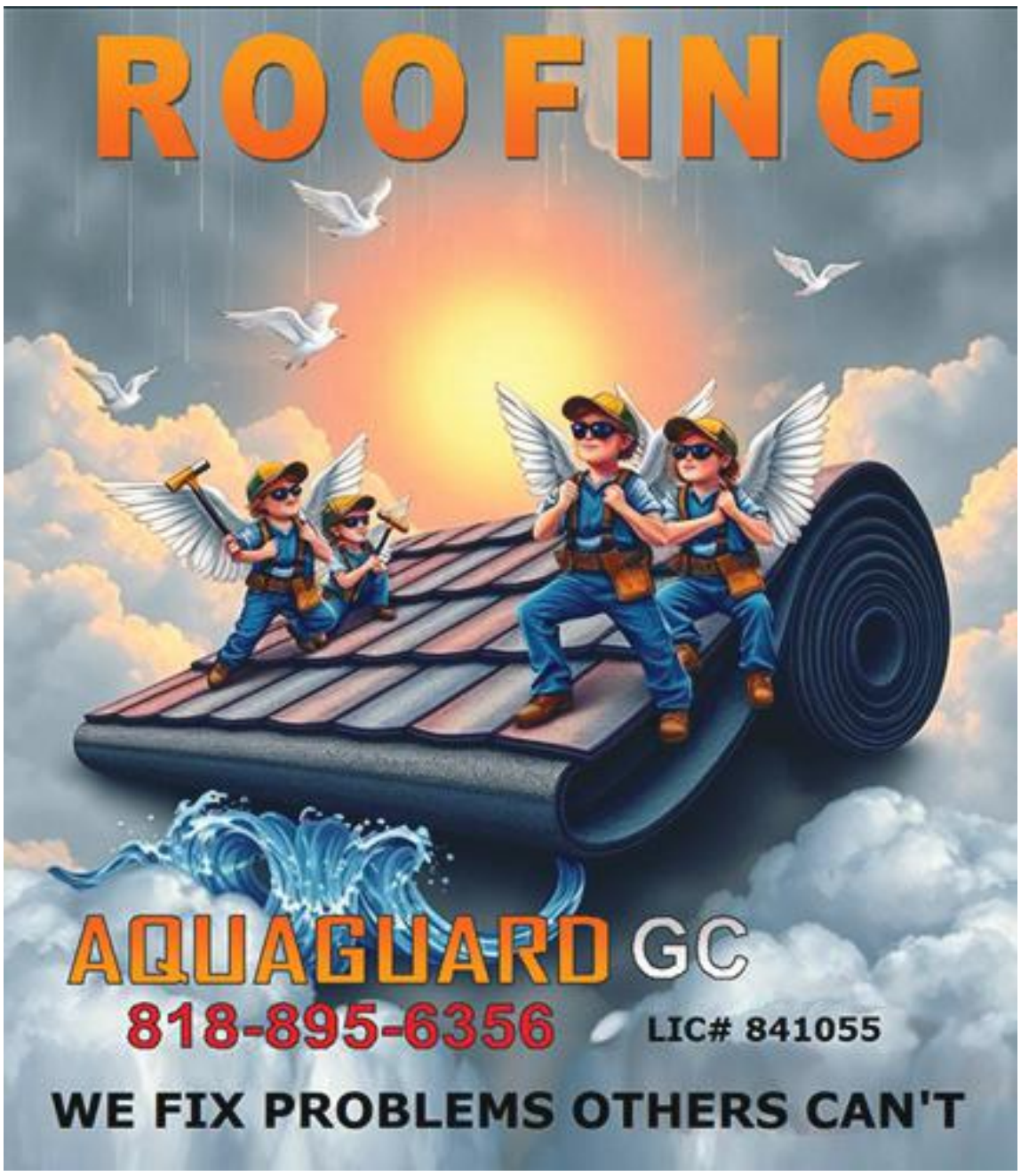
December brings back a very popular constellation, Orion the Hunter. When night falls, Orion is in the east laying on its side. Very quickly it rises to it upright position and becomes the mighty hunter. Many people are waiting to see the star that makes up the left shoulder which is named Betelgeuse. Betelgeuse is a stunning orange-red star that you can spot with the naked eye. There is a chance it could go supernova in our lifetime, but that's just a possibility, and the exact date is unknown.

This massive red giant star is 700 times the diameter of our Sun! Meanwhile, the belt of Orion is the three identical stars of the same brightness all in a line. Below the belt is a fuzzy patch we can see even from our city lights which is the sword. This patch is called M42 or the "Great Orion Nebula."

The Ursid meteor shower is an annual meteor shower that peaks on December 22 and 23. The Ursids are named for the constellation Ursa Minor, also known as the Little Dipper. Most of the meteors appear to come from this area. Make sure to bundle up since December 21 is the Winter Solstice which is the shortest and darkest day of the year.

Come to the FREE astronomy show about the Winter Night Sky on Thursday, December 19, at 6 pm. Many interesting topics will be covered including famous winter constellations, how to spot the planets, NASA updates and much more. This event will be held at the Woodland Hills Library at 22200 Ventura Blvd. Call 818-226-0017 for more info.

When not star-gazing, Neill Simmons is a Wealth Advisor with LPL Financial in Woodland Hills. 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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THE SORAYA

SAT DEC 7 3PM
SUN DEC 8 3PM

Nochebuena: A Christmas Spectacular

Featuring Ballet Folklórico de Los Ángeles with Special Guest Camila Fernández

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Dorrance Dance: *The Nutcracker Suite*

Duke Ellington & Billy Strayhorn, arrangement
Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky, composer

SAT DEC 14 3PM

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SUN DEC 15 2PM 7PM

Lea Salonga
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