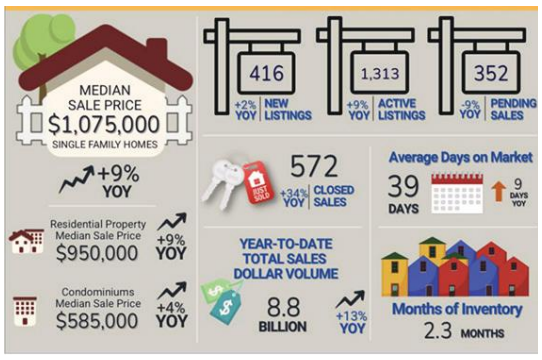
Councilman John Lee: No Toxic Waste at Sunshine Landfill

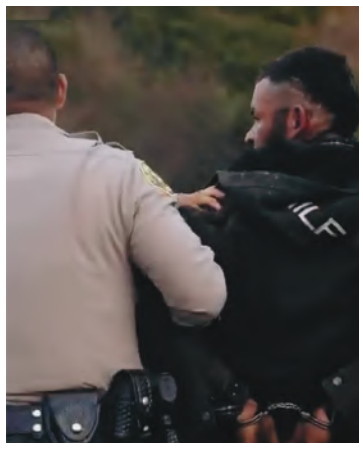
See page 4



2024 Home Prices Hit Record High

See page 10

Residents Tackle Arson Suspect in Woolsey Canyon



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North Valley News

Volume 3, Number 19 February 13, 2025

Serving Porter Ranch, Northridge, Granada Hills & Chatsworth

News in Brief

North Valley Residents Get Wildfire Relief Funds

In a united effort to support those affected by the recent wildfires, Shepherd Church in Porter Ranch, Los Angeles City Councilmember John Lee, and The Change Reaction have joined forces to provide direct financial relief to individuals and families in need. A total of 60 local residents, identified by Councilmember Lee, Shepherd Church, and other community leaders, received checks ranging from $1,000 to $5,000 through The Change Reaction's Wildfire Direct Giving Fund. This initiative, which was launched with a $10 million commitment to help wildfire victims, aims to assist those struggling to rebuild their lives after the devastating fires.

"The recent wildfires have left many of our neighbors facing unimaginable loss," said Greg Perlman, Founder of The Change Reaction. "We are committed to providing immediate, tangible relief to those in need, and this partnership demonstrates the strength of our community in coming together to support one another during such difficult times."

Councilmember John Lee shared similar sentiments, stating, "I hope these contributions offer comfort and reassurance to those facing some of the hardest days of their lives."

Pastor Dudley Rutherford and Shepherd Church were instrumental in making this relief event a reality. Pastor Dudley and his dedicated team have consistently opened the doors of Shepherd Church to provide support for wildfire victims, hosting numerous relief efforts in the aftermath of the fires. As a steadfast advocate for the community, Shepherd Church remains committed to finding ongoing ways to assist Angelenos as they rebuild and recover.

CSUN's Nazarian College Receives Dual Accreditation

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) has granted California State University Northridge's David Nazarian College of Business and Economics supplementary accreditation for its accounting program. The college is one of only six institutions in California and one of only 194 institutions worldwide to hold AACSB accreditation in both business and accounting. "This significant achievement affirms CSUN's commitment to providing a superior business education with high-quality teaching and impactful learning experiences that prepare our students to become leaders in business, industry and their communities," said CSUN President Erika D. Beck. The Nazarian College also received re-accreditation from the AACSB, both are valid until 2030.

After the Fires:

Steve Soboroff - Rebuilding L.A.

He's been named L.A.'s "Recovery Czar" and Steve Soboroff feels up to the challenge.

The L.A.-based businessman and developer was Chairman and CEO of Playa Vista, served on the Harbor Commission, Police Commission and more, He has both a public sector and private sector perspective on what it will take to put Los Angeles back together after the devastating wildfires.

Valley News Group asked Soboroff how much autonomy he had to make decisions about the clean up. He said he will work within the system of Los Angeles, saying "I can make calls. Can't authorize contracts. Don't need to." He said he was not taking any work away from any City employee.

His job is to oversee recovery efforts in the Palisades Fire, which now have moved into Phase II debris clean up.

"We've got to get that all out," he said. "We're removing six inches of dirt, putting mulch in and making lots ready for reconstruction." He recommended that property owners also remove their remaining slabs. "Foundations need to go because rebar has melted. The utility lines could also not withstand the 1,800-2,000 degrees, at which appliances, cast iron and even glass melted."

When asked about the controversial decisions about where to dispose the toxic substances, Soboroff said that landfill arrangements are all made by others - the EPA and Army Corps, and that sites are chosen for what they normally accept.

He urged homeowners not to do "self help." If you accept city help you're good. If you reject it you can't come back later and say you want the Army Corps of Engineers to step in.

Leading the recovery is Steve Soboroff, seen here with Mayor Karen Bass

Valley News Group asked Soboroff about why the Mayor and city and county officials kept claiming that clean up was "free" when in fact, the county bills your insurance company? He was adamant that the cost is free - unless you have insurance. A portion of that insurance goes to the lot clearance, and goes from the insurance company to the funding county, who then pays the Army Corps of Engineers.

Mayor Karen Bass is telling people to sign leases for 12 months. We asked Soboroff if that was realistic.

Mayor Karen Bass is telling people to sign leases for 12 months. We asked Soboroff if that was realistic, given the clean up and the fact that DWP has to now replace all infrastructure underground.

"I don't know the answer," he replied. "I would like to see it done in a year and three months. That doesn't mean there won't be power - we're stringing up power poles now."

When asked about the expedited permit process to rebuild, Soboroff said that he is bringing in a team of architects and outside inspectors to expedite the plan and permit process. Most developers agree that right now in Los Angeles you can't get a permit quickly. It takes months. Inspections are also on a backlog.

(Continued to page 11)

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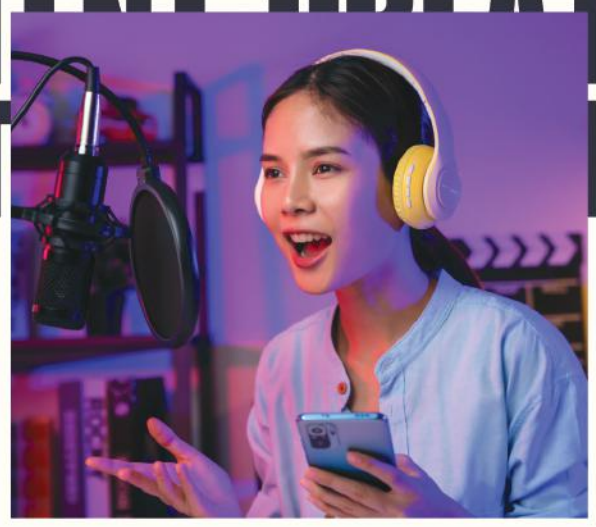

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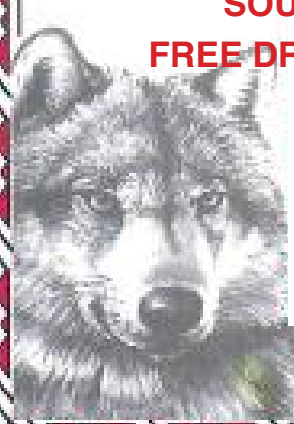

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Community Calendar

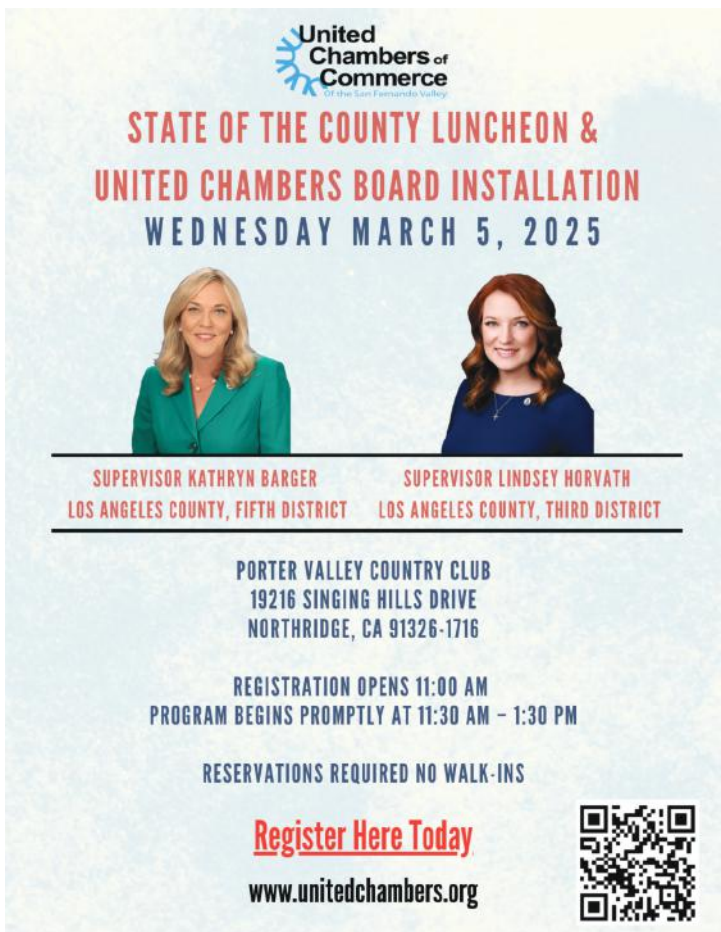
NORTHRIDGE: Tax season is here, and the California State University, Northridge's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is ready to assist low-income taxpayers. VITA offers free income tax assistance for those with an annual income of $67,000 or less, including non-English speakers. CSUN VITA, part of the David Nazarian College of Business and Economics, is operating on the CSUN campus Monday through Friday from 10 am to 6 pm and until 10 pm on Thursdays throughout the end of the tax preparation season of April 15. Those interested should call (818) 677-3600.

CHATSWORTH: The Chatsworth Branch Library will host an adult crafting session on Wednesday, February 19, at 11 am. Learn how to fold a book into a lovely heart. Participants will get their own book, from the abundant supplies of books at the library, and learn the basics of book folding. The library is located at 21052 Devonshire.

GRANADA HILLS: Join the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society for a free mid-week bird watching walk in beautiful O'Melveny Park on Tuesday, February 18, at 9 am. Meet in the parking lot. Bring binoculars if you have them, water and appropriate shoes. For more information, call Carolyn Oppenheimer at (818) 885-7493 or email carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org. O'Melveny Park is located at 17300 Sesnon Blvd.

NORTHRIDGE: The Oakridge Estate at 18650 Devonshire Blvd. in Northridge has two tours planned on Saturday, February 22, at 10 am and Sunday, March 9, at 10 am. Docents will lead the 75 minute tour of the home that was built for Barbara Stanwyck by architect Paul R. Williams in 1937. She bought the land with her agent Zeppo Marx and they both built homes there and started a horse ranch called Marwyck which was a combination of their two names. After she married Robert Taylor she sold the house in 1941 to Jack Oakie who renamed it Oakridge. There is a rich history to learn about this historical landmark. Comfortable walking shoes are required. Advanced registration is required attheoakridgeestate.org. dmission is $15 per person. Please arrive 10 minutes prior to check-in.

GRANADA HILLS: LAPD Operations-Valley Bureau will hold a ommunity Police Academy from February 27 to April 10, every hursday from 6 to 8 pm. Get an up-close look at the LAPD and various cets of law enforcement. Students will be able to learn More about police perations such as special weapons and tactics, homicide investigations, uman trafficking, hate crime and gang awareness. The academy is for ose 18 years and older with no criminal convictions, pending arrest arrants or pending criminal cases. It will be held at LAPD Edward .Davis Training Facility, 12001 Blucher Avenue. For more information nail ovcbomm@lapd.online.



People in the News

Ruthy Bickel Roth, above left, was recently recognized by the Los Angeles Police Department, Topanga Community Station, and given an award for her many years of service as a community member volunteer. Roth was recognized for her generosity, dedication and willingness to help the community, and for helping make CPAB (Community Police Advisory Board) a successful integration between the Police Department and the community. She has been an invaluable asset to the Los Angeles Police Department and has provided over 27 years of service as a community volunteer. Rotha board member of CPAB (Community Police Advisory Board), oversees recruiting new community members, and coordinates guest speakers to come speak at the monthly CPAB meetings. Roth is shown with **LAPD Topanga Station Captain Rudy Lopez**.

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VIEWPOINT

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.

• What's the difference between a cobbler and a shoemaker? Ans> Their soles!

• A woman tells her hairdresser she's going to Italy. "Too far," he sneers. She says they're staying in Rome. "Too dirty," he mouthed. They're going to the Vatican to see the Pope. "Too conservative," the hairdresser said. Well, she went on her trip and got her hair touched up on her return. "The trip was fabulous," she told the hairdresser. "The flight wasn't too long, Rome was clean and glorious, and the Vatican was stupendous." "And what did the Pope have to say," asked the hairdresser. "Who the hell gave you such a bad haircut?" replied the woman.

• The women love this, but why? Three men found a bottle with a genie and were each granted one wish. The first man said, "Double my intelligence," so the genie did. The second man said "Triple my intelligence," and it was done. The third man said, "Well, quadruple mine!" And the genie said, "I don't think you'll be happy but here goes." So he quadrupled his intelligence and turned him into a woman!

• Carry this thought for a happier life. "Time is all you have and the idea isn't to save it - but savor it!"

• Know what a raisin is? Ans> A grape with a sunburn!

• In these tough times we like this new definition of inflation: Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

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Congressman Brad Sherman Defends FEMA

Since the start of the disastrous Palisades wildfire, thousands of FEMA employees have been working 12-hour days, seven days a week, helping my constituents all while facing threats of dismantlement by President Trump and a full-scale assault by Elon Musk making the U.S. less – not more – ready to respond to the next historic emergency.

FEMA has more than 5,000 permanent full-time staff and thousands of additional reservists and temporary employees. Incident management teams supplement and provide technical support to local authorities' disaster response efforts.

Smaller states need FEMA's technical assistance and immediate emergency response resources even more than California does. Embedding FEMA experts into the local government's emergency response command, FEMA can deploy response teams to disaster areas quickly – which states simply do not have the capacity to do on their own.

Not even a huge state like California can obtain the quantity of people with the quality of expertise on the payroll waiting for the next disaster. And, most of our states are much smaller.

(Continued to page 10)

Councilman John Lee: No Toxic Waste at Sunshine Canyon

As your Councilmember, my top priority is protecting the health and well-being of Los Angeles, especially, the residents living in Council District 12. The devastating fires earlier this year disrupted countless lives across Southern California, and now our city and the surrounding region are facing a long road to recovery. A lot of concern has been expressed regarding the role that the Sunshine Canyon Landfill may play in the cleanup that has begun taking shape in recent weeks.

To ensure the safety of residents who live near Sunshine Canyon, I have introduced a motion that: Directs the Bureau of Sanitation, in coordination with county and federal agencies involved in the cleanup, to submit a detailed report on how fire debris is handled during the cleanup process and requires the Bureau of Sanitation to report on a comprehensive testing plan that ensures testing of debris before it reaches the landfill, if deemed necessary, and allocates funding toward executing this testing effort. This cleanup is essential, but it is vital that we uphold the highest environmental and public health standards to protect Angelenos while balancing a swift recovery.

As the Councilmember, and a resident of this district, I share every concern you have. The health and well-being of the Council District 12 community remains my top priority, and I have made it clear to Republic Services that I am fully aligned with the calls from my community to ensure that hazardous debris does not make its way to the landfill.

Become a Member of Your Local Neighborhood Council

Are you frustrated?

Are you tired of how things are in our community?

Are you concerned with the homeless population on our streets, unsafe intersections for both pedestrians and vehicles, the construction of our only pool, our children's education, the welfare of our seniors, more cultural events, our environment including wasted water use and recycling, ugly cell towers, the construction of a Home Depot in a residential area? Along with much more.

If I am echoing some of your concerns you are in luck.

Well, I was in your shoes a few years ago when I decided to stop talking about it and actually do something about it. Please consider joining the Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council where many of your concerns. and more are addressed as part of the 10 committees that the council has.

Our council's role is to work with stakeholders (you the people) to increase our influence with city lawmakers and government departments to improve our community.

So, if you truly want to make a difference, I would encourage you to come and join us on a truly rewarding adventure.

We have a few seats still up for grabs so please call to apply.

Best wishes,
Michael Benedetto
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Amplifying the Valley: How Hector Perez-Roman is Giving the SFV a Voice Through Valley Views

By Danrochelle D. Yumul

Hector Perez-Roman started Valley Views SFV with a clear mission in mind: to uplift stories of brilliant people, organizations, businesses, and social movements that have a positive impact on the San Fernando Valley and beyond.

Hector Perez-Roman

As the host and executive producer of Valley Views on KROJ 101.5 FM, Perez-Roman has become a prominent voice in the community, highlighting the often-overlooked narratives that make the Valley vibrant.

His foray into broadcasting was driven by a desire to create a platform to celebrate the positive aspects of the San Fernando Valley. He recognized that mainstream media often focused on negative stories, leaving a void when it comes to showcasing the region's culture and the individuals contributing to its growth. This realization led to the creation of Valley Views in December 2019. The show is dedicated to bridging communities through deep and engaging discussions at the intersection of politics, economics, culture, art, and music.

"When I started with this vision, it was all about creating a space on the radio waves to highlight individuals of the San Fernando Valley and/or folks that have a positive connection to the Valley. It has been my goal to continue to grow the platform and have featured guests tell their story through an organic, thoughtful, and genuine format," shared Perez-Roman in a previous interview.

In the past six years, Valley Views has become more than just a radio show. It's grown into a catalyst for community networking, connecting influencers, entrepreneurs, community organizers, professionals, and organizations. To date, Valley Views has featured over 460 guests across 174 episodes, showcasing individuals and groups making significant contributions to the community. The show airs on Thursdays at 7 pm and Sundays at 10 am. Under Perez-Roman's leadership, the platform's expansion includes a monthly newsletter, community hikes, and participation in local events, all to foster connections and partnerships within the community.

Perez-Roman's commitment to the community is evident in the diverse range of guests featured on Valley Views. From local entrepreneurs to social activists, each episode delves into the stories of individuals making a difference in the San Fernando Valley. This approach highlights their contributions and inspires listeners to engage and contribute to their communities.

Looking ahead, Perez-Roman envisions Valley Views continuing to grow as a multifaceted media platform. Plans include expanding content offerings, increasing community engagement initiatives, and exploring new ways to highlight the stories that define the San Fernando Valley. What was originally a one-man show grew into a team committed to its original mission.

Through his unwavering dedication, Hector Perez-Roman and his team are not just reporting on the community; they are actively shaping its narrative, ensuring that the positive aspects of the Valley receive the recognition they deserve.

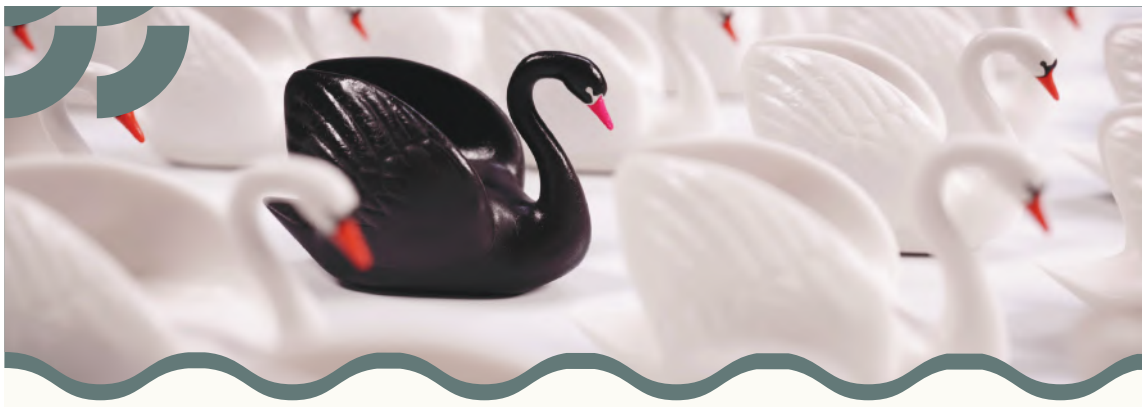
Danrochelle D. Yumul is a Communications Specialist with Cowe Communications. Follow them on all social @CoweOfficial or visit cowe.com.

Financial Aid for Businesses and Workers Hurt by Fires

To aid in the financial recovery of small businesses and displaced workers affected by the wildfires, the City of LA, in collaboration with LA County DEO, have launched the LA Region Small Business and Worker Relief Funds. Through these funds, eligible small businesses and nonprofits can receive up to $25K in grants. Eligible displaced workers can obtain $2K in cash assistance.

Impacted small business owners and workers residing in the City of LA can receive application assistance through the WorkSource and BusinessSource Centers.

For more information visit lacounty.gov/relief.



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Dept. of Homeland Security Sets May 7 as Deadline for Real ID

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has set May 7, 2025 as the deadline to acquire a Rea; ID.

While the deadline was pushed multiple times over the past few years, thanks to events like COVID, the government is now urging all individuals to switch over as soon as possible. Starting May 7, travelers will need either a Read ID or a passport to get through airport security as driver's licenses will no longer be accepted as a proper form of ID.

To acquire a Real ID, you will need to provide the DMV with your full legal name, date of birth, social security number, two proofs of address of principal residence and lawful status.

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VALLEY ENTERTAINMENT

The Wild Robot is a Delightful Adventure for All

By Katie Sterling

With the recent rainy weather, sometimes it's nice to do absolutely nothing but stay inside. While this can sometimes lead to restlessness, there's the perfect movie to pop on to appease family members of all ages. Based on the YA science fiction novels of Peter Brown, *The Wild Robot* will have you laughing, crying and enchanted by the heartwarming tale of what it means to truly live.

The story follows Roz (voiced by Lupita Nyong'o), a personal assistant robot who has found herself stranded on a remote island after a shipwreck. Programmed to fix any problem or complete any task, Roz is thrown for quite a loop when she realizes her new environment is not her intended destination. The woodland creatures see her as a threat given her demeanor and her vastly different manners of survival. After all, as a highly intelligent computer, Roz may have extreme book smarts, but lacks (woodland) street smarts.

In an attempt to find her intended master and complete any sort of mission before she can return home, Roz encounters a roster of quirky creatures. There's a wily fox named Fink (Pedro Pascal), a beaver named Paddler (Matt Berry) and an opossum named Pinktail (Catherine O'Hara), whose children are obsessed with death and frankly, the best characters in the whole film. They don't quite understand Roz, but are willing to help her when a gosling imprints on the robot as his mom. Brightbill (Kit Connor) is a runt and wouldn't have a true chance of survival given the unforgiving world of nature. But, most goslings don't have a fully-equipped robot as their mother with the tools to increase their survival odds.

As the film progresses, Roz must reckon with the notion that as a goose, Brightbill must fly south for the winter. The two have grown as a little family despite their obvious differences, but it's at this stage of life that Roz realizes she isn't quite equipped to handle this problem. While she may have a wealth of knowledge, none of it can compete with life experience. Roz recruits the help of a sage goose named Longneck (Bill Nighy) who is planning on leading his own pack south come winter. It's the first true instance where Roz must grapple with the mechanics of feelings instead of programming. After all, this gosling must literally fly the coop, and Roz must come to terms that this mission was actually one of love.

It's a poignant story of connection that weaves together the themes of love, loss and survival. While many children's stories steer away from loss, *The Wild Robot* tackles the theme of death quite openly and honestly. From the nature in which Brightbill is brought into the world to the likelihood of Roz being decommissioned, death is at the forefront of each storyline.

Although heavy, the filmmakers present the tale in such a beautiful way, in large part thanks to the captivating animation. Each character is so carefully thought out, with their own emotional depth and story to tell. From every high to every low, the details of the film so accurately portray the emotions each character feels without relying too heavily on dialogue.

The Wild Robot is clear in its messaging that love knows no boundaries despite the differences you may have with others. Coexistence is possible if one can simply lead with grace and understanding. It's a film that stresses the importance of wanting connection in life and while the path to get there might be a wild adventure, the destination is always worth it.

The Wild Robot is streaming on Peacock.

The Reel History of the Valley

By Martin M. Cooper

The G.O.A.T. of All Stuntmen

It doesn't happen frequently, but on rare occasions, someone is universally acknowledged to be the best in his or her field. Today, the often-used expression is that someone is a G.O.A.T. – The Greatest of All Time. When it comes to movie stunt men, Yakima Canutt stands well above the rest of the herd.

Canutt was an actor, stunt man, screenwriter, stunt coordinator, and second-unit director. He was involved as one or more of these in more than 400 films.

Canutt was born in 1895 and became a working cowboy. He was named the All-Around Champion Cowboy in 1917, 1919, 1920, and 1923.

His first film was the 1915 Tom Mix-directed, *Foreman of Bar Z Ranch*. His final credit was *John Wayne: Cold Vengeance* (1935).

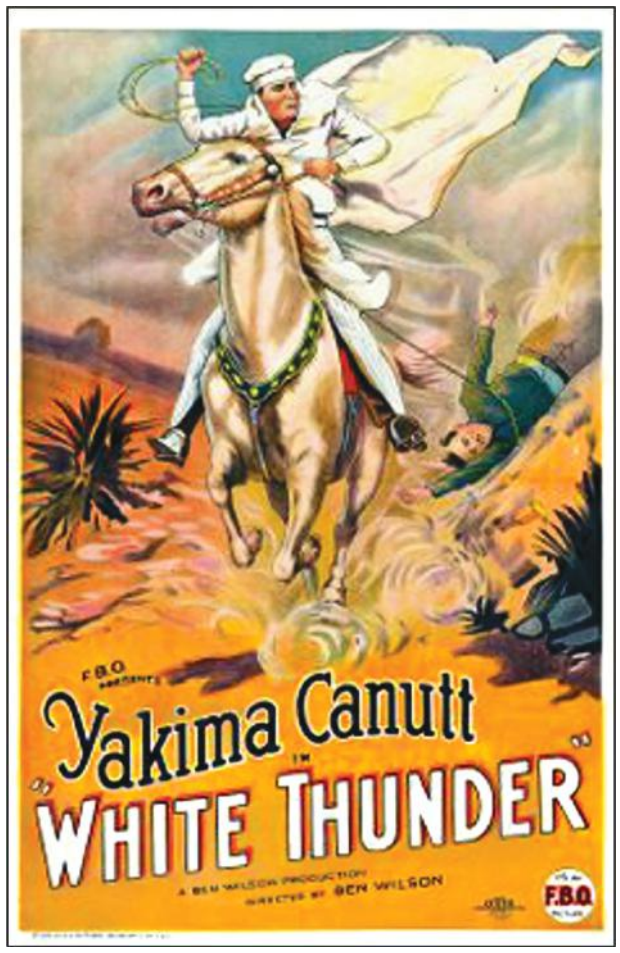
When talkies came in at the end of the 1920s, Canutt looked to continue what had been a mediocre silent film career. In his autobiography, *Stunt Man, The Autobiography of Yakima Canutt*, he explained why he moved from acting to focus on his stunt career:

"By 1928 all the pictures were talkies. I realized that I was in trouble. I had had the flu in 1918, while in the Navy, and my vocal chords were permanently damaged. My voice lacked resonance, a quality needed for good recording. When I heard it for the first time on a sound track, I thought they were kidding me."

He was the stunt man stand-in for Clark Gable in 1939's *Gone with the Wind* and also in *Boom Town* (1940); backed up John Wayne in more than 30 movies; and performed on-screen stunts for Errol Flynn, Tyrone Power, Henry Fonda, Randolph Scott, Roy Rogers, and scores more.

Canutt performed two of the most famous stunts of all time in 1939's John Ford-directed *Stagecoach*. In the first, he portrays one of the Indian warriors attacking the stagecoach; he leaps aboard one of the galloping horses, is shot, and falls underneath the traces to the earth. In the second, he doubles for John Wayne. As the six-horse stagecoach is racing to escape the Indians, Canutt leaps from the wagon to the back of a speeding horse and then jumps from horse to horse to the lead steed to bring it to a stop; cut to close-up of John Wayne.

That scene was filmed 86 years ago and is as exciting today as it was then. To miss it on YouTube is to miss an exhilarating piece of filmmaking as there is. See it at youtube.com/watch?v=5__GP5BBm6I.



Exactly 100 years ago, in 1925, FBO Pictures released one of the few films starring Yakima Canutt. Like many films before and after White Thunder, such as the Mark of Zorro (1920) and The Scarlet Pimpernel (1934), a costumed fop turns out to be our brave hero.

1939's Stagecoach features two of the most famous stunts in all movie history. In one of them, a band of Indians is pursuing the stagecoach and Yakima Canutt leaps from the stagecoach onto the back of one horse to another to bring them to a halt.

Less known but perhaps even more exciting is a scene at the end of *The Trail Beyond* (1934). Canutt, again doubling John Wayne, is galloping after a buckboard driven by the bad guy. Canutt misses the horse-to-wagon leap, falls onto the trail; remounts; renews the chase; and this time successfully makes the jump onto the speeding buckboard (youtube.com/watch?v=2L5rjogXy-w&t=2760s).

In the 1940s, a combination of injuries and age caused Canutt to reduce stunt work and focus on stunt coordination and second-unit directing. Throughout that decade, he was the director or co-director on about 20 Republic Studios westerns and serials.

During the 1950s and '60s, he was a second unit director and stunt coordinator for, among others, *Ivanhoe* (1952), *Knights of the Round Table* (1953), *Spartacus* (1960), *Cat Ballou* (1965), and *Where Eagles Dare* (1968).

He was the stunt coordinator for *Ben-Hur* (1959) starring Charlton Heston, with the famous chariot scene that Canutt staged.

So it was appropriate that Heston present Canutt with his Oscar at the 1967 Academy Awards, saying: "Before movies could even talk, he had already performed some incredible stunts that have since become legendary. And by the time he'd made his reputation as the greatest stunt man of all time, he devised special safety devices and stunt techniques that are still used by the men who make up the profession to which he gave so much…When he stopped doing stunts himself he became what the film world acknowledges as the most talented director of action sequences ever to put motion on the screen."

Canutt lived for many years at 11808 Riverside Drive in North Hollywood. He died at the age of 90 on May 24, 1986, at the North Hollywood Medical Center; his ashes are scattered in the Garden of Remembrance at the Valhalla Memorial Park Cemetery in North Hollywood.

Yakima Canutt's obituary in the *Los Angeles Times* quoted Charlton Heston: "When it comes to movie stunts, no one stands above Yakima Canutt."

But don't just read about Yakima Canutt, do yourself a favor and enjoy viewing his heart-stopping stunts. You'll be watching the greatest of all time.

Martin Cooper, President of Cooper Communications, supervised public relations for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences for 10 years; held executive positions with Disney and Universal Studios; and served as Chairman of the Board of the UCLA Film & Television Archive. He is a Fernando Award Honoree and Past Chairman of VICA.

An award-winning author, he has written four books, two of them on the San Fernando Valley. He is currently researching his next book, the history of motion pictures in the Valley.

Rough Riding Stranger was a 1935 Western with Yakima Canutt in a supporting role, filmed in Calabasas. It was produced by Weiss Brothers Artclass Pictures Corp., a small production company that made more than 200 films in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Volunteer For the L.A. Homeless Count

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority has announced the 2025 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count will take place February 18 - 20. The Annual Homeless Count is a countywide event that brings thousands of Angelenos together to count persons experiencing homelessness as required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). If you are interested in volunteering, visit count.lahsa.org/pages/volunteer-registration.

Vitamin Vitality: Small Steps to Boost Your Immunity

By Allie Priore

There is no doubt that fatigue has set in for many of us following the last few weeks, but I wanted to take a moment to remind you of simple ways you can boost your immune system and keep yourselves as healthy as possible. Below are a few of my favorite products that are great to take on a daily basis:

1. Multivitamin – Make sure you are taking a quality multivitamin – check the ingredients to make sure there are no random ingredients thrown in (such as artificial coloring, xanthan gum, lead and mercury to name a few). A lot of companies use fillers in their products and casings, so I always steer myself toward organic vitamins to avoid any sneaky, harmful toxins. Make sure it includes vitamin C and zinc, two properties crucial in building up immune support.

2. Probiotic & Prebiotic – These will help your gut health. You want to ensure you have a healthy gut to properly process and clean out your internal system. Too often we overlook our gut health, and it is so important to make sure it is getting the proper bacteria that our bodies need, while ridding it of the toxic bacteria. A prebiotic will help the probiotic absorb better into your body, but you do not need to take one every day. You can absolutely do so but if you have a queasy stomach when taking pills, try taking it once a week to start and then increase to three times if you can! If you have to choose one over the other go with a probiotic.

3. Mushroom Capsules – I love taking a mushroom supplement. Do not fret if you do not like the taste of mushrooms because these do not taste like them. Mushrooms are one of the best foods you can consume for immune support. It aids in inflammation of the body, hypertension, can calm nerves and serves as a great anti-aging property! Adding this into your daily regimen will increase your immune system and help to strengthen it.

4. Elderberry – Taken in a syrup form, it is not the best tasting supplement, but it will do wonders for your immune system. It helps fight specifically against cold and flu symptoms (we love that!), protects your heart and can aid in stress relief. Incorporate it a few times a week for that extra immunity boost. Try to avoid a syrup that is high in sugar if you can. If you have trouble finding low sugar syrup, I would advise to take the elderberry every other day.

Adding the above supplements into your daily routine will ensure you are getting the proper vitamins and nutrients your body needs to help fight against infection and viruses. Given that it is still cold and flu season, we can't control much in this situation, but we can take better control of our health as best we can.

This year has already been a wild ride, but keep your head up. As well as feeding your physical body, make sure to take time to take care of your mental health as well. Take a moment of quiet when you can, breathe deeply and focus inward. And always, drink your water!

Until next time – stay safe and stay healthy!

Allie Priore is a certified Pilates Instructor and teacher of mindful movement. She teaches at various studios and now offers both private sessions and classes on the virtual sphere. For inquiries about sessions, email her at alessandra.c.priore@gmail.com.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Flossing and Brain Health

It may seem like an odd connection, but flossing is an important tool for optimal brain health. Studies have found that those who floss even as little as once per week, can reduce their risk of stroke.

The mouth is filled with bacteria that can settle into the crevices and gums. When an individual flosses, they prevent that buildup of bacteria that can possibly make its way into the bloodstream. When it does, it causes inflammation in the blood vessels that can trigger clots. This chronic inflammation can then lead to strokes, poor cardiovascular health and heart attacks.

Researchers set out to examine the relationship between oral hygiene habits and cardiovascular and brain health. Those that participated in the study reported their oral hygiene habits (brushing, flossing, etc.) alongside their blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, smoking habits, body mass and frequency of dentist visits. After 25 years of study, researchers found that those who flossed had a 12% reduced risk of atrial fibrillation, which disrupts normal blood flow

in the body.

Additionally, the study linked a 44% lower chance of ischemic stroke (when a blood clot prevents blood flow to the brain) and cardioembolic stroke (when the clot originates in the heart.)

Those who floss, even as little as once per week, can reduce their risk of stroke.

While the study has not been peer-reviewed, and is thus prone to inaccuracies, it does touch on important health points.

Flossing is a key tool for ideal dental health according to the American Academy of Periodontology and traditional flossing is just as effective as water flossing. Research shows that it's better to floss before brushing, and use a fluoride toothpaste for best results.

In addition to at-home dental care, ensure you have regular dental updates for deep cleans and professional checkups to catch any potential dental issues early on.

February is American Heart Month

February is Heart Month and a great time to refocus your energy on easy ways to improve your heart health. When your heart is healthy, you feel healthy. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, especially for women, with one in every five deaths attributed to the disease.

"Heart health manage-ment can be as simple as paying attention to what you eat and your daily activities, which both can make a big difference in how good you feel," states Sam Kalioundji, MD, Cardiologist, Dignity Health – Northridge Hospital Medical Center. "Your heart can benefit from just 10 minutes of physical activity each day – a brisk walk, a bike ride, or even taking the stairs instead of waiting for the elevator."

The American Heart Association provides helpful tips for eating healthy, including preparing your own meals at home so you can control the ingredients, such as salt intake, which can lead to hypertension. Be sure to add more fruits and vegetables to your diet by using them as snacks throughout the day.

Remember to maintain regular fitness activities. Check your local parks and recreation areas to ensure available open space for walks, trail hikes, yoga, or other outdoor activities – stay active, stay safe. In addition to eating healthy and staying active, know your numbers – blood pressure is the measure of your heart health.

Be as consistent as possible with regular health checkups because the best course of action is prevention. The ABC's of heart health include: aspirin if directed by your healthcare provider to take, blood pressure control, cholesterol control and avoiding smoking.

Talk to your healthcare provider to find the best tips and actions to keep your own heart healthy and happy!

For more info on heart health visit heart.org.

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At Fairwinds – West Hills, we are saddened by the unimaginable devastation caused by the recent fires that so many, especially our senior community, are facing. That's why, in an effort to ease the burden during this challenging time, **we are offering reduced rates and waiving residency fees for 90 days to support seniors who have been displaced by the recent LA fires.**

Learn more about our California Assistance Program at leisurecare.com/california-assistance or by contacting us at FairwindsWestHills.com.

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Brad Sherman Defends FEMA

(Continued from page 4)

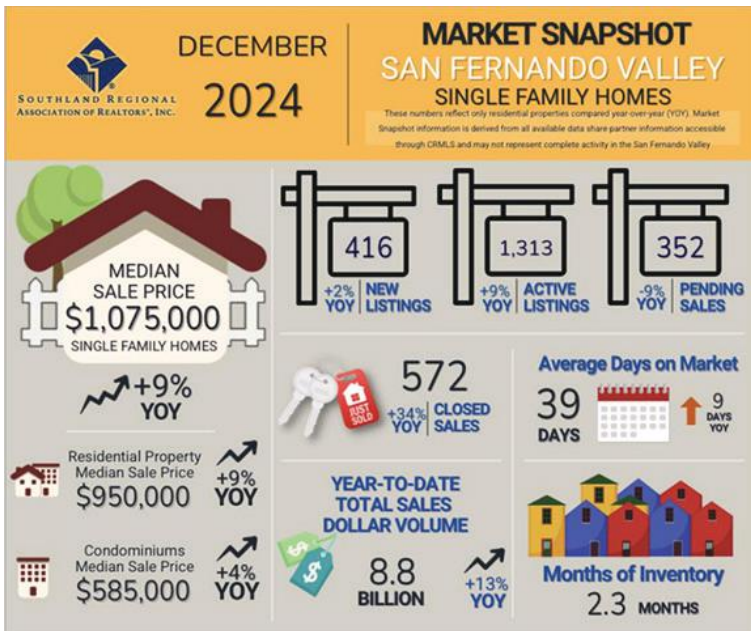
Should Rhode Island maintain an enormous staff on their payroll year in and year out? Should every state have 28 search and rescue teams waiting in case there's a North Carolina level disaster?

During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, one of the costliest disasters in U.S. history, FEMA sent millions of meals, cots, blankets, and bottles of water to northeastern states ahead of the storm.

The Los Angeles Fires are estimated to cost upwards of $275 billion in property damage and lost economic activity, making it the second costliest disaster in U.S. history – second to only Hurricane Katrina, which cost $320 billion after adjusting for inflation according to AccuWeather.

At the Palisades Fire Roundtable in January, President Trump claimed that FEMA was very well-run during his first term. Americans affected by disasters across the country – in red states and blue states – are counting on the President to make sure FEMA is well-run during his second term.

It's true that FEMA is a large federal bureaucracy and could be made more efficient. Trump's Executive Order establishing a commission to review federal disaster response may lead to improvements. The President's job is to ensure that the agencies that make up the executive branch are managed effectively, rather than give up and abolish them.



Valley Home Prices Hit Record Highs in 2024

The number of single-family home and condominium sales assisted by Realtors increased during 2024 after two consecutive years of annual drops, while the annual price of both categories of housing rose to record highs, the Southland Regional Association of Realtors reported today.

Realtors assisted the close of escrow for 6,257 single-family homes, up 6.4% from the prior year. Condominiums that changed owners totaled 1,722, up 8.5%.

Those 2024 transactions generated $9.97 billion for owners, plus billions more for the local economy in complementary services ranging from landscaping and home repairs to furniture and remodeling projects. The total was up 13% over 2023.

"The hallmarks of 2024 probably come down to the return of somewhat more affordable interest rates on home loans and an increase in the number of properties listed for sale," said Anthony Bedgood, the 2025 President of the 11,000-member Southland Regional Association of Realtors.

"Even with an increase in listings," he said, "there still were not nearly enough homes up for sale to satisfy demand. Competition for available inventory almost certainly will increase in 2025 given the thousands of homes destroyed or damaged in January's devastating brushfires — competition that will add even more upward pressure on housing prices."

The annual average number of active listings per month for homes increased 15.3% over 2023 to 1,480 per month — up from the prior year, but well below 2019 and 2020 as the COVID pandemic was raging.

Condominium annual active listings also rose during 2024, jumping 43.2% to 431 average listings per month, which was the best tally since 2020.

"Resale prices continued to climb throughout 2024," said Valerie Biletsky, SRAR's Chief Executive Officer, "Every uptick means the pool of prospective qualified buyers eager to own a home keeps shrinking, further exacerbating what already was an ongoing crisis in housing availability and affordability."

The annual price of the 6,257 single-family homes sold in 2024 came in at $1.065 million — up 7.7% from the prior year and the first time the annual price has shattered the $1 million ceiling.

Similarly, the condominium annual average rose 5.1% to a record $614,583. Home and condo annual prices had been on an uninterrupted upward streak starting in 2011 until posting less than 1% declines in 2023.

The 572 homes that closed escrow during December had a median price - meaning half were higher and half lower - of $1.075 million, which was up 9% from the median reported in the prior December. 2024 was the first time on record that every month saw a median home price above $1 million, with March posting an unprecedented $1.14 million median.

The price of the 137 condominiums that changed owners in December was up 5.1% to 585,000.

SRAR's Income-to-Loan guide for December found that an income of $271,559 was needed to qualify for an 80% loan of $860,000 on a San Fernando Valley median-priced single-family home of $1.075 million.

With lower interest rates than a year ago, the income needed to qualify was up 5.9%. The monthly PITI - principal, interest, taxes and insurance payments - would come to $6,789.

Pending escrows - an indicator of future sales - were down 9% for homes and off 1% for condominiums compared to the prior December.

Chartered by the National Association of Realtors in 1920, the Southland Regional Association of Realtors is the voice for real estate in San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys.

REAL ESTATE

Once Again, Residents Chase and Tackle Arson Suspect

A small brush fire was reported Monda February 3, around 4:30 pm in Chatsworth near Woolsey Canyon. Residents then noticed a man with a lighter attempting to start another fire at the entrance to Woolsey Canyon View Estates.

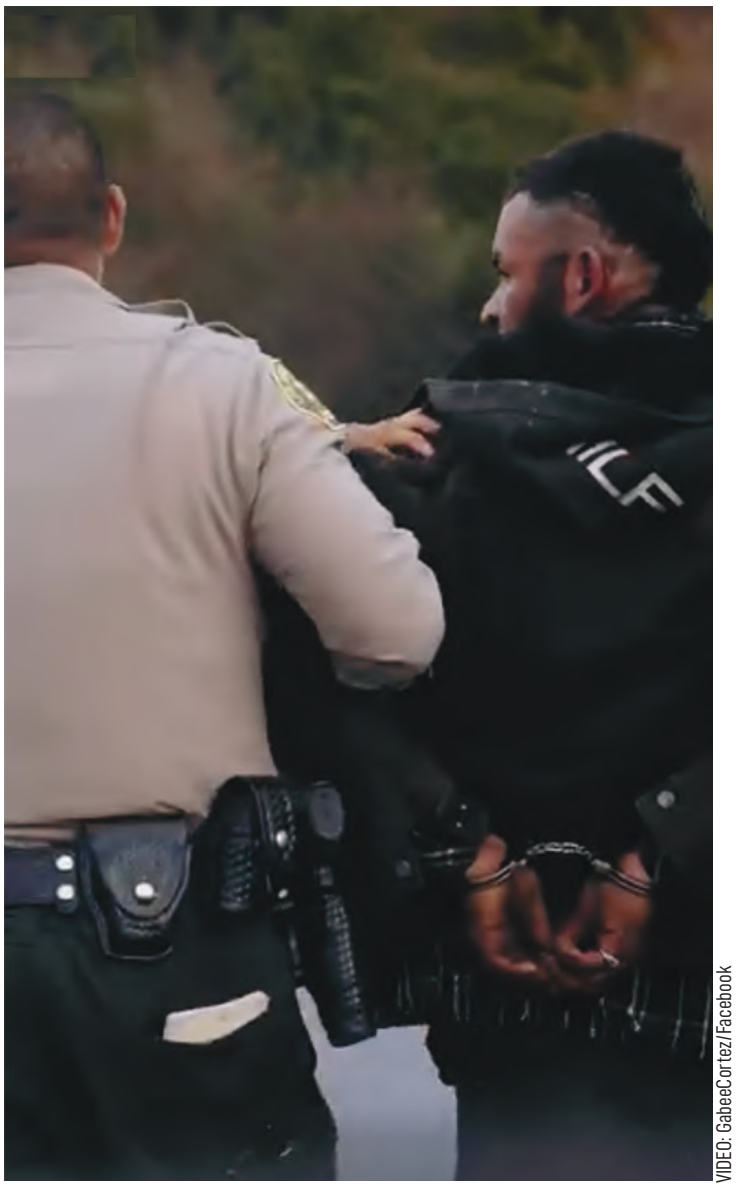
Video online shows cars stopping and drivers pursuing the suspect, who ran down the street. He was tackled and subdued by local residents. In the video you can hear a resident saying, "Wrong neighborhood buddy, wrong neighborhood" as more residents gathered to view the arrest

Sheriff's Deputies with guns drawn cuffed and arrested 41-year-old Alejandro Martinez on suspicion of arson. They pulled a lighter and various other objects out of his pockets.

This is the second "citizen's arrest" of an arson suspect since the January fires began.

Brian White and other residents in Woodland Hills tackled a homeless man with a blowtorch who they thought was trying to start a fire near Ybarra Road. They zip tied him and detained him until officials arrived. That suspect was arrested for a felony parole violation but was not charged with arson due to lack of evidence.

According to the Lost Hills Sheriff's Station, Martinez and the incident are under investigation by their arson squad. They could not confirm if Martinez was the suspect in the Woodland Hills arrest or not.



VIDEO: GabeeCortez/Facebook

Arson suspect being arrested in Woolsey Canyon.

Soboroff on Rebuilding L.A.

(Continued from page 1)

Plans go into a "black hole" of soils reports because there is no one manning the desk, it's all a drop off system.

"As long as you don't build over 110% of the previous structure you'll go quickly. ADU's can also now be built," he explained. "The goal is that by the time Phase II is done homeowners would have plans and permits."

His recommendation to homeowners was to bring plans to an architect who is qualified and certified to approve them on behalf of the city. "A bigger kitchen, fewer bedrooms is fine. If you want to go bigger you have to take it back to the city for plans and permits."

The job of coordinating the rebuilding of almost 6,000 homes in one location is enormous - given demolition, infrastructure, and individual contractors and suppliers. "We were able to build Playa Vista with 3,000 people a day," Soboroff claimed. "We're trying to provide a 'yellow brick road' for homeowners now with an 'a to z' to get to the end of the road in an efficient, cost-saving manner."

When asked if this was now the time to make changes other than putting utilities underground, such as widening the narrow roads of the Palisades or finally getting all of Malibu on a sewer system, Soboroff deferred that decision to the City of Malibu and said that this would be a long-term job, with an "all solutions in" system for watersheds, residential and commercial rebuilding and public infrastructure resilience.

Valley News Group asked Soboroff if he is also talking to Rick Caruso, who has created his own "Steadfast LA" team to drive the city's rebuild. "I've called him a couple of times," he replied. "Asked him some questions."

When asked where the money was coming from for all of this, Soboroff said he was taking $1.00 a year from the City, and was depending on philanthropy, taking donations from people who were not planning to give money to the City.

He said FEMA and banks would cover the gap from what insurance pays and what rebuilding costs. DWP improvements will be passed on to residents.

Valley News Group asked Soboroff one last question. This is not L.A.'s last disaster. Will this expedited permit process and more inspectors continue on in the city or is this a one-shot deal?

He said that once rebuilding was done the City's Program Managers would continue with their regular oversight.

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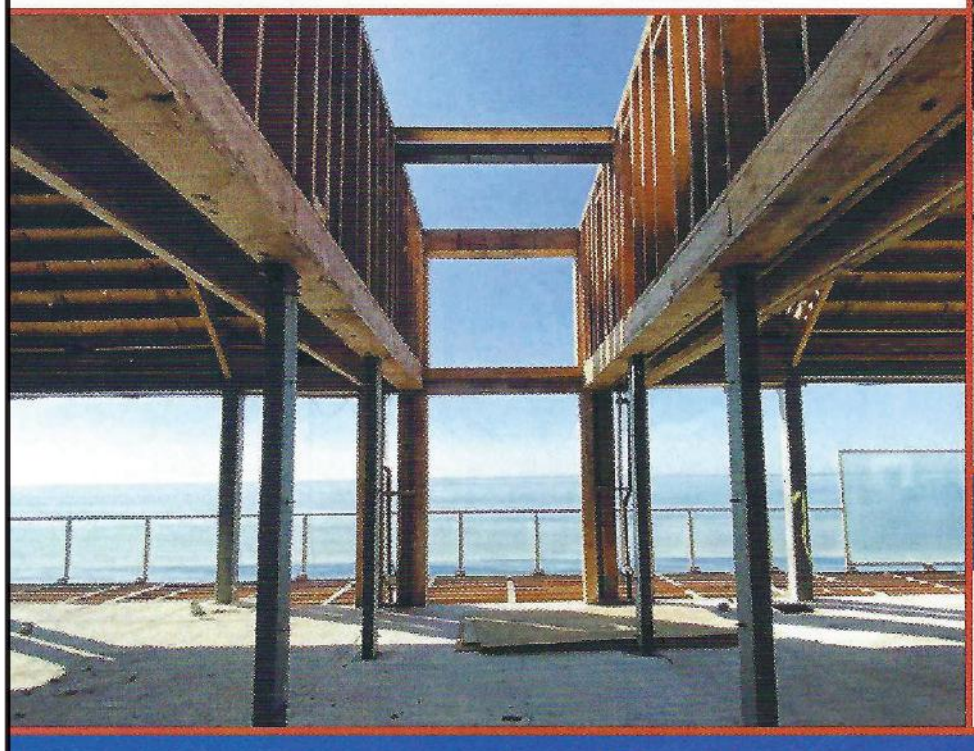

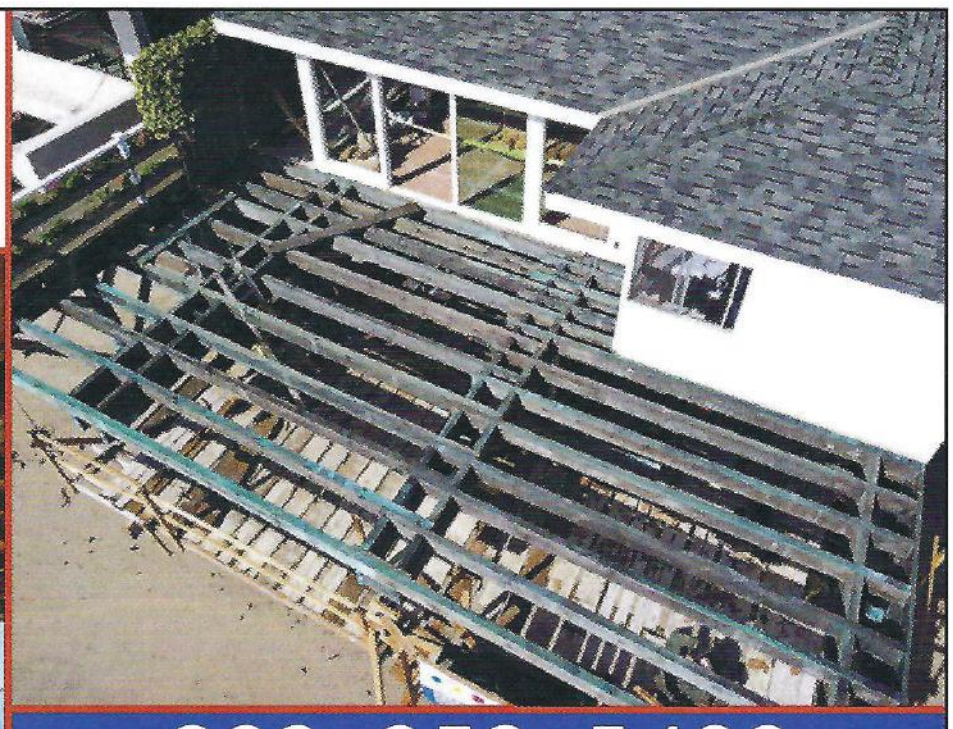

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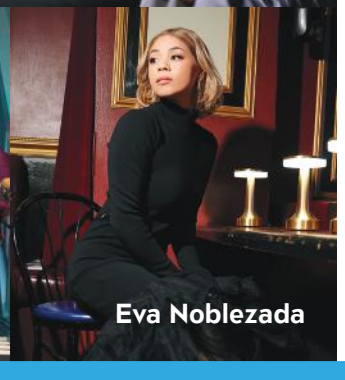
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Christian McBride, bass **& Ursa Major**
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