Utility Box Art Program Expands into Encino

See Page 11

Indulge in Culinary Delights During Greater Palm Springs Restaurant Week – See Page 9

May is National Stroke Month–Know the Signs

See Page 8

ENCINO ENTERPRISE

Volume 6, Issue 120 | A Compendious Source of Information | May 15, 2025

NEWS IN BRIEF

ONEgeneration Senior Symposium This Saturday

ONEgeneration will host its 16th Annual Senior Symposium & Health Fair this Saturday, May 17, from 9 am to 12 pm. Join them for a morning of exciting vendors and sponsors, health screenings, community exercises and giveaways. This is event is free and open to the general public and those of all ages. In addition to community resources, health screenings and presentations, there will also be an opportunity to learn about utility bill savings programs. See their ONEgeneration booth at the event to learn about water conservation programs and if you qualify for discounts on your LADWP bills and other utility savings.

The event will be held at ONEgeneration's Senior Enrichment Center (17400 Victory Blvd.) and registration for the event is open at eventbrite.com under search term "ONEgeneration."

Congressman Sherman to Host Town Hall May 21

Congressman Brad Sherman will host a Telephone Town Hall on Wednesday, May 21, from 7 to 8:15 pm. The Congressman will make opening remarks and then answer questions on any issues facing Congress. To participate call (747) 331-8100 any time during the Town Hall. RSVP at BradSherman.house.gov/RSVP. Sherman is currently serving his 14th term in Congress and has served in the House of Representatives since 1997.

Meet the Encino Neighborhood Council Candidates

The Encino Neighborhood Council will hold a number of candidate forums via Zoom for the community to meet the candidates running for open positions on the council. Each forum will consist of a moderated Q&A where each candidate will answer a few community-focused questions. While the first forum was held May 14, the second will be held Saturday, May 17, from 3 to 5 pm and the third forum will be held Sunday, May 18, from 3 to 5 pm. To learn about the candidates running, visit clerkappsele.lacity.org/NCElection/nccandidates?id=57a04ad0-4a1b-4b74-6249-08dd41479c27. For the Zoom link for each event, visit encinonc.org.

Not Your Father's Army

It's not what you think about when joining the U.S. Army.

You could join as a trumpeter, a budding scientist, a computer genius or a car geek/mechanic.

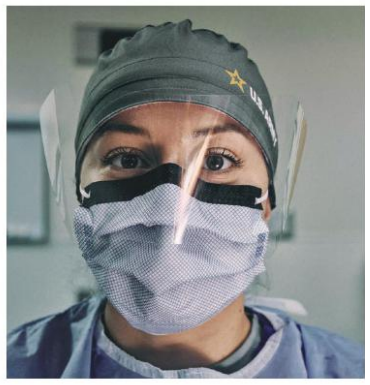
According to Command Sergeant Major Marco Vazquez, the Army has over 180 jobs, and only 13% are combat-related. Yes, you could join to be part of special ops, but most of the jobs are combat support, including mechanics, musicians, cyber communications specialists, lawyers, doctors, nurses and techs.

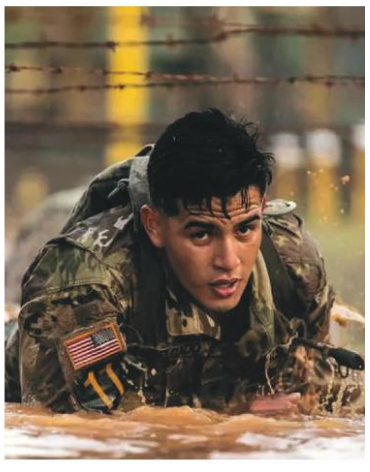
And best of all, the Army can help you get that degree or certification - and pay for it.

Even high school students can start their career in the Army, going to technical school in the summer and back to secondary school in the fall. The Army pays for the training - up to $105,000 for 36 months of academic training for full-time students. If they start in high school with military training they can basically start as a junior in college.

"The career path will place you in a specific job," said Vazquez. "We administer an aspirations test to see a student's strengths and weaknesses in 12 subjects, from English to math to science, and gear studying to a career they want. Pathways range from medicine, intelligence, IT and cyber work, mechanics and engineering to logistics, aviation, leadership and legal."

Requirements to join the Army are simple: Men and women must be 17 or older with body fat less than 15% and no prior drug use. All recruits will go through basic training in addition to their technical education.





From playing musical instruments to performing medical procedures, the Army offers an array of opportunities.

And the benefits? Vazquez cites many. "You enter with a high school degree but after 20 years chances are you will have a Masters. Education is a priority and we pay for it."

Another cool fact is that the Army is the only military branch where, with a high school degree, you can go to flight school and fly a plane.

As you get older there are VA benefits such as low-interest business loans or no-down home loans for up to four property purchases. Your children also get educational benefits as well.

The Army also matches a retirement program similar to a 401K so when you get out you have something in the bank.

Of current relevance is if your parents are illegal and you join up, your parents get legally admitted for a path to citizenship. If you join the Army with a green card you become a U.S. citizen upon graduation for free.

"Our purpose is to provide the next generation of Americans with opportunities for advancement in all aspects of life through education, leadership and skills that are transferable to the civilian sector. When you leave, you come out on top to work in a government or private job," explained Vazquez.

The Army has several recruiting stations in the valley where you can get more information, including one at 6337 Balboa Blvd. in Encino.

For more information call (818) 609-7312 or visit recruiting.army.mil.

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Community Calendar

* The Encino Neighborhood Council will hold their general board meeting on Wednesday, May 28, at 7 pm via Zoom. For the link and agenda, visit encinonc.org.

* The Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce will be holding their next Mix & Mingle on Tuesday, May 27, from 5:30 to 7 pm at Buvette (15005 Ventura Blvd). Make new business connections over lite bites and a no host bar. The cost is $20 for members and $30 for non-members. RSVP at shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

* Join the West Valley Regional Library on Monday, May 19, at 10 am for an engaging discussion on some of the world's best short stories. This year's selections are from *100 Great Short Stories* edited by James Daley and *The Scribner Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction*. This week's selection will be *Caviar* by T.C. Boyle. For the Zoom link and weekly story to be discussed, email wvally@lapl.org with "World Literature" in the subject line.

* Los Angeles Youth Orchestra (LAYO), made up of over 100 talented student musicians from over 50 schools throughout the greater LA area, will hold auditions for new orchestra members on Saturday and Sunday, May 17 and 18, at First Presbyterian Church (4963 Balboa Blvd. in Encino). Auditions are open to all students ages eight to 18 who have had at least two years of private instruction on their instrument. LAYO rehearses at the Encino Community Center on Sunday afternoons from 1:30 to 5 pm. For more information, visit losangelesyouthorchestra.org.

* San Fernando Valley Audubon Society is continuing to work with partners, the Friends of the Los Angeles River (FoLAR) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) on the ongoing Habitat Restoration efforts in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (SBWR). This group will gather on Sunday, May 24, from 8 to 11 am to work and weed. If you would like to get involved and get your hands dirty, this is for you. For more details, see sfvaudubon.org/event/sbwr-habitat-restoration-3/2025-05-24.

* LA Made Presents: Henna Art With Khushboo Manchanda at the Encino Tarzana Library on Thursday, May 22, at 4 pm. Participants will learn about the significance of henna across cultures, the process of making henna paste and its application, before walking away with their own small henna tattoos.

* Are you registered to vote? Local neighborhood council elections are coming up and all elections will be vote by mail this year. Ballots must be requested by May 27, with a return ballot postmarked by June 3. To read all the details, visit neighborhoodempowerment.lacity.gov/elections.

* Moving into a smaller home? Organizing your life? Doyle Auctioneers and Appraisers is holding special Encino consignment days in the next few weeks. 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. Their specialists are traveling throughout the Valley collecting jewelry, watches, handbags, fine art, silver, coins and more for auction consignment, outright purchase or private sale. Interested parties should contact Emily Marchick, G.G. for information and appointments at (310) 276-6616 or doylela@doyle.com.

* Looking for conversation and collaboration? Join the Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce for "Coffee with the CEO" on Wednesday, May 21, from 9:30 to 10:30 am at the chamber office (4933 Balboa Blvd). The cost is free for members and $5 for guests that RSVP before May 20. Sign up at shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

* Tarzana Community and Cultural Center will hold their next Music Night on Friday, May 30, from 7 to 10 pm. Performances will be outside and tickets are $5 at mytarzana.org.

A Successful Day of Service

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel held his annual "Day of Service" earlier this month.

At two locations, Pierce College and Hope the Mission, over 1,300 volunteers prepared sandwiches and packed homeless outreach kits for organizations such as the West Valley Food Pantry and LA Family Housing.

Plus, they prepared a world-record 250,000 meatballs to feed unhoused resident!

Over 50 community organizations, chambers of commerce and neighborhood councils hosted information booths for the crowds of residents and volunteers attending the annual event.

Canoga Park Neighborhood Council was represented by Shawn Fornari and Mireira Moran.

Woodland Hills Neighborhood Council members manned the booth, from left, Karen DiBiase, Shelly Schwartz, Jon Mann and Joyce Pearson.

CHP Officer Ramstead and senior volunteer Willa Meller talked car seat safety.

Hundreds of volunteers made sandwiches and packed lunch bags for L.A. Family Housing's food distribution service.

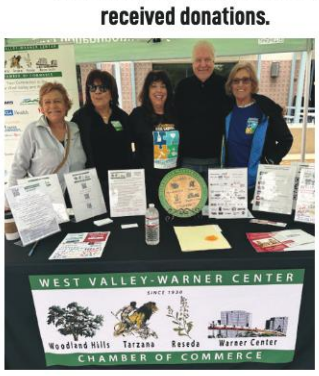
The gang from the Southland Regional Association of Realtors showed up in force to volunteer with Jesse Gabriel for his annual Day of Service.

West Valley Food Pantry volunteers Dave Wasson, Judy Wasson and Robert Naturman received donations.

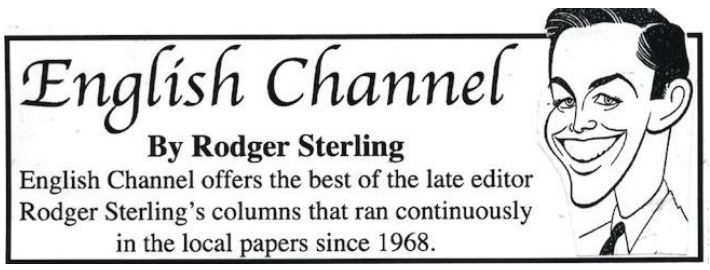
Reseda Neighborhood Council was well-represented by left to right, Maddie Lee, Danny Duarte, Doug Smith and Amos Marvel.

Rams Cheerleaders Jose C. and Delany D. warmed up the crowd of volunteers!

Winnetka Neighborhood Council President Mihran Kaladijian and board member Victor Lerma.



West Valley Warner Center Chamber members showed up from left, Sharon Hice, Marcine Campbell, Florine Goodman, Sean McCarthy and Jeanette Capaldi.



• So true. A sage told us, "10% of the people make things happen, 80% of the people watch and 10% have no clue what's happening."

• Did you hear about the butcher who backed up into his meat grinder and got a little behind in his work?

• My coffee drinking buddy Mary Kathleen says that being over the hill is much better than being under it!

• Didja' hear about the thief who stole a calendar and got 12 months?

• Max Turrell, a regular contributor to this column, announced a new policy for himself. He's only going to dread one day at a time.

• Another Turellism: What's the difference between anxiety and panic? Anxiety is the first time you can't do it a second time, and panic is the second time you can't do it the first time.

• A prominent couple here in Warner Center are getting a divorce. The wife says it's over religious differences. "He thought he was God and I didn't."

• Chloe Humes tells us about the scientist who put a knocker on his front door. She said the scientist wanted to win the "no-bell" prize.

• For your next dinner party, how about stumping your guests with these questions: What is a group of pandas called? An embarrasment...How about a group of flamingo's? They're a flamboyance!

• Why were the Middle Ages called the Dark Ages? Because they had so many knights!

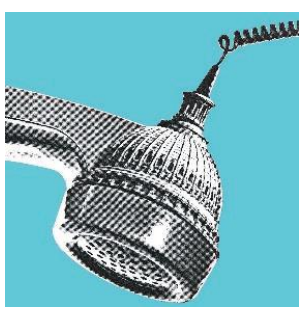
• 90% of men kiss their wife goodbye when they leave their house. The rest kiss their house goodbye when they leave their wife.

Congressman Brad Sherman

TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

Wednesdsay ✦ May 21, 2025

7:00 - 8:15 pm



A Telephone Town Hall operates like a large conference call, where you will hear Congressman Sherman's opening remarks and then ask questions on any issue facing Congress.

To participate call (747) 331-8100 any time during the Town Hall.RSVP at: BradSherman.house.gov/RSVP

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Guest Editorial: The City of Los Angeles is a Soft Target and Attorneys Know It

By Tim Gaspar

It was a brisk New Year's Eve in Hollywood a few years ago when a couple was walking in the dark on the way to a nightclub. In a playful mood, the girlfriend jumped on the boyfriend's back for an impromptu piggyback ride. The boyfriend successfully carried his girlfriend for a short time before tripping on a crack in the sidewalk, sending them both crashing to the ground. The girlfriend unfortunately hit her head on the sidewalk and suffered significant injury. The girlfriend subsequently sued the City of Los Angeles for the condition of the sidewalk and received $3,000,000.

Two days before Christmas in 2023, at a family gathering in Canoga Park, a man assaulted his mother, sister and uncle before leaving the home with a machete, metal bar and a hammer while wearing a gas mask. When responding LAPD officers arrived at the home, the man refused the officers' commands before rushing towards the LAPD officers while holding the metal bar above his head ready to swing. The officers were forced to shoot the man to avoid serious injury or worse. The man unfortunately passed away from his injuries. The family filed a lawsuit against the LAPD and received $24,000,000 from the City of Los Angeles. These stories are true.

For the last seven years in a row, the City of Los Angeles has included in its budget an amount of $87 million for liability claims. The amount of liability claims actually paid out has exceeded that number every one of those years. In 2024 alone, $277 million was paid out and 2025 is expected to be worse. When you hear our city is short $1 billion dollars in this year's budget, this is a big part of the reason why.

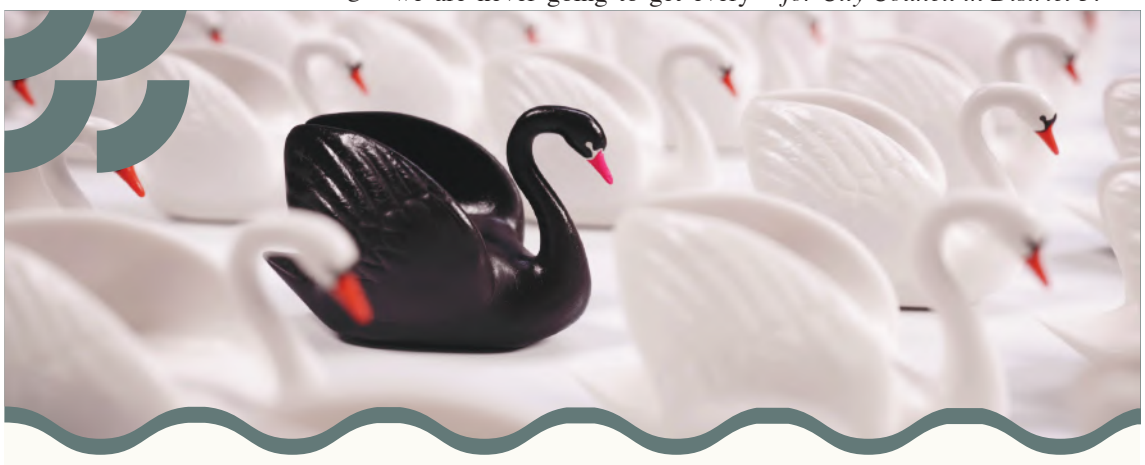
$277,000,000, that's a lot of money. That amount of money could hire 1,582 more LAPD officers to keep our city safe. That amount of money could hire 2,216 teachers to teach our children. Or we could just send each of the 1.4 million households in the city of Los Angeles a check for $200. Also, keep this in mind. Of that $277 million, about $110 million (or more) went to attorneys.

Does the City of Los Angeles need better risk management to avoid these types of lawsuits? Yes. Every $1 investment into risk management returns $3 to $6 in avoided litigation costs. That being said, we are never going to get every sidewalk in the city to be free of cracks. In the world of crime fighting, bad people sometimes get hurt. Our LAPD is the finest police force in the world and although they are not infallible, they already do more training than any other department in the country.

My point is this, the city needs to stop being a nice big soft target for attorneys. Litigation in our city is at record levels in both the frequency of lawsuits and size of awards (by the way, that's one of the reasons your auto insurance jumped so much this year but that's a story for another article). You can't drive more than 30 feet in LA without seeing three billboards for personal injury attorneys. Our L.A. City Attorney's office has an army of 550 attorneys on staff. We can use this army of city lawyers to make it clear to plaintiff attorneys that the city of Los Angeles (and its taxpayers) will not be taken advantage of and will fight tooth and nail for every dollar.

The bottom line is we simply cannot afford to continue paying out liability claims at the level we have been; the money simply isn't there. Unless our politicians in Sacramento are going to get serious about state tort reform or establish a maximum cap for municipalities, our city needs to fight every lawsuit like our city's future depends on it, because it does.

Gaspar is the founder of Gaspar Insurance in Woodland Hills and currently a candidate for City Council in District 3.



Canoga Park Memorial Day Parade: A March Through Local History and Pride

by Danrochelle D. Yumul

Every year on Memorial Day, the heart of Canoga Park beats a little louder. Sherman Way fills with flags, music, classic cars, and generations of residents gathered, not just for a parade, but for an act of remembrance. The Canoga Park Memorial Day Parade is a defining tradition in the San Fernando Valley, built from community pride and a deep respect for those who served and sacrificed. But the road to this beloved event wasn't always a straight one.

"Even though this is my third year as chair, I know the parade has been around in some form since at least 1980," said Bill Ratner, a retired Navy captain, longtime community volunteer, and current Board Chair of the Canoga Park Community Center Foundation. "I remember biking out to see it (the parade) because parking was impossible even then."

Ratner explained that while the parade has had gaps over the years, it's always been a grassroots effort. "There just wasn't anything in the San Fernando Valley to honor Memorial Day," he said, "That's what got it started."

One of the most significant elements of the parade is its connection to Canoga Park High School. About a decade ago, the parade organizers built a portable memorial wall, mirroring the memorial wall at Canoga Park High School that lists the names of alumni who lost their lives in service, some dating back to World War II.

"It's not just a parade," Ratner emphasized. "It's a tribute to our own fallen, and a teachable moment for the next generation."

The parade has seen an array of memorable grand marshals from veterans like Major General Peter Gravett, who earned the Medal of Valor for actions during the 1965 Watts Riots, to Admiral Mike Shatynski, a retired two-star Rear Admiral and co-founder and Chairman of Los Angeles Fleet Week. Another notable grand marshal was Admiral Sandy Adams, who served in both Desert Storm and Afghanistan.

"We've also had incredible support from the community, both from the past and the present," Ratner said. "Wells Fargo, the LA Rams, the LA Kings, local banks, insurance agencies, and individuals—this year alone, we filled 81 of the 90 available banner slots along Sherman Way."

"It's not just a parade," Bill Ratner, a retired Navy captain, emphasized. "It's a tribute to our own fallen, and a teachable moment for the next generation."

Though there were years when the parade didn't happen, especially during the pandemic, it bounced back thanks to a committed planning team and a city that believes in the tradition. Ratner sees the parade as more than just a celebration—it's a bridge between generations, a moment to reflect and educate. That's why leaders like LAUSD Board President, Scott Schmerelson join the opening ceremony each year, to help ground the event in civic responsibility and history.

For Ratner, his role began with the Sea Cadets, marching in the parade and helping coordinate opening ceremonies. "Now, I'm orchestrating the whole thing—banners, grand marshals, you name it," he laughed. "But it's worth it. This is about honoring the fallen and showing our community what that sacrifice really means."

Danrochelle D. Yumul is the Communications Manager at Cowe Communications. She's written for several publications including the Huffington Post, Patch.com, My Daily Find, and the Valley News Group.

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New Surgery Center to Bring Best-in-Class Spine and Orthopedics Program to Valley

TriasMD, parent company of the DISC Surgery Centers, has broken ground on another high-tech facility that will bring DISC's best-in-class spine and orthopedics program to the San Fernando Valley.

Set to open in the third quarter of 2025, DISC Surgery Center at Tarzana will be part of a two-story, 19,936-square-foot medical building at Ventura Blvd. and Lindley Ave. with its own full-service spine and orthopedic clinic conveniently located directly above it on the second floor.

The highly customized ambulatory surgery center (ASC) will feature 11 patient beds (five private preop rooms, six PACU bays) and three operating suites fully integrated with the latest in microscopes, imaging, navigation and robotic equipment.

This project answers a growing demand for the kind of specialized, efficient and cost-effective care inherent to the Ambulatory Surgery Centers model.

According to the latest ASC Market Report, the U.S. ASC market was valued at $45.6 billion in 2024 and projected to grow 21% to $55.3 billion by 2029, as minimally invasive techniques help shift surgeries from inpatient to outpatient.

Emphasizing motion preservation, DISC Surgery Center at Tarzana will be equipped to perform 1,300 spine surgeries and 400 robotic total joint replacements annually, in addition to an extensive array of general orthopedics and interventional pain management procedures. DISC's efficient model of care delivery means that this center will provide an estimated $60 million in annual savings to patients and commercial payers vs. traditional inpatient surgical programs.

"We are excited to bring the pinnacle of musculoskeletal care to the heart of the San Fernando Valley with our newest surgery center and clinic," said James H. Becker, TriasMD's CEO. "Tarzana marks our second location to open in 2025, building upon the strength and momentum of DISC's ASC model to perform complex spine surgery and total joints."

In Southern California, DISC already has locations in Marina del Rey, Valencia, Thousand Oaks, Newport Beach and Carlsbad.

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LEISURE CARE

May is National Stroke Month

May is National Stroke Month, bringing awareness to the fourth-leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of adult disability.

While approximately 80% of strokes may be prevented, this medical event can happen to anyone at any age.

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to the brain is cut off, either by a blocked blood vessel (ischemic stroke) or a ruptured blood vessel (hemorrhagic stroke).

To notice the signs of a stroke, one must think "FAST."

F is for face drooping, with one side of the face looking numb or unable to make an even smile.

A is for arm weakness – can the individual lift both arms evenly?

S is for speech difficulty usually coming across as slurred or difficult to understand.

T is for time. The faster you can identify a stroke, the higher possibility of possibly preventing long-term damage. Call 911 immediately and make note of the time symptoms started as this can affect certain medications given.

Not only can strokes be incredibly life-altering, having a stroke also puts you at higher risk for experiencing a second one. Stroke prevention focuses on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, including keep your blood pressure under control, your cholesterol under control, limiting alcohol, not smoking and getting regular exercise in.

Monitor your body and be aware of any major changes including sudden numbness on one side of the body, dizziness, difficulty speaking or a sudden severe headache.

If you ever suspect you or someone may be having a stroke, always think FAST and call 911 immediately.

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. In addition to your monthly plan premium, you must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium. For accommodations of persons with special needs at meetings, call 877-217-8783 (TTY 711).

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ENTERTAINMENT

Dine and Unwind in the Palm Springs Desert

By Katie Sterling

While the Palm Springs area has become almost synonymous these days with music festivals, the desert is a treasure trove of enticing offers any weekend of the year – no VIP wristlets or backstage passes required.

After all, Tinseltown stars like Frank Sinatra helmed the area as the ideal weekend retreat from the San Fernando Valley – close enough to home, but far enough away to feel like you're truly on vacation. While certain components have evolved over the decades, Palm Springs still stands as the perfect playground for Angelenos looking to dine and unwind beneath the infamous fronds. A hot climate and a cold martini, who could argue with that?

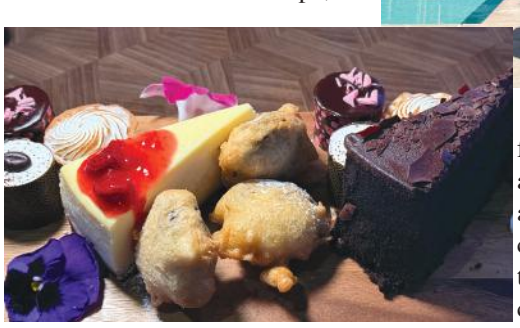
To showcase the culinary destination that Coachella Valley has become, I was invited to preview the 2025 Greater Palm Springs Restaurant Week. Similar to our DineLA, it's an opportunity for participating restaurants to showcase the best of their offerings through curated menus for a unique 10-day run. An opportunity to indulge in exclusive eats at discounted prices?! Yes, please.

To kick off the itinerary was a dinner reservation at Cork & Fork, an American restaurant whose menu changes with the seasons, based on locally sourced ingredients. Situated in an unassuming strip mall that is quickly becoming a culinary hot spot, Cork & Fork's menu has an array of options, ranging from shareable apps like the Thai shrimp cakes drizzled with togarashi aioli to one of their most popular items, the filet mignon tacos.

However, I found the real star of the show to be the Luau salad; a refreshing, yet hearty blend of beets, mango, goat cheese and crispy wontons sprinkled atop a bed of baby greens. I'd like to tell you that I savored it slowly, but it was gone within minutes. To cap off the night, and foil my healthy greens, the Kings Hawaiian bread pudding was the perfect dish to tickle your sweet tooth. Drenched in whiskey caramel and studded with white chocolate chips, it was decadent, delicious and much like my salad, gone in seconds.

With a full belly, I retreated to the Agua Caliente Resort Casino Spa in Rancho Mirage that would be my home base for this foodie excursion. Not only is Agua Caliente a gold sponsor of Greater Palm Springs Restaurant Week, but they also have their own establishments participating

in the event: The Steakhouse and 360 Sports. At their Palm Springs location, Executive Chef Brian Kenney ensures that guests get a taste of both their higher end restaurant and their more casual eatery – each menu full of flavor with the possibility of an alcohol pairing. Is there anything better than sipping a glass of Canyons Cabernet Sauvignon (exclusive to Agua Caliente) with a perfectly seasoned and sauced meatball? Perhaps a refreshing watermelon and feta salad? Or a spicy shrimp pasta? Just make sure to leave room for dessert as the options are as decadent as anything you could dream of. To get the



full scope of what's available, we received a charcuterie (choc-cuterie?) board of triple layer chocolate cake, cheesecake,

petit fours and deep-fried Oreos. Research was tough, but I selflessly participated for you dear readers…

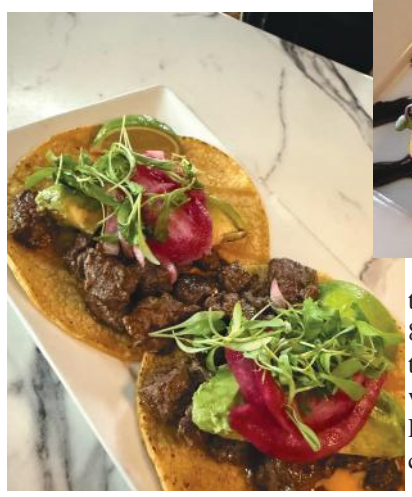
After a restful slumber, I simply had to mosey downstairs for my first meal of the day at Waters Café where you can indulge in eggs benedict on the poolside patio or tuck into buttermilk pancakes with your morning coffee.

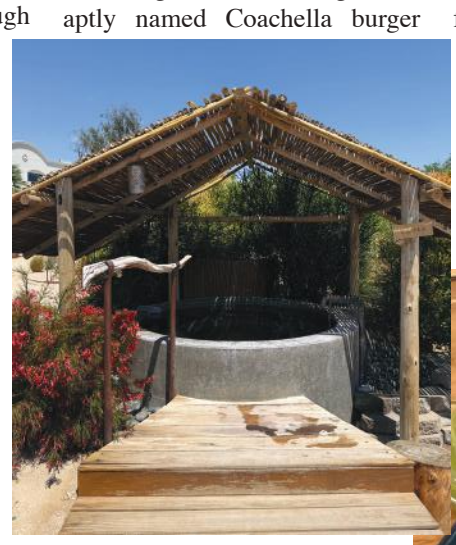
With another delicious dine under my belt, it was time to do a little unwinding and what better place than the natural hot springs at Azure Palm Hot Springs? This oasis not only boasts the largest mineral water pool in Southern California, but has an array of mineral water spas for you to soak away in. These tubs are abundant in minerals designed to promote well-being, relaxation and countless therapeutic benefits for your skin. You can spend the whole day dipping in and out of their beautiful cabana tubs or take a reflective stroll through their reflexology walk where carefully placed stones hit the pressure points of your feet. With a dry sauna, a Finnish sauna, a Himalayan salt room, an ice room and the option to partake in yoga, there is truly no reason not to indulge yourself for a day.

With your soul rejuvenated, it's time to satiate your stomach at their in-house eatery Azure Palm Café. Dishes here are not only healthy, to stay in vogue with its spa setting, but incredibly satisfying. A lunch of sesame seared wild caught tuna over a bed of rice and green beans is the perfect meal to curb your hunger, while still feeling healthy post- or pre-spa. In perhaps a nod to their city, indulge in their whipped hearts of palm dip as well, served with homemade taro chips that crunch so delicately with the dip. Yet, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the house-made, freshly-pressed juices that the café offers. Made with their award-winning water and offered in unique blends, the Golden Green juice (pineapple, turmeric root, cucumber, mint and green apple) was the absolute highlight.

To cap off an already incredible dining excursion, my trip ended with a breathtaking adventure – both literally and figuratively. The Palm Springs Aerial Tramway has long been a fan-favorite for those visiting the area, but tucked atop the mountain is a restaurant with incredible views and a menu to match.

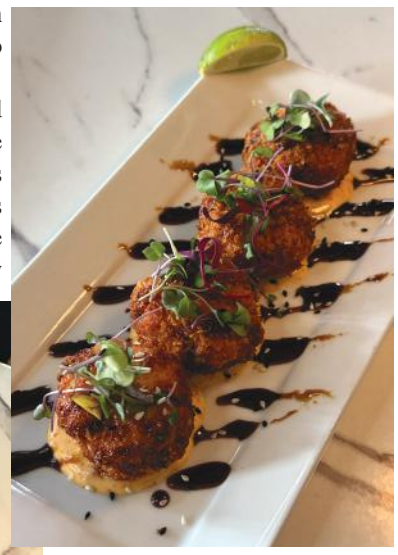
Appropriately named Peaks Restaurant, guests are invited to dine above the clouds and indulge in Chef Fritch's seasonal offerings. It's a fine dining option, but still slightly





casual given the location and the fact that many visitors are in their finest athleisurewear to explore the area. The food can either swing slightly fancy (I had a lovely charred pineapple chili glazed shrimp appetizer on a bed of cabbage) or heartier (again, an aptly named Coachella burger with date spread and french fries). It's an ideal spot for those leisurely looking for a relaxed dinner over a glass of wine and a view or anyone looking to fuel up pre/post hiking. To both ascend and descend from the restaurant at approximately 11,000 ft, the tram offers the most unique experience. Spinning 360 degrees, riders get a full view of the mountains that surround them and a breathtaking view of the valley below. The whole experience is a spoil of riches for your senses.

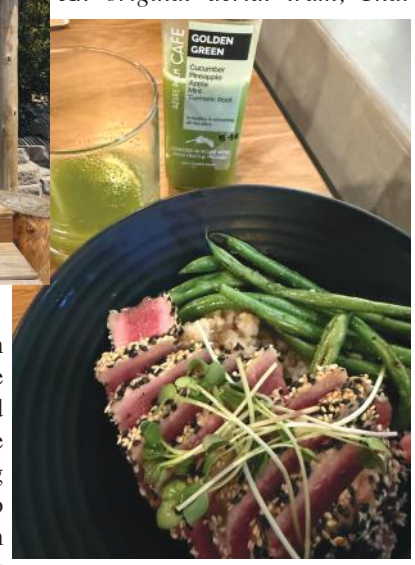
While all aforementioned restaurants will be participating in the Greater Palm Springs Restaurant Week, they are only a drop in the gastronomic bucket. Dozens of restaurants of all culinary specialties in the nine cities of the Coachella Valley will be participating during the event



that runs from May 30 to June 8. Plus, every reservation made through the Restaurant Week website will donate $1 to the FIND Food Bank. Eat for a good cause!

Greater Palm Springs Restaurant Week is ideal for those new to Coachella or even long-established fans of the valley to explore the dynamic culinary community on offer. With this upcoming celebration of dining, why not treat yourself to a restaurant road trip only a few hours away? Your tastebuds will surely thank you.

For a full list of restaurants participating, curated menus and reservations, visit dinegps.com.



Clockwise from top: An original aerial tram, Thai shrimp cakes, filet mignon tacos, a mineral soaking tub, the sesame-encrusted tuna bowl, an opportunity to unwind poolside at Agua Caliente, the choc-cuterie board and the grilled shrimp.

The Reel History of the Valley

By Martin M. Cooper

Pulling Back the Curtain on Porn

On October 8, 1997, the film *Boogie Nights* premiered at the New York Film Festival.

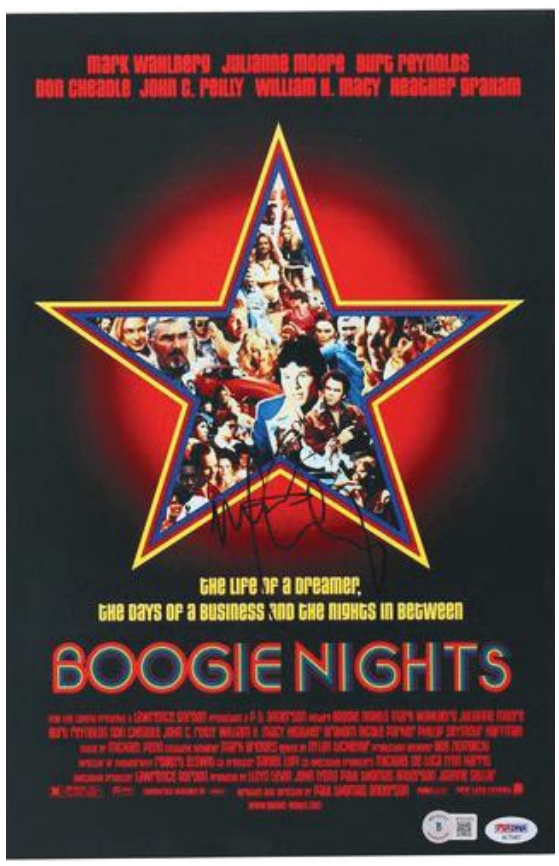
The New York Times review of the same date summed up its impact: "Everything about *Boogie Nights* is interestingly unexpected, even the few seconds of darkness before the film's neon title blasts onto the screen. The director, Paul Thomas Anderson, whose display of talent is as big and exuberant as skywriting, seems to mean this as a way of telling viewers to brace themselves. Good advice."

Some of the best-known films of that era, such as *Pulp Fiction* (filmed partially in Canoga Park) and *The People vs. Larry Flynt* have portrayed a sleazy Southern California as the epitome of a decadent culture. *Boogie Nights* ratchets up the raunchiness by taking pornography and drug use to a new level…and gives it a specifically San Fernando Valley sense of place.

The film marked one of the first major Hollywood films to acknowledge what many already knew: that the San Fernando Valley was, for all intents and purposes, the real capital of the American adult film industry.

The cast of the film had a number of actors who would go on to major careers.

Paul Thomas Anderson, who wrote and directed the film, pulls back the curtain on the multibillion-dollar porn industry, one largely based in the San Fernando Valley. A product of the Valley, Anderson dramatized the rise and fall of fictional porn star Dirk Diggler. Performances by stars Mark Wahlberg, Burt Reynolds, and Julianne Moore, all enhanced the sense of regular people caught up in something much larger than themselves.



Boogie Nights' most popular poster.

The Valley became the unlikely epicenter of porn production starting in the late 1970s, largely because it provided a perfect blend of low overhead, proximity to Los Angeles' film infrastructure and personnel, a sunny, camera-friendly climate, and relative anonymity. That combination created a Wild West for adult film, where porn could be churned out quickly, cheaply, and largely under the radar.

By the time *Boogie Nights* hit the local cinema, the adult film industry had been a part of the Valley for nearly two decades. In the early 2000s, estimates suggested that up to 90 percent of all legally distributed adult films in the United States were produced in the Valley. With hundreds of production companies operating out of nondescript warehouses and modest ranch homes, and thousands employed either directly or indirectly, the industry was booming.

This economic engine had substantial local impact. Pornography generated hundreds of millions of dollars annually, fueled in part by the rise of home video and, later, the internet. Talent agencies, distributors, editors, set designers, and even local catering businesses found revenue in the orbit of adult entertainment. *Boogie Nights* was largely filmed in Encino, Van Nuys, and Reseda. While communities such as Chatsworth and Canoga Park earned unofficial nicknames like "Porn Valley" and "Silicone Valley;" they belied a genuine economic significance.

Boogie Nights captures this era with both affection and criticism. The film chronicles the golden age of porn in the late '70s — a brief period when filmmakers like the fictional Jack Horner (played by Burt Reynolds) aspired to make adult films with artistic merit, shot on film and screened in theaters. As the narrative unfolds, we see the transition into the 1980s: a darker, more commercial era of VHS tapes, drug abuse, and declining production values.

Anderson's recreation of this world, complete with vintage tracksuits, poolside parties, and clunky video cameras, is nostalgic and sobering. The film doesn't shy away from the exploitation, addiction, and legal gray areas that plagued many of its participants. But it also presents the human beings behind the spectacle — people seeking fame, family, or simply a better life.

The break-out star of the film was Mark Wahlberg, who played porn star Dirk Diggler.

What makes the film resonate nearly three decades later is not just its masterful storytelling and excellent performances, but its honesty about a uniquely Valley phenomenon. The San Fernando Valley, with its reputation as a bedroom community for Los Angelese, became a global engine of erotic fantasy.

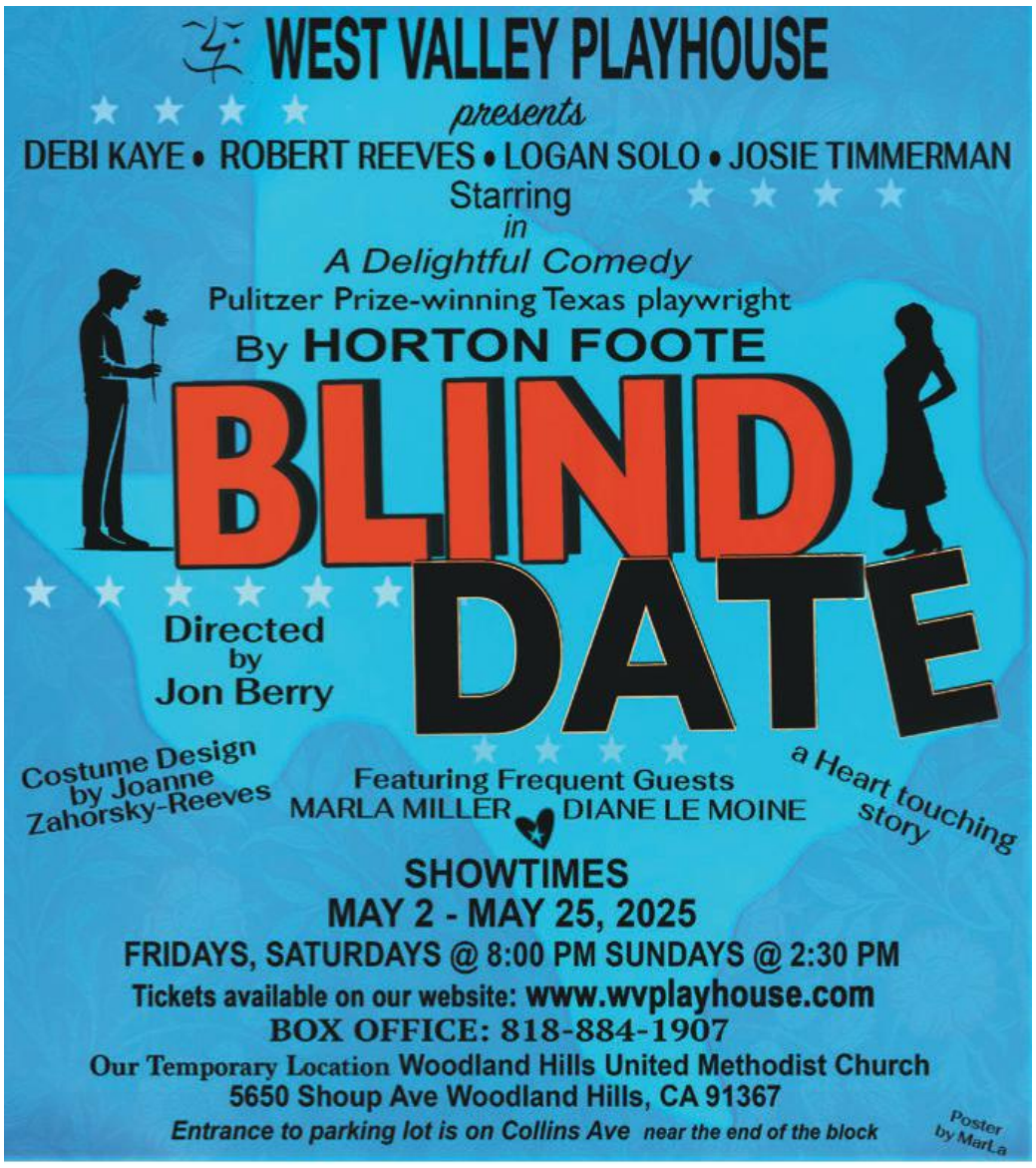
In the early 2000s, estimates suggested that up to 90 percent of all legally distributed adult films in the United States were produced in the Valley.

Today, the Valley's adult film presence is diminished. Regulations, online distribution, and cultural shifts have all decentralized the industry. The COVID-19 pandemic further pushed performers toward independent online content. But the legacy remains. The porn industry shaped the Valley's economy, real estate markets, and even its cultural identity for decades.

Paul Thomas Anderson didn't just direct a time capsule movie about porn; he directed a movie about the Valley itself.

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 was Board Chairman of the UCLA Film & Television Archive. He is currently researching his next book, The 'Reel' Hollywood: The San Fernando Valley, the history of motion pictures in the Valley.

ENTERTAINMENT



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Grace Jones and the Isely Brothers, above, headline the Blue Note Jazz festival at the Hollywood Bowl.

LA Phil Joins with Blue Note Jazz for Jazz Festival at Hollywood Bowl

The iconic Blue Note Jazz Club is expanding to Los Angeles, bringing the legendary reputation of its renowned New York flagship to the heart of LA's dynamic music scene.

Designed specifically for Los Angeles, the new venue on Sunset Boulevard will offer an intimate atmosphere paired with programming similar to its New York counterpart's: world-class jazz performances from celebrated icons, rising stars and genre-defying collaborations that reflect the evolution of jazz. The new club is set to open its doors in early 2025.

In addition to the new venue, Blue Note and the LA Phil confirm a partnership for the newly named Blue Note Jazz Festival - formerly the storied Hollywood Bowl Jazz Festival - beginning the upcoming Hollywood Bowl season.

Presented by the LA Phil, the 2025 edition of the festival kicks off on June 14 at the iconic Hollywood Bowl. This partnership reflects a shared commitment by both organizations to supporting and showcasing jazz artists..

"We are thrilled to join forces with Blue Note to launch the Blue Note Jazz Festival at the Hollywood Bowl," said the LA Phil's President & Chief Executive Officer Kim Noltemy. "This partnership represents a shared dedication to celebrating jazz and its extraordinary artists while continuing the legacy of world-class music at the Bowl. Together, we look forward to creating an unforgettable experience for jazz lovers in Los Angeles."

"This collaboration represents a powerful union of two iconic institutions dedicated to celebrating jazz and its profound impact on music and culture," details Steven Bensusan, President of Blue Note Entertainment Group.

The host of the Blue Note Jazz Festival at the Bowl will be actor Arsenio Hall. The line up on Saturday, June 14 includes The Isley Brothers, De La Soul, Derrick Hodge with special guest D Smoke, Dee Dee Bridgewater and Bill Charlap, Keyon Harrold, Lakecia Benjain, Pedrito Martinez, Brandon Woody, and the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance Ensemble UCLA.

Sunday, June 15's lineup includes Grace Jones, Willow, Stanley Clarke N, 4Ever, The Soul Rebels with special guests Rapsody, Goapele and Brandee Younger, Joe Lovano's Paramount Quartet featuring Julian Lage, Asante Santi Debriano and Will Calhoun, Weedie Braimah and the Hands of Time, Mohini Dey, DC6 Singers Collective and LAUSD Beyond the Bell All-City Jazz Big Band.

Tickets to the Boue Note Jazz Festival are on sale now at hollywoodbowl.com/bluenote.

West Valley Playhouse Presents Blind Date

The West Valley Playhouse will produce the comedy *Blind Date* by Horton Foote - a touching and very funny study of what befalls a fluttery, well-meaning aunt when she tries to arrange a date for her visiting (and uncooperative) niece. The play stars Debi Kaye, Robert Reeves, Logan Solo, Josie Timmerman, Marla Miller and Diane Le Moine. It is directed by Jon Berry with costumes by Joanne Zahorsky-Reeves. It runs now through May 25 on Friday and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 2:30 pm at Woodland Hills United Methodist Church, 5650 Shoup Ave. For tickets visit wvplayhouse.com.

REAL ESTATE

Utility Box Art Program Expands into Encino Community

The Sherman Oaks/ Encino Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to announce that its 501©3, the Sherman Oaks Chamber Foundation is expanding its utility box art program into the Encino community. This beloved program turns ordinary utility boxes into beautiful works of art. The creative and often thought-provoking boxes celebrate local culture, creativity, and community pride.

Since its inception in 2015, the Sherman Oaks Chamber Foundation locally known as "Let's Paint Sherman Oaks," has transformed more than 100 utility boxes around Sherman Oaks, turning the bland gray boxes into colorful canvases showcasing the talent of local artists. With growing demand to keep neighborhoods beautiful, they are expanding into Encino with strong support from Council District 4 that has been a champion for the program since it started.

"We are excited to bring this program to Encino," said Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber CEO and Foundation Board Member Vickie Bourdas Martinez. "Public art has the power to connect us to one another, inspire creativity in others, and beautify our neighborhoods. This expansion ensures more residents and visitors can engage with art daily."

This first year in Encino will likely feature up to 12 painted utility boxes, and the foundation will invite local artists to submit design proposals. In addition to receiving a small stipend, the selected artists will have their work prominently featured throughout the community.

"We encourage artists of all backgrounds, whether emerging or established, to apply when our next call for artist submissions is announced later this summer," said Fran Kerzner, Sherman Oaks Chamber Foundation President. "We are most interested in artwork that shows Encino's unique history, local identity, and natural beauty." Community members and businesses are invited to sponsor a box or donate to the program to help paint and maintain the utility boxes.

For more information, utility box templates, and to view past projects, visit letspaintshermanoaks.com.

Restoration of 'Can of Cardines' Mural Nearing Completion

Spearheaded by City Councilmember Nithya Raman, the Encino Neighborhood Council and the San Fernando Valley Arts and Cultural Center, funds were assembled to restore the "Can of Cardines" mural under the 101 freeway at the Hayvenhurst exit in anticipation of the 2028 Olympics in LA.

Originally painted by Sandy Bleifer in 1975 under the City's first mural program, Citywide Murals, the mural evokes the pervasive frustration of Valley residents connecting with greater Los Angeles by an often gridlocked freeway.

The hope is that the mural will anchor a tour of a number of Encino landmarks: The Japanese Tea House and Gardens of the George C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant on Woodley, Tapia Brothers' Corn Stand (a vestige of the rural history of Encino), remains of the original Ranchero Encino on Balboa and the flagship store of what became the Gelsons Market chain.

The city's mural protection agencies (Office of Community Beautification and Graffiti Control Systems) recognized that the unadorned, adjacent natural wall surfaces are an essential part of the illusion of space for the "Can of Cardines" mural. They have dedicated a specific paint color to match the vulnerable lower wall color so that any future graffiti to an unsealed area can be overpainted without a checkerboard effect.

The restoration team led by Kiernan Graves, (Site & Studio Conservation), included paid interns from the Inner Resources Mural Conservation Apprenticeship Project and the Broad Diversity Apprenticeship Program, which train the next generation of professional conservators: Carolina Benitez, Brandon Phuong, Justus Ross, and Yulimar Luna Colón and three more with graduate degrees in conservation/preservation: Makayla Rawlins (UCLA), Cait Greeley (NYU) and Caitlin Gallupe (Queens U, Canada).

Noted photographer, Gary Leonard has photo-documented the work on the mural from its inception, to its repair in 2000 and throughout this current process of restoration.

For those who would like to visit the mural, parking is available at 5174 Hayvenhurst Ave.

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Jesus Love Vision Church seeks Choir Director (Los Angeles, CA) Duties: Lead/ oversee daily choir activs during serv/ events; coor/ lead serv/ event rehearsals; est scheds/ budg + select hymns; facil auditions + find potential membs; delegate respblts. Reqs: MA (music, classical voice, or rel). $90,522 - $92,000/ yr. Resume: 1236 S. Hobart Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90006

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June 22
DJ Quik
EMERGING ARTIST: **Trevan**

June 29
Mamase
A Michael Jackson Tribute
EMERGING ARTIST: **Cherose**

Friday, July 4
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield's
July 4th Extravaganza
Featuring
Strange Days - Tribute to The Doors

July 13
Twisted Gypsy
Fleetwood Mac Re-imagined
EMERGING ARTIST: **Ava August**

July 20
Kenny Hale
The Music of Neil Diamond
EMERGING ARTIST: **Jeffrey Chan**

July 27
Surfin'
The Beach Boys Tribute
EMERGING ARTIST: **Millie Oliver & The Missing Pieces**

August 3
Live From Earth
Tribute to Pat Benatar & Beyond
EMERGING ARTIST: **Abby Berman**

August 10
Which One's Pink?
A Tribute to Pink Floyd
EMERGING ARTIST: **Astral Mixtape**

August 17
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Lineup subject to change.