Universal Studios Hosting Mega Movie Summer

See page 6

Where Locals Hang Out: Brand Partnerships

See Page 5

"Reel" History of the Valley: A Very Talented Man

See page 7

North Valley News

Volume 3, Number 26 June 19, 2025

Serving Porter Ranch, Northridge, Granada Hills & Chatsworth

News in Brief

Neighborhood Council Election Results Released by City Clerk

The Los Angeles City Clerk has released final results of the June 3 voting for local Neighborhood Councils that had elections.

Results for the Northridge West Neighborhood Council are as follows: Candidates elected are, At Large Representatives Kathleen Edwards, Joel Lewell, Nathan Lichtman, Sam Dulys and Krystal Sims; Community Interest Stakeholder Alanna Flax-Clark.

Results for the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council are as follows: At Large Representatives elected are Hilda Sarkisyan, Becky Leveque, Patrick Lee Gipson, Deborah Violante and Nune Gipson and Hrant Vartzbedian who tied (ties are resolved in accordance with Sec. 6.4 of the 2025 NC Election Handbook); Open At-Large Representative Christine Demirtshian.

Results for North Hills West Neighborhood Council are as follows: Janayn Martinez, Ilse Lopez, Maggie E. Elliott, Liza Ashley and Garry Fordyce.

Summer Solstice Celebrated June 21 at Chatsworth Nature Preserve

LADWP is celebrating the Summer Solstice on Saturday, June 21, from 9 am to 1 pm at Chatsworth Nature Preserve. There will be an opening ceremony with a Native American blessing, guided nature hikes, storytelling, live animal exhibitions, a community and environmental resource fair, plus food trucks. Bring hats, refillable water bottles sunscreen and comfortable shoes. Don't bring dogs, drones, smoking, bikes or scooters. Enter on Valley Circle Blvd. west of Plummer; street parking available. For more information visit ladwp.com/CNPevent.

Blockfest Hits the Street Saturday, June 28

The annual Blockfest Festival produced by the Northwest Valley Chamber - and this year also My Valley Pass - will take place on Saturday, June 28 on Nordhoff Street between DeSoto and Eton. The free event will feature over 200 vendors, beer gardens, a kids zone, live music and professional wrestling. To learn more visit myvalleypass.com/valley-blockfest or call the Northwest Valley Chamber office at (818) 341-2428.

PHOTOS: PaulDavis

Peaceful Protests Spread Across the Valley

On Saturday, June 14th, Americans from coast to coast marked "No Kings Day" with peaceful protests demanding the preservation of democracy and a rejection of authoritarianism. More than 11 million people participated nationwide, including a powerful turnout in Canoga Park.

Over 1,000 people showed up at the corner of Topanga Canyon Blvd. and Victory adjacent to Westfield Topanga. Protesters held signs and waved at passing cars, many of which honked in solidarity.

There were no reports of violence, in fact those at the rally reported that the crowd was friendly and helpful to each other, with certain groups passing out water bottles.

In Studio City, an estimated 5,000 demonstrators gathered at Ventura Boulevard and Laurel Canyon. The event, organized by the SFV Indivisible Organization, stretched nearly 10 blocks west and four blocks east along Ventura, drawing a sea of American flags, protest signs, drums, and high spirits. *Valley News Group* reporter Mark Hovater said that, "The tone was peaceful, energetic, and unified, as people of all backgrounds came together to raise their voices. The Studio City protest stood out not only for its size but for its overwhelming positivity.

Attendees arrived early, filling sidewalks and spilling into the streets with smiles, chants, and a sense of purpose. Despite the crowd, the event remained well-coordinated and safe, a testament to strong local organizing."

COMMUNITY

Trading Cards and Memorabilia Club Formed

A new club will Meet July 8 at Northridge Recreation Center, 18300 Lemarsh Street, for those who collect trading cards and memorabilia.

Ken Ross will lead the family-friendly group. Bring your own vintage and new cards to trade, as well as signed and unsigned memorabilia. Games will be played for fun and prizes - you may actually win trading cards!

For more information call (818) 340-7341 or email rep.northridger@lacity.org.

DJ Quik at Free Concert at Warner Park

DJ Quik will be the featured performer at the Sunday, June 22, free concert in Warner Park in Woodland Hills. Emerging artist Trevan will open for him at 5:30 pm. The park is located at Topanga Canyon Blvd. and Califa Street. For more information visit valleycultural.org.

Sherman Hosting Town Hall

Congressman Brad Sherman will host an in-person Town Hall on Saturday, June 28, from 2:30 to 4 pm.

The meeting will be held at Canoga Park High School (6850 Topanga Canyon Blvd). The Congressman will make opening remarks and then answer questions on any issues facing Congress. Register to attend at bradsherman.house.gov/register. Sherman has served in the House of Representatives since 1997.

Community Calendar

GRANADA HILLS: SAGE Learning in Retirement will hold an open house on Saturday, June 21, from 10 am to noon at St. Andrew and St. Charles Church at 16651 Rinaldi St., Granada Hills. Join them to learn more about their programs and activities and win a free trial membership! RSVP to (818) 831-5064 or sagelearners@csun.org. SAGE is a membership-supported community of retired and semi-retired people who share great curiosity about the world and a commitment to life-long learning. Learn more at sagelearninginretirement.org.

LAKE VIEW TERRACE: The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society will hold a bird walk at Hanson Dam on Saturday, June 28, from 8 to 10 am. Reportedly over 280 species of birds have been seen at Hansen Dam, which holds the record for most species seen in a day in the San Fernando Valley at 120. If you're unsure whether a walk is taking place, please contact your walk leader at batesbird@gmail.com or call (747) 237-3720.

GRANADA HILLS: LAPD Senior Lead Officer Phillip Sellers will hold a Neighborhood Watch meeting on Tuesday, June 24, at 7 pm at Granada Hills Charter High, 10535 Zelzah Avenue. For more information contact Sellers at 31934@lapd.online or (818) 832-0754.

PORTER RANCH: The L.A. Zoo's library outreach program will join the Porter Ranch Library, 11371 Tampa, for storytime and crafts on Wednesday, June 25, at 10:30 am. Discover some of the amazing ways Los Angeles-area animals adapt to their environment.

VAN NUYS: The United Chambers of Commerce will hold a Mega Mixer on Thursday, June 26, from 5 to 8 pm at Anheuser-Busch (15800 Roscoe Blvd). Join the largest networking event where more than 10 different chambers of commerce will attend. The cost is $45 for members and $60 for non-members. To register, sign up with your local chamber.

CHATSWORTH: The Chatsworth Library will screen the movie *Conclave* on Thursday, June 26, at 1 pm. After the Pope dies of a heart attack, the College of Cardinals, under the leadership of its dean, Thomas Lawrence of the United Kingdom, convenes to elect a successor. Have some popcorn and meet some new friends in the comfort of the library, which is located at 21052 Devonshire Street.

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Congressman Brad Sherman

IN-PERSON TOWN HALL

SATURDAY ✦ JUNE 28, 2025

FROM 2:30-4:00 PM

At Canoga Park High School
6850 Topanga Canyon Blvd Canoga Park 91303

Register To Attend: Sherman.House.gov/rsvp

People in the News

The North Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce presented their Small Business of the Year Award at United Chambers Small Business Breakfast to Code Ninjas Northridge, which teaches children how to code. Chamber Board President Andreas Farmakalidis, above right, said of owner **Ashima Gupta**, above left, "What Ashima Gupta has built isn't just a business - it's a beacon of possibility. In a word driven by technology, she's giving our children the most powerful tool of all - the belief that they can shape the future with their own hands."

Granada Hills Chamber honored **The Tina Grigorian Group** with their Small Business Award. Chamber VP of Community Outreach Natalie Khooda, said of Grigorian, above left, "It's not every day you come across someone who embodies leadership, service, and heart all in one. Our honoree tonight is a top-producing real estate professional, a trusted advocate, and a tireless community builder. As President of the Granada Hills Chamber, she's been a driving force behind initiatives that uplift local businesses."

The Northwest Chamber of Commerce presented their Small Business of the Year Award at the United Chambers Small Business Breakfast to Strain Caregivers, located in Chatsworth. Past President Nick Montano said, "Strain is a compassionate Chatsworth dispensary. Community, safety and maintaining high-quality products are at the core values they hold dearly and they're proud to embrace cannabis and its journey on the path of normatization in our culture."

Accepting the Small Business Award at the breakfast, above from left, is Strain owner and Northwest Chamber board member **Bree Worden**, with Montano, Northwest Chamber President Julio Galvez and Vice President David Phelps.

Students in the News

Havyn Rolle of Northridge has been named to the Spring 2025 Dean's List at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, Rhode Island.

Benjamin Coen of Porter Ranch received a BA in Business Creative Enterprises from Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts.

Alexander Markarian of Northridge graduated with a Master of Science Ioin Data Science and **Karan Singhvi** of Porter Ranch graduated with a Bachelor Of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin.

Arusyak Muradyan of North Hills and **Emily Van Houten** of Chatsworth were named to the Honor Roll at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, New Hampshire.

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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.

• If a terminator ends something, shouldn't an exterminator bring it back?

• More lexophilia for our enlightned readers:
- Haunted French pancakes give me the crêpes.
- England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
- I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

• Niki Budd chimes in with this factoid: the name "Jason" is the only name acronym for five months of the year: July, August, September, October, November.

• Three may keep a secret if two are dead.

• What happens when you throw a library full of books into the sea? You get a title wave.

• Didja' hear this one? A beggar walked up to a well-dressed woman on the boulevard and told her, "I haven't eaten anything in four days." To which she replied, "God, I wish I had your willpower!"

• Here's a thought for today: "Before borrowing money from a friend, decide which you need most."

• Politicians need to remember that "no comment" is a comment.

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Word on the Street

----------From Kathleen Sterling

While the city roils with. tension, there is one thing that brings us together - regardless of race, religion, economic status or politics.

That is music.

On June 7, more than 10,000 attended the Hollywood Bowl's opening night.

Broadway and movie star Hugh Jackman was the featured guest artist, while the brilliant and personable Thomas Wilkins conducted the L.A. Philharmonic, with special guest performers from the Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles.

Though Jackman is best known for his role as Wolverine in the *X-Men* films, he is a Tony Award-winning Broadway star for his role from the *Boy from Oz*. He is fresh off his role of Harold Hill in *The Music Man*, and indeed, Wilkins honored him with pieces from *The Music Man* and even *Wolverine*.

Jackman himself entertained the audience after the intermission with songs from his most memorable shows including *The Boy from Oz* and *The Greatest Showman*.

And what a showman! Jackman sang, danced, joked with the audience and gave a rousing performance, even dancing and singing his way through the audience.

Fireworks topped off the evening and kicked off an exciting summer schedule of classical, jazz, and contemporary music at the Hollywood Bowl.

Sundays through August 24, the music continues locally as Valley Cultural Foundation starts their summer Concerts in the Park season.

VCF has been producing the free concerts in the park since 1975. Concerts were first performed from a trailer pulled on the park, and drew crowds even then. Today a professional bandshell hosts concerts and events attended by thousands every Sunday.

Their new Emerging Artists program showcases new local talent each night before the main event.

The Valley now also has its own professional concert and event venue at The Soraya.

Located on the CSUN campus, The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts will start their season in September with *Fiddler on the Roof*. The season continues with a selection of music - from ethnic to classical to their famed "Jazz at Naz" series, where they transform the stage into an intimate jazz club.

I grew up at the Music Center and the Hollywood Bowl as my parents loved music and sang opera around the house.

For me one of the best things about our city is the variety of venues and offerings where so many can relax, escape reality and enjoy for a few hours the enchantment of a For me one of the best things about our city is the variety of venues and offerings where so many can relax, escape reality and enjoy for a few hours the enchantment of a I'm not saying ignore the strife, the drama and the reality of what's happening here, but take a few hours off and grab a picnic, a lawn chair or a blanket. Grab the family, partners or good friends, and lose yourself in the music.

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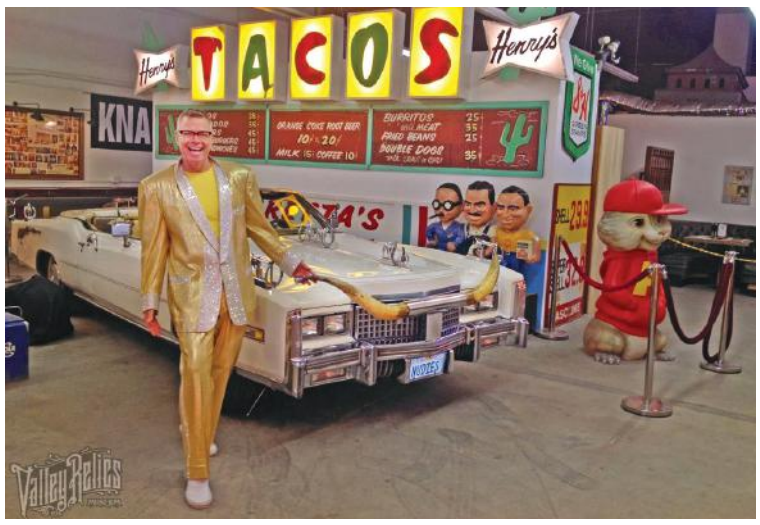

Where the Locals Go: Building Brand Presence Through Community Partnerships

By Danrochelle D. Yumul

These days, authenticity drives consumer trust, and brands are discovering the best way to connect with people is to show up where they already are. For businesses rooted in the San Fernando Valley, it means becoming part of the community's cultural fabric. The Valley offers endless opportunities for businesses to deepen their brand presence by investing in the people and places that make it special.

Community partnerships foster trust and visibility. Reputation travels fast in the Valley. When a business supports a local initiative or forms an authentic partnership, it's not just seen as marketing; it's seen as care. And, care builds loyalty.

Cultural Engagement

Few entities celebrate Valley pride like the Valley Relics Museum and My Valley Pass. The museum, packed with neon signs, classic BMX bikes, vintage fast-food memorabilia, and rare photos, draws in both locals and tourists. Meanwhile, My Valley Pass curates uniquely San Fernando Valley experiences, like summer drive-in movies, film location tours, and restaurant and brewery tours that keep the Valley's history alive and relevant.

Brands that partner with either of these organizations gain a priceless connection to Valley nostalgia, pop culture, and hometown pride. For example, local breweries and restaurants often sponsor events through My Valley Pass, earning grassroots visibility among tight-knit, loyal Valley audiences.

Retail That Gives Back

Large retailers can still act local, and Westfield Topanga has proven this. Through recurring partnerships with Hope of the Valley, a local nonprofit addressing homelessness, Westfield has hosted charity drives, awareness campaigns, and in-person donation stations. By using its platform to uplift a local cause, the mall transcends commerce and enters the realm of civic leadership.

The Events Connection

Events like the Sherman Oaks Street Fair, The Valley BlockFest, San Fernando Outdoor Market, and 818 Night Market provide a goldmine for brand interaction. Local businesses and service providers get direct access to thousands of residents, not just to sell, but to connect. These events bring together local food trucks, live entertainment, artisan booths, and local creators. Businesses that participate in these events benefit from strong foot traffic, social media buzz, and direct engagement with a community-minded audience.

Successful partnerships are built with intention. The most effective brand-community connections stem from genuine engagement, shared purpose, and consistent presence. Here are a few tips to help your business create lasting, meaningful relationships in the San Fernando Valley and beyond:

Align with Shared Values: Choose organizations or events that reflect your brand's core values. Authenticity is key.

Show Up Consistently: Presence builds trust. Being a recurring name at annual events or monthly meetups matters.

Empower the Community: Don't just promote - give back. Whether through sponsorships, mentorships, or volunteer hours, community investment shows character.

Listen and Adapt: Ask local leaders what's needed. Being a partner means responding to real needs, not just assumed ones.

Building brand presence in the San Fernando Valley isn't about slick ads or flashy campaigns. It's about becoming a trusted neighbor. Whether you're a national brand with Valley roots or a family-owned business looking to grow, investing in community partnerships is one of the most powerful, long-term strategies you can employ. When your brand becomes synonymous with where the locals go, you become part of the community's story.

Danrochelle D. Yumul is a Communications Manager at Cowe Communications. Follow them on social @CoweOfficial or visit the website at Cowe.com.

VALLEY ENTERTAINMENT

Universal Studios Hollywood Introduces Mega Movie Summer

This summer, Universal Studios Hollywood will become movie buff central when iconic movies leap from the silver screen to the theme park as part of Universal Mega Movie Summer, an all-new seasonal event designed to offer guests the best summer day in L.A. Having debuted Friday, June 13 and continuing daily through Sunday, August 10, Universal Mega Movie Summer will create experiences for guests that redefine how they can "beat the heat," "hang with friends" and "party in the park."

With the addition of ingenious menu items, curated by Universal Studios Hollywood Executive Chef Julia Thrash and complemented by all-new collections of exclusive merchandise, including apparel and toys, Universal Mega Movie Summer will delight guests and fans with an array of exclusive in-world, themed offerings.

Highlights include: Jurassic World—The Ride Featuring Mosasaurus Splash, inspired by Universal Pictures' highly-anticipated movie *Jurassic World Rebirth* opening in theaters on July 2, roars to life within the theme park's popular dinosaur-laden thrill ride. The iconic 84-foot water drop at the ride's finale will reverberate with the menacing roar of a mosasaurus. Four new spitter dinosaurs will join the melee and water geysers will erupt to shower guests.

An all-new adorable dinosaur from *Jurassic World Rebirth* will join Blue the velociraptor, Juliet the triceratops and Baby Tango. These highly realistic, lifelike dinosaurs will engage with guests alongside the debut of an all-new adventure

character, also inspired by *Jurassic World Rebirth*. A larger-than-life photo op of a spinosaurus dinosaur will welcome guests to step into a thrilling scene from the film for a memorable photo for instant social postings, and an inspiring scavenger hunt game featuring Compy will entertain visitors while keeping them on their toes.

Jurassic Cafe will serve up a sampling of new prehistoric delicacies, plus Isla Nubar will feature new cocktails, The Jurassic Water Rebirth and Spicy Jurassic Pearadise.

To mark the 50th Golden Anniversary of *Jaws* the movie, Universal Studios Hollywood is reintroducing its iconic hanging shark, a larger-than-life dimensional sculpture photo op, and paying homage to this Academy Award-winning blockbuster with the debut of meet and greet characters, Captain Quint and Chief Brody. On the Studio Tour, Jaws will be featured on the iconic Hollywood Sign replica, situated along the backlot hillside, and the infamous Jaws Lake attraction as it celebrates July 4th all summer long.

Hollywood & Dine, located just inside the theme park's main entry, will transform into Amity Island Cafe, serving up a menu fit for a great white. Menu and beverage highlights will include lobster roll, vegan crab cake sandwich, fish and chips, fish and chicken basket, Shark Bait Burger, Shark fin funnel cake, Amity Island Parfait and Amity Beach Lifesaver Donut, as well as The Shark Bite cocktail and Amity Open Water, a non-alcoholic beverage.

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the landmark film *Back to the Future,* the iconic time machine from the film will be staged on the theme park's Upper Lot, adjacent to Mel's Diner. Characters Doc Brown, Marty McFly and Einstein the dog will all be on hand and paw to greet guests and pose for timeless photo ops.

With its decades-old throwback sensibilities, Mel's Diner idyllically captures the essence of *Back to the Future*, serving up such menu options as the Flux Capacitor Patty Melt, Time Machine Pastrami Melt, Doc Brown's Chicken Pot Pie, Outatime Cookie, Time Traveler's Milk Shake, Flux Capacitor Mocktail and Wake Up Juice Cocktail.

Guests and fans of Universal Pictures' blockbuster *Wicked* will have a chance to rejoicify with popular characters, Elphaba and Glinda, when they step out in style to greet guests at the theme park's existing vibrant Wicked themed photo op, located adjacent to the main entrance.

A sculpted dimensional photo op of Toothless from Universal Pictures and DreamWorks' live action movie *How to Train Your Dragon* will take center stage within Universal Plaza. This lifelike, 730-pound, larger-than-life sculpted dimensional dragon will tower at nearly 6' in height, measuring 24' in length and 8' in width. Surprised guests posing next to Toothless will no doubt be able to imagine themselves soaring with their favorite dragon within the Isle of Berk.

Marty McFly, above, will be on hand next to the Time Machine

Construction continues on Fast & Furious: Hollywood Drift roller coaster, above center.

New food offering will be on hand at the park, right.

A dedicated food cart within Universal Plaza will serve scrumptious treats that only a dragon could devour, such as Toothless and Light Fury cookies and a Toothless popcorn bucket.

As construction continues on Fast & Furious: Hollywood Drift, Universal Studios Hollywood's first-ever high-speed outdoor roller coaster opening in 2026, the theme park will offer guests an exciting sneak peek at one of the ride vehicles for this all-new adventure. The Dodge Charger ride vehicle, designed to look like Dominic Toretto's 1970 Dodge Charger, will park within Universal Plaza for guests to enjoy as the theme park races towards the roller coaster's grand opening next year.Universal CityWalk Hollywood is also toasting Universal Mega Movie Summer with a variety of entertainment and limited-time offerings.

For more information about Universal Studios Hollywood, visit UniversalStudiosHollywood.com, follow @UniStudios on Instagram and X and like Universal Studios Hollywood on Facebook.

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WOODLAND HILLS

The Reel History of the Valley

By Martin M. Cooper

A Strange Name for a Very Talented Man

Ever heard of Ubbe Ert Iwerks?

Probably not, yet a large measure of the success of the behemoth Disney organization's early achievements belongs to him.

An artist and animator just like Walt Disney, Ub, as he was known, was a key part of the Burbank Mouse House organization from 1923 to 1930, left for a decade and then returned to Disney from 1940 to 1964, a total of 31 years.

Iwerks and Disney met while both were working at the Pesmen-Rubin Art Studio in Kansas City. Iwerks was just nine months older than Disney and the relationship they struck up lasted for decades. They went into the cartoon and animation business together, but their fledgling firm's bankruptcy led to Disney relocating to Los Angeles in 1923.

While you would never know it, since the near-deification of Walt Disney by the company's publicity machine leaves little room for others to stand in the spotlight (and that was one of the major causes of the studio's cartoonists' bitter strike in 1941), Iwerks was nearly as responsible for the creative and technical achievements of the company as Walt himself.

To prove the point, a few of Iwerks achievements: He refined the look of Mickey Mouse, based on Disney's initial sketch and developed Oswald the Lucky Rabbit with Walt; much of the animation for the early *Silly Symphony* cartoons, which included Steamboat Willie and several others; and was responsible for much of the technical advancements in animation.

In January 1930, he and Walt had a disagreement. Some biographers say it was over the issue of who received credit for what creations, but in any event, Iwerks set up his own firm, and provided services for MGM, Screen Gems, and others.

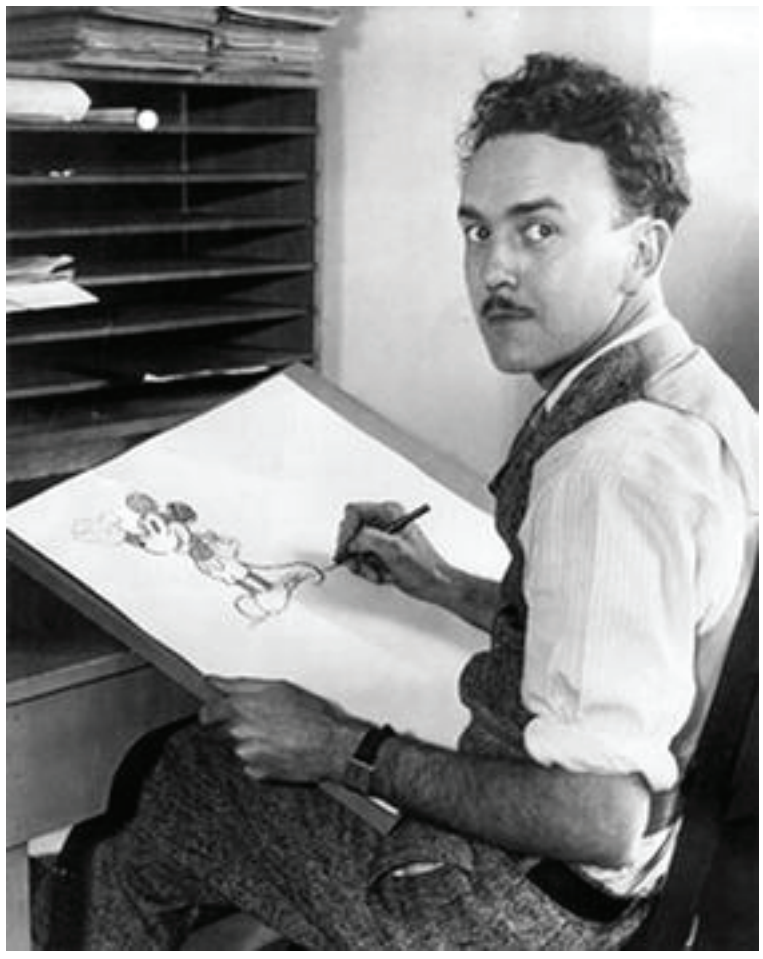
He returned to Disney in 1940 and stayed there until his retirement, but the closeness of the early relationship was never rekindled.

Some of his activities during that 24-year stint included much of the animation for 1946's *Song of the South*, technical advances used in such films as *101 Dalmatians* (1961), the matte system for the "Feed the Birds" sequence in *Mary Poppins* (1964) and he developed a number of attractions for the Disney theme parks. His last Disney contribution was to the Hall of Presidents attraction at Disney World in Florida.

It's not as if the Disney organization totally ignored Iwerks' substantial contributions to its success; he was posthumously made a Disney Legend in 1989; was honored with three Academy Awards nominations and one Academy Award, and other honors.

Iwerks died at the age of 70, successful as an animator, cartoonist, film producer, inventor, and special effects technician. *The Hand Behind the Mouse: The Ub Iwerks Story*, a documentary film, was released in 1999, followed by a book written by Iwerks.

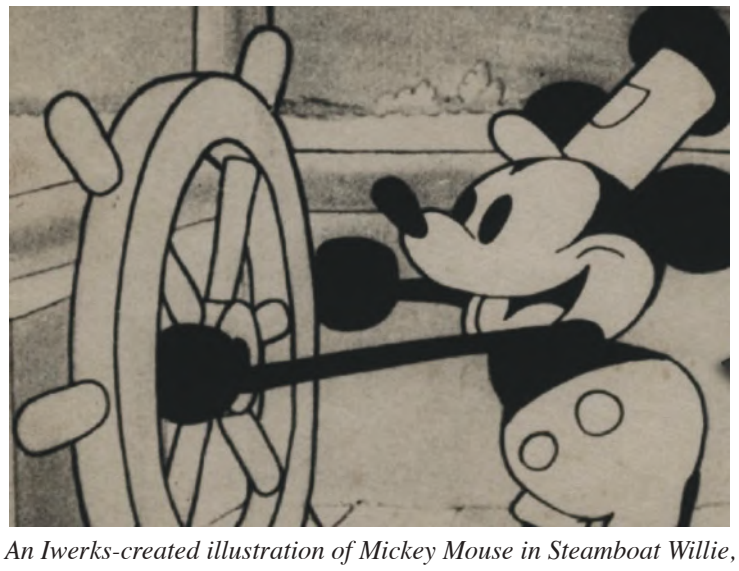
But the truth of the matter is that – to a large degree – Ub Iwerks has never received all the credit he deserves as one of the creative pillars upon which the Disney organization rests.



Ub Iwerks at his drawing board.

The title card for Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, which Iwerks played a major role in creating…but his name is not on the credits.

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.



An Iwerks-created illustration of Mickey Mouse in Steamboat Willie, a short directed by both Disney and Iwerks.

VALLEY ENTERTAINMENT

Clarkson's Farm Continues to Amuse with Farming Antics

By Katie Sterling

It's hard to see other people living your dreams. That dream being the owner of acres of farmland in the English countryside. Farmland amuck with various animals, crops and idyllic landscapes to keep you occupied for hours. Granted, if anyone can tell you that dreams aren't always cracked up to be, Jeremy Clarkson would be first in line.

In the fourth season of his hit Amazon show, *Clarkson's Farm*, Clarkson is again fighting the never-ending battle of attempting to run a successful farm. His troubles are our amusement, seeing as how the man known for his *Top Gear* days isn't exactly qualified for farm logistics. However, thanks to those *Top Gear* days, Clarkson has enough funds to fail spectacularly and well, keep calm and carry on as they say.

Thanks to his dedicated team, who actually know what they are doing, Clarkson has been able to establish Diddly Squat Farm as a profitable and popular spot in Chipping Norton. In four seasons, he's tended to the land, raised animals and created not only his own beer from the grains he grows, but opened up a farm shop and a café selling only what he has grown on the farm.

Season four picks up a few months after the end of season three with Clarkson setting his sights on his next big project: opening a local pub. Given how much the local council has been vehemently against any of his previous projects, Clarkson must find an establishment outside of local limits. While pub-hunting, Clarkson must also still follow through with his farm responsibilities, an extra pressure this year seeing as how his right-hand man Kaleb is off on his own book tour. In four seasons, everyone's popularity has grown but, alas, Clarkson's farm skills have only scantily improved.

To rectify this issue, Clarkson hires a temporary farm assistant, Harriet, who may be half his age, but has twice (dare I say three-times) the knowledge. While Kaleb feels a little thrown by this decision, he can't fault the fact that her presence showcases how important it is for younger generations to keep farm life thriving. And truly, that is an important message woven throughout the whole series, despite how comical many of their adventures tend to be. Clarkson works tirelessly with his team and neighboring farmers to ensure that the work they put into their crops is appreciated and continues to thrive despite environmental and government setbacks. *Clarkson's Farm*, in many ways, is a small peak into an industry that is struggling to survive thanks to climate change and a way of life that may cease to exist as technology continues to involve.

He may know diddly squat about its practices, but farm life through his eyes has never been more appealing.

While it touches on these issues throughout the show, it mainly provides a comforting escape for viewers looking for a laugh. From battling Mother Nature to buying Lamborghini tractors, there's no doubt that Clarkson isn't your traditional farmer utilizing traditional techniques. He may know diddly squat about its practices, but farm life through his eyes has never looked more appealing.

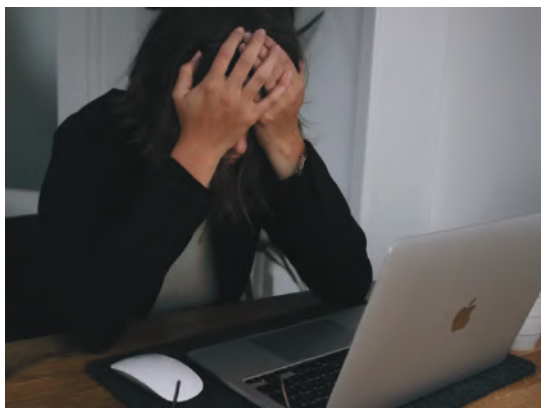
Clarkson's Farm is currently streaming on Amazon Prime.

Sherlock Holmes at West Valley Playhouse

The West Valley Playhouse's next production is Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes: The Woman in Black. Directed by Jon Berry, the play stars Patrick Foley, Debi Kaye, Diane Le Moine, Bill Prescott and Ken Solo.

The Woman in Black will be on stage July 11 through August 3 at Woodland Hills United Methodist Church, 5650 Shoup Avenue. For tickets visit wvplayhouse.com or call (818) 884-1907.

Maintaining Your Mental Health During a Stressful News Cycle



It goes without saying that Southern California has recently been inundated with an overwhelming amount of stressful local news.

As the world becomes more dependent on technology, the news cycle is now not only instantaneous, but widely available. At any time, an individual is flooded with the latest headlines, breaking news and continuous alerts on events locally and worldwide.

While important to stay informed and thus, better understand events at hand, there's no doubt that the influx of information can take a toll on your mental health. So how do you navigate the news during heightened media coverage? How do you balance your consumption of media while protecting your mental health?

With a myriad of outlets reporting on the same topics, a lot of the information will be redundant. Consuming all the information you can find won't aid in easing anxiety, but could rather fuel it as reading the same repetitive information may make you feel as if you're not getting any answers.

With that being said, stick to select trustworthy news sources. There are countless outlets that will be disseminating information and many will exude fear-mongering, sensationalism or regurgitating false information.

Find sources that deliver the facts in a non-panicked and straightforward way and stick to those. Strategically curate your social media feeds to only show you these outlets.

Unfollow accounts that make you feel frustrated or anxious, mute certain key words or hashtags that you no longer want to see and block those that are not credible. Even turning off phone alerts for certain news apps can lessen anxiety and decrease distraction without the constant pinging of new updates.

With certain parameters in place, it's also helpful to set time limits for news consumption. If you find yourself in an endless bought of doomscrolling, limit your media intake to select parts of the day and try and not stray from those set times.

Make an hour of your morning dedicated to media updates and then only check your newsfeed once again at night. Or make certain areas of your home no-phone zones so the temptation to constantly pick up your cell for the latest information is diminished.

Don't feel guilty about needing to temporarily tune out of news coverage for the sake of your mental health. Whether you unwind with your favorite TV series or a novel, there's no shame in tuning out of world events to unwind and have a mental reset.

The influx of horrific and never-ending news coverage can make anyone feel powerless, but by utilizing the strategies above, individuals can attempt to find balance in being informed without being overwhelmed.

Small, tangible actions can lead to better well-being that will not only benefit yourself but others. By taking the time to step away from regurgitating news cycles, individuals can also step towards actions and partake in small acts of change to aid the crisis seen on screen.

While media breaks may be brief, the benefits on mental health are crucial.

24 / 7
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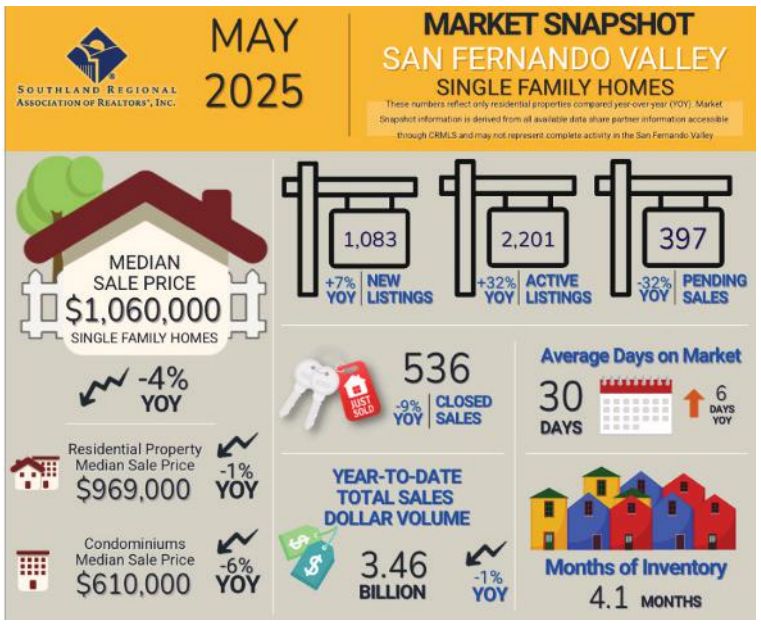

Valley Inventory Soared as Home Sales Fell in May

After rising for four consecutive months, closed escrows of existing single-family homes and condominiums fell during May throughout the San Fernando Valley, while the number of properties listed for sale climbed to the highest level in five years, the Southland Regional Association of Realtors reported today.

While low by long-term historical standards – the record for any month for combined home and condo listings was 14,976 active listings set in July 1992 – the 2,201 single-family home active listings reported this May surpassed the peak tally reported prior to the COVID pandemic of 2,161 in June 2019.

Similarly, the 649 condominium active listings in May came in just under the totals reported in April through September 2019.

The home active listing total was up 46.0% while the condo tally rose 64.7% compared to May 2024.

"Prospective buyers were coming out in numbers, eager to sort through a suddenly expanded selection as the inventory swelled," said Anthony Bedgood, President of the 10,000-member Southland Regional Association of Realtors. "Then the impact from the January wildfires, the threat of international tariffs, and now lingering economic uncertainty continues to cloud the future, making some buyers hesitant.

"Sales were rising, as they often do in the early months of each year," he said. "But after a hopeful start, May totals went in the other direction."

The Association reported the close of escrow on 536 single-family homes and 119 condominiums. The home total was down 9% while the condo tally plunged 20.7% compared to May 2024 – numbers closer to when the economy shut down due to the pandemic.

"There's always opportunity, regardless of the market," said Valerie Biletsky, SRAR's Chief Executive Officer. "Slowing sales and rising inventory typically translate into slower price appreciation or even price reductions, especially if an owner must sell in a hurry."

The median price of single-family homes that closed escrow last month was $1,060,000, which was down 3.6% from a year ago and well below the record high $1,140,000 of July 2024. The condominium median price – which means half the sales had prices higher and half lower – of $610,000 fell 6.2%.

Pending escrows – a measure of future closed escrow totals – reported a 32% drop for homes and a plunge of 51% for condominiums.

Bedgood and Biletsky agreed that rising inventory, softening prices and fewer closed escrows are all reflections of ongoing buyer concerns over the direction of the economy.

Plus, listings are staying on the market longer – 30 days for homes, up 6 days from a year ago, and 44 days for condos, up 21 days.

At the current pace of sales May saw a 4.4-month supply of homes and condos, a number approaching a historical tipping point where sellers' grip on the market loosens and buyers gain bargaining leverage. (For perspective, over 38 years, SRAR reported a 5.3-month average supply while the five-year average from 2019 to 2024 came in at a 2.6-month supply.)

SRAR's Income-to-Loan guide for May found that an income of $158,326 was needed to qualify for an 80% loan of $488,000 on a San Fernando Valley median-priced condominium of $610,000. With the national average interest rate at 6.64%, the income needed to qualify was down 9.1% from a year ago. The monthly PITI — principal, interest, taxes and insurance payments — totaled

Bill Would Add 118,000 to Rim of the Valley Corridor

U.S. Senator Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) and U.S. Representative Laura Friedman (D-Calif.-30) introduced the bicameral reintroduction of the Rim of the Valley Corridor Preservation Act, landmark legislation that would protect some of the last wild and open spaces in the Los Angeles area and allow the National Park Service to work with local communities to better protect natural resources and improve access to nature.

This bill would add over 118,000 acres to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) and is based on a National Park Service study that was reported to Congress in 2016.

The Rim of the Valley stretches from the Simi Hills and Santa Susanas to the Verdugos and the San Gabriel Mountains, making a "green belt" that encircles the San Fernando, La Crescenta, Santa Clarita, Simi, and Conejo Valleys.

"The Rim of the Valley contains some of the last wild and open spaces in LosAngeles and connects our urban city centers and suburbs with the beautiful outdoors. This legislation will preserve the land and wildlife that millions of Angelenos enjoy. We must protect these natural treasures for future generations, so they too can experience the beautiful hiking, abundant wildlife, diverse ecosystem, and significant historic sites found in the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area," said Senator Schiff.

"The Rim of the Valley is one of Southern California's most important natural treasures. We must protect these lands so that every Californian and American can enjoy them for generations to come," said Congresswoman Laura Friedman (D-Calif.-30). "Not only will this legislation provide local communities with better access to our beautiful public lands, but it will ensure that we protect the natural resources and wildlife that call the Rim of the Valley home."

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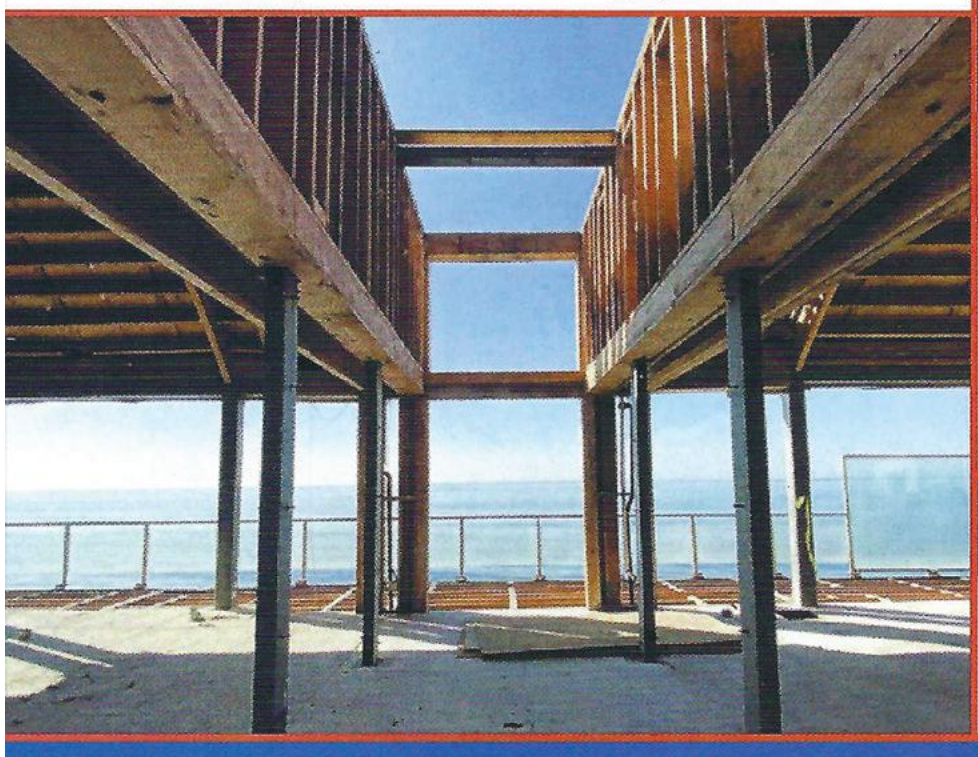

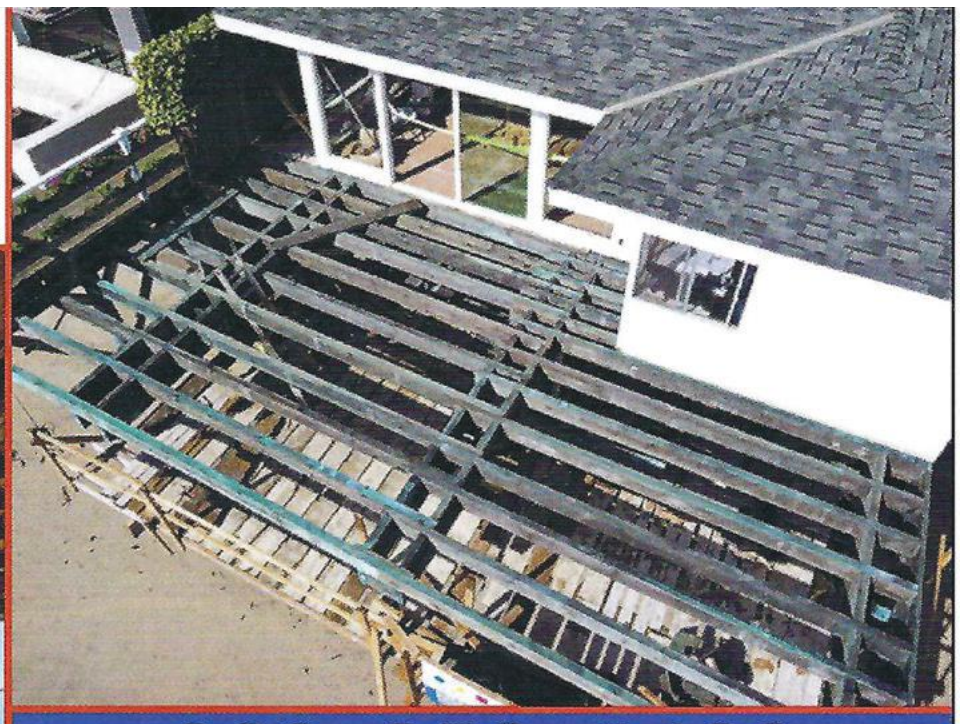

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Tribute to Pat Benatar & Beyond
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