Recent Backlash on Benadryl

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Reel History of the Valley

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ENCINO ENTERPRISE

Volume 6, Issue 126 | A Compendious Source of Information | August 14, 2025

NEWS IN BRIEF

Encino Tarzana Libray Book Sale on August 22 and 23

Friends of the Encino Tarzana Library will be holding a used book sale on Friday, August 22 and Saturday, August 23. On Friday, the sale runs from 9:30 am to 4 pm, with the first hour exclusively open for Friends of the Library members. Those interested can join at the door for $15. On Saturday, the sale runs from 10 am to 1 pm. Most books are $2 unless otherwise marked.

SFV Audubon Society Donates New Firefighting Equipment to Station 88

The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society recently announced a donation of new equipment to LAFD Station 88 to help defend the Sepulveda Basin from fires. A fire skid, a self-contained firefighting system that can be quickly mounted on a truck or a trailer, was purchased by the society (with assistance from LAFD Foundation), to help Station 88 rapidly deploy an agile defense in areas not accessible to large firetrucks. "LAFD Station 88 has constantly stepped up to fight fires in the Sepulveda Basin, helping to preserve the wildlife reserve that is continually set on fire by vagrants, etc. SFV Audubon donated funding for the skid in recognition of LAFD 88's dedication, and to show our support for a City Department that shares our values," stated Kathryn Barton, President of SFV Audubon Society.

Encino Community Gathers For Candlelight Vigil

Approximately a month after the murder of Robin Kaye and Thomas Deluca by a burglar in their Encino home, community members held a candlelight vigil for the victims. Family, neighbors and community members spoke about the couple and how devastating a loss it has been. Amidst the sadness however, was continued upset and anger at the current state of crime in Encino. Speaking in regards to increasing security in the area, Encino Property Owner's Association President Rob Glushon said, "We are demanding that the city take the kind of actions that Robin was begging them to do."

Encino Crime is Escalating: Community Leaders and Government Officials Share their Thoughts and Plans of Action

Senator Henry Stern

When a severely mentally ill individual slips through the cracks of our criminal justice system and two community leaders are murdered in Encino, we must sound the alarm: public safety will remain at risk unless we break the cycle of crime and untreated mental illness.

For too long, severely mentally ill individuals who commit crimes have cycled through our courts, jails, and hospitals, only to return to the streets sicker than before. This is neither justice nor compassion—it's failure for them, for victims, and for public safety.

The Encino tragedy is just one example. Before 22-year-old Raymond Boodarian allegedly murdered Robin Kaye and Thomas Deluca last month, he had threatened his family with a knife, assaulted relatives, and displayed a history of mental illness, assaults, and drug-fueled behavior.

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Councilmember Nithya Raman

Dear Encino Community,

I want to first acknowledge the deep pain and grief our community is experiencing following the recent, heartbreaking murders in Encino. As I shared in my message to residents in late July, I am devastated by the tragic killing of Robin Kaye and her husband Tom DeLuca — two beloved members of our community whose lives were senselessly taken. This loss, coupled with recent home burglaries, has shaken all of us, and I know it has left many of you feeling vulnerable and unsafe in your own homes.

While the suspect has been arrested and is currently being held without bail, I recognize that no arrest can undo this tragedy — and that for many of you, fear and uncertainty remain. That's why our office has been working around the clock in close coordination with the LAPD, the Mayor's Office, and

(continued to page 4)

Encino Neighborhood Council VP

This summer has shaken Encino to its core.

Burglaries are up. People are being followed, surveilled, and robbed. But the most horrifying moment came when we learned that two of our neighbors—Robin Kaye and her husband, Thomas DeLuca—were brutally murdered in their own home. And it wasn't random.

Just weeks before their deaths, Robin and Thomas reached out to the Encino Neighborhood Council. They'd already been the victims of a break-in. They were terrified. A party house next door had become a source of chaos and danger: wild parties, strangers arriving in cars with no license plates and heavily tinted windows, and—according to Robin and Thomas—gun lockers made available for guests to store weapons.

They told us they no longer felt safe in their own home. And they weren't alone—the entire neighborhood was on

(continued to page 4)

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Community Calendar

* The Encino Neighborhood Council will be holding their monthly General Board meeting on Wednesday, August 27, at 7 pm via Zoom. For the link and agenda, visit encinonc.org.

* The Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber will hold their next Restaurant Group meeting on Monday, August 18, at 2 pm at The Oaks Tavern (13625 Moorpark St). The goal of the Restaurant Group is to provide marketing strategies, operational support and to build a strong network of restaurant professionals. The meeting is free, but registration is required at shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

* Join the West Valley Regional Library for an engaging discussion on some of the world's best short stories in their World Literature Book Club. This year's selections are from *100 Great Short Stories* edited by James Daley and *The Scribner Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction*. The book club will meet Mondays at 10 am and this month's selections (from *100 Great Short Stories*) are August 18: *Nobody's Story* by Charles Dickens and August 25: *The Fiddler* by Herman Melville.

* The Reseda Neighborhood Council will be holding their general board meeting on Monday, August 18, from 6:30 to 9:30 pm via Zoom. For the agenda and Zoom link, visit resedacouncil.org.

* On Saturday, August 23, from 9 to 11:30 am, the 818 Week Coalition is hosting "Saluting Our Firefighting Heroes: Breakfast with the Brave," a free community pancake breakfast honoring the LAFD heroes who protected the Valley during the January firestorms. The day will include a family-style pancake breakfast, fire station tours, engine displays, family-friendly activities and entertainment, community health resources, safety, and disaster readiness resources, nonprofit resources, health screenings and disaster prep tools, music and a chance to connect face-to-face with the heroes who protected you. The event will take place at the Van Nuys Fire Station 39 (1465 Oxnard St).

* The Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce will be hosting their next "Mix and Mingle" on Tuesday, August 26, from 5:30 to 7 pm at Willy Sanjuan Photography Studio (14336 Ventura Blvd). The cost is $20 for members and $40 for non-members before August 25. Register your spot at shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

* ONEgeneration Farmer's Market will be hosting a Red Cross blood drive on Sunday, August 24, from 8 am to 1 pm. While walk-ins are accepted, registration is preferred. Make your life-saving appointment at redcrossblood.org and use sponsor code "onegeneration."

* The 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). The next community cleanup will take place on Saturday, August 23, from 8 to 11 am. For details on volunteering, visit sfvaudubon.org/event/sbwr-habitat-restoration-3/2025-08-23.

* NoHo Summer Nights will hold their last concert of the season on Saturday, August 16, at 7 pm at North Hollywood Park. The featured performer will be It's Britney Beep (a tribue to Britney Spears), with emerging artist Dogs Forever.

* Save the date! The 33rd annual Sherman Oaks Street Fair is back on Sunday, October 19, from 10 am to 6 pm. The Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce is inviting interested sponsors and vendors to take part in this community tradition that draws thousands of attendees each year. Whether you're a small business, artisan, nonprofit or a larger brand looking to make a local impact – the Chamber has sponsorship packages and booth options to fit your goals and budget. Those interested in signing up to be a part of the fair are encouraged to reserve their spot early. For more details, visit ShermanOaksStreetFair.org.

People in the News

Well over 100 valley residents, community leaders, politicians and Wings Over Wendy's (WOW) members came together Tuesday night to celebrate **Ed Reynolds** on his 90th birthday. Reynolds leads Wings Over Wendy's, a valley veterans group that meets weekly in Woodland Hills and Encino.

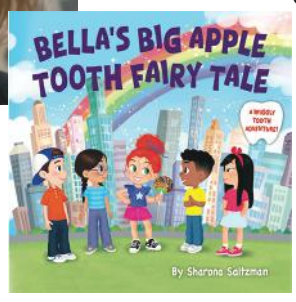
Reynolds is a retired Air Force Lt. Colonel. He served as a navigator on air refueling tankers, Air Operations Staff Officer, Missiles Targeting Officer for MIRVs (multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle), and Intelligence Advisor to the Vietnam Air Force and action officer - for six years - in the Pentagon. There he introduced computer terminals to the Air Staff and managed the USAF Aircraft Inventory database.

He has 5,000 flying hours including 640 combat hours in 147 combat missions.

Following his service in the Air Force, he worked as an International IT Management Consultant at United Airlines, SRI International and several other defense contractors. He formed service management consulting groups for companies before focusing on traveling the world. He is one of only 100 people known to have visited every country in the world.

Encino resident **Sharona Saltzman** is a writer, creator, and mom who turns everyday moments into fun, meaningful memories. She's the founder of MyWish4U, known for its joyful products like clever lunch box and holiday notes that bring smiles to kids and parents alike. The notes are available at Target stores.

Her latest venture is the children's book *Bella's Big Apple Tooth Fairy Tale*.



Embark on a joyful, magical Tooth Fairy adventure with Bella and her friends Vivi, Chloe, Nash, and Henry. This heartwarming 32-page story captures the enchantment of the Tooth Fairy as Bella and her friends experience the excitement of losing their first teeth. Each friend has a unique encounter, discovering delightful Tooth Fairy secrets that will captivate young readers.

This charming tale not only prepares kids for their own Tooth Fairy visits but also inspires them to take care of their teeth. Perfect for bedtime reading or as a cherished keepsake, this book sparks curiosity, nurtures imagination, and celebrates the wonder of childhood. Available at Barnes & Noble, Amazon and Walmart.

Congratulations to *Valley News Group* contributor and Encino resident **Martin Cooper**, above, on his 60th column of the "Reel History of the Valley" for us. Cooper has been writing the column featuring all things industry related from the valley - movies, directors, actors, locations and more, for five years. He is turning the columns into a book, *The "Reel" Hollywood: The San Fernando Valley*, which will be published later this year.

Cooper is 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 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.

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.

• We can't wait for those Target ads to reappear for back to school...the ones that have parents singing the Christmas song, "It's the most wonderful time of the year," as they tire of trying to figure out what to do with their little darlings in the last days of vacation.

• Sometimes your life is a 52 card pickup. Your day depends on which cards you choose to pick, and which you leave lying on the table.

• What do you call a one-eyed deer. Ans: No idea. (Get it - no eye deer...)

LOCAL NEWS

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Encino Crime Editorials Continued

Senator Stern

(continued from page 1)

In Sacramento, 25-year-old Jordan Murray—arrested for violent robberies, including using a caustic chemical on store employees—was released through mental health diversion. Six months later, he allegedly stabbed a man to death.

Public safety will remain at risk unless we break the cycle of crime and untreated mental illness.

In Napa, Ramiro Ochoa Mendoza was declared incompetent on misdemeanor charges, failed diversion terms, and had his charges dismissed under current law. Three days later, he was arrested for murder.

To address this, I introduced Senate Bill 483 to preserve diversion for those committing low-level crimes, while giving judges the discretion to require treatment and keep individuals posing an unreasonable risk to public safety off the streets. Under current law, judges can be compelled to release defendants with serious mental disorders without ensuring they get care.

Inside jails, another gap exists: courts are unable to order necessary medication for inmates with severe mental illness, even while their psychosis is exacerbated before they are released untreated. My SB 820 would allow jail-based psychiatrists to provide involuntary medication in extreme cases.

Legislation alone is not enough. With the passage of Proposition 1, counties now have billions in state resources for behavioral health treatment and facilities. These funds must be directed toward psychiatric beds, crisis care, and long-term treatment for those whose illness puts themselves and others at risk—sometimes in secure facilities where treatment isn't just voluntary. LA County should prioritize such interventions in the hundreds of millions it's receiving from Sacramento.

This is not about punishing people for being sick. It's about ending a destructive cycle that endangers communities and fails those in crisis. Victims deserve protection. Families deserve hope. And people with severe mental illness deserve timely, appropriate care—sometimes compelled—to help them regain stability and avoid the revolving door of arrests and hospitalizations.

With SB 483, SB 820, and strategic use of Proposition 1 funds, we can replace a broken system with one that heals and protects.

Senator Henry Stern represents the 27th Senate District.

Councilmember Raman

(continued from page 1)

our City departments to ensure residents feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods.

I want to take a moment to address several pressing concerns we've been hearing from the community:

First, regarding the persistent public safety issues at the illegal party house on White Oak Avenue: let me be clear — our office takes this matter extremely seriously. This property owner's repeated violation of the law is a public safety issue and we have zero tolerance for their disregard for neighbors, our community, and the laws of our city. We have been working with constituents to address the issue for some time now, and we have urged LAPD and the City Attorney to escalate enforcement to finally put this repeat offender out of the illegal party business — we expect swift action from them on this matter.

Second, we've received the community letter that circulated on July 31st outlining what residents want to see to feel safer. I want you to know: we hear you, and we support you. Some of your requests are already underway and the rest are being evaluated by LAPD for feasibility and appropriateness.

I've introduced legislation to expand the City's unarmed crisis response program citywide and to reform the 911 system to reduce wait times.

LAPD has also implemented a focused crime suppression strategy in Encino, modeled on successful tactics from last summer. This includes increased patrol visibility, the deployment of mounted units and helicopter patrols, and coordination with the Sheriff's Department's Burglary & Robbery Taskforce, as well as LAPD's Metropolitan and Commercial Crimes Divisions to target organized burglary crews. In addition, license plate readers have been deployed at key intersections throughout the neighborhood.

Beyond immediate safety responses, our office is also pushing for systemic improvements to how the City handles public safety. Cities across the country, including Los Angeles, have increased police officer wages to improve recruitment, but it has not worked. So we must ask ourselves, what do we do with a police force that is not growing? I've introduced legislation to expand the City's unarmed crisis response program citywide and to reform the 911 system to reduce wait times. These are reforms that will allow sworn LAPD officers to focus on the core work of crime prevention and response, rather than getting taken off the streets to fill roles that don't need sworn officers.

I know this is an incredibly difficult time for our community. I remain fully committed to working with all of you, with law enforcement, and with our City departments to keep Encino safe, today and in the long term.

Warmly,

Nithya Raman, Los Angeles City Councilmember, 4th District

Encino Neighborhood Council VP

(continued from page 1)

edge. We did what we could: we contacted LAPD, reached out to elected officials, and tried to bring attention to what was happening.

Robin even spoke at our general board meeting in June to thank the Council for trying to help.

Then, just weeks later, she and Thomas were murdered.

A neighbor saw someone jump a fence. The police were called. A unit showed up… and left. Shortly after, Robin and Thomas were killed.

The man accused of their murder has a documented history of violence and mental illness. Domestic violence charges. Battery. According to reports, he should never have been on the streets—yet there is no system in place to track violent offenders with serious mental health issues. No registry. No warning. Nothing to protect unsuspecting communities.

That's unacceptable.

But what happened to Robin and Thomas isn't just a one-off tragedy—it's a symptom of what we're all feeling. Encino residents are being targeted. It came up again and again at a major public safety meeting on July 31st, hosted by the Encino Property Owners Association, where we heard from Mayor Karen Bass, Councilmember Nithya Raman, Senator Henry Stern, and top brass from LAPD.

The frustration in the room was real. Residents shared story after story of being broken into, stalked, or surveilled—yet

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Encino Crime Editorials Continued

(continued from previous page) never once seeing a patrol car drive down their street. And when they did call for help? Voicemail. Hold music. Hours-late responses.

LAPD admitted there are only nine patrol units covering the entire West Valley. Nine. For hundreds of thousands of people.

The most effective deterrent to crime is a strong, connected community.

This is why burglars feel emboldened. They hop fences. Break back windows. Head straight to the master bedroom. Grab whatever they can in under three minutes. And they're gone. There's no police force in the world that can respond fast enough to stop that. Not when the calls go unanswered.

So what can we do? Yes, we must keep demanding more resources from the city. We need increased patrols. We need real investment in mental health systems and violent offender accountability. We need tighter regulations on party houses.

But we also need something else—something even more immediate:

Each other.

The most effective deterrent to crime is a strong, connected community. I've heard it from every LAPD officer I've spoken to: a robust neighborhood watch—neighbors who look out for one another—is our best line of defense.

Let me give you an example. A few weeks ago, I noticed a new neighbor playing catch with his kids. I saw he was throwing lefty—just like me. I stopped and said, "Hey, Vic, you a lefty?" He laughed and said, "Yeah, throw left, bat right." "No way," I said. "Me too."

A simple moment turned into a real connection. I invited him over to grill, to swim with our kids. We became neighbors in more than name. Later, Vic texted me a video—someone had let their dog poop on his lawn and didn't clean it up. He was frustrated. But I recognized the guy from the video. I reached out, and guess what? The next day that neighbor came by with a bottle of wine to apologize.

Now, that's not exactly high-stakes crime—but it's the same principle. When you know your neighbors, things get resolved. People are accountable. And when something really dangerous happens? You've got someone watching your back.

Last month, my family and I spent a month in Sweden visiting my wife's relatives. Not once did I worry about our home here in Encino. Not because burglaries weren't happening—they were. But because I knew the people on our street. Multiple neighbors had our key. They watered our plants. Let their dogs play in our yard. Kept an eye on things. Because that's what neighbors do.

So yes—Encino is being targeted. Yes—we are under-resourced and under-patrolled. Yes—this summer has been terrifying.

But we are not helpless.

If you're reading this, take a moment this week to meet someone on your street. Say hello. Start a text thread. Exchange numbers. Ask if they'll keep an eye on your place—and offer to do the same.

Because the safest streets aren't always the ones with the most patrol cars. They're the ones where people know each other's names.

And I think that's something Robin and Thomas would have wanted us to remember.

-Josh Sautter is Vice President of the Encino Neighborhood Council.

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June 22
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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

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A Tribute to Pink Floyd
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August 17
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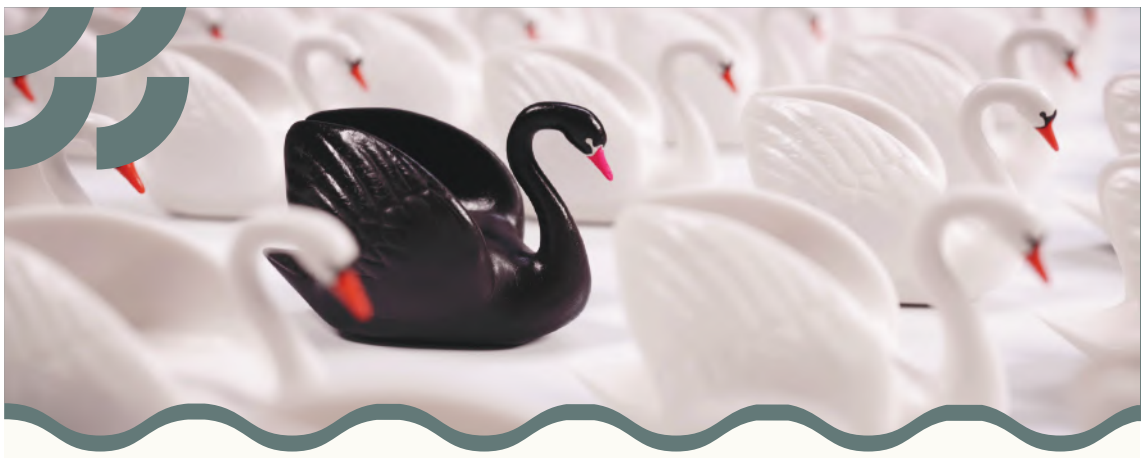

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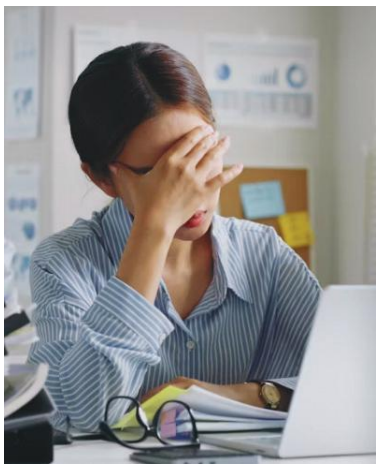
Signs You're Wearing Too Many Hats (And It's Hurting Your Business)

By Lindsey Sine

Many of us are juggling more than ever, and not in the fun, carnival-act kind of way. For small business owners, it's all too easy to pile on responsibilities until you're wearing the hats of CEO, marketer, accountant, and HR- all at once.



The problem? Taking on too much can quietly chip away at your focus, energy, and business growth. With the right approach and a little strategic delegation, those many hats can become your secret weapon for growth.

Here are a few tell-tale signs you might be wearing too many hats and what to do about it.

Loss of Focus & Efficiency

When you're stretched too thin, it becomes harder to stay focused on what matters most, and the quality of your work inevitably suffers. For small business owners, losing focus in the early stages can stall growth, lead to costly mistakes, and set the business back before it has had a chance to thrive.

You Experience Burnout & Stress

Burnout may be a buzzword lately, but it's not a new concept. Psychologist Herbert Freudenberger first coined it in the 1970s to describe the toll of extreme stress and relentless workplace demands. Long hours and mounting responsibilities can lead straight to exhaustion, decreased productivity, and a to-do list that never seems to shrink.

Your Business Performance is Suffering

If you are constantly bogged down by everyday tasks, your growth could not only slow, but also stall. Your focus is on completing everyday operations instead of strategic ways to get your business to the next level. Functioning in this solely reactive state can make it more difficult to adapt to changes and weaken your competitive edge. The more time spent in "survival mode" is more time away from the business of your dreams.

The good news? There is a way to get unstuck. You can take a step back, identify where your energy is best suited, and hand off the rest. Then you can create space for strategy, creativity, and long-term growth.

The Fix: Delegate, Delegate, Delegate

You don't have to do it all, and you shouldn't have to. Start by identifying the tasks that drain your time or pull you away from your highest priorities. These might be things like social media management, bookkeeping, scheduling, or even customer support. Then, decide which ones can be outsourced to experts or streamlined with tools and systems.

When you free yourself from the constant pull of small tasks, you gain back your most valuable asset: time. Time to focus on strategy, develop new ideas, strengthen client relationships, and actually enjoy running your business. With the right support, delegation is not just a quick fix; it's a growth strategy.

Lindsey Sine is the Director of Marketing at Cowe Communications. Follow them @CoweOfficial or visit their website at cowe.com.

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The Recent Backlash on Benadryl

Benadryl, or diphenhydramine, has long been a staple in household medicine cabinets for relieving allergy symptoms. Whether combating seasonal allergies, hives, adverse reactions to food allergies or even insomnia, the little pink pill has been the go-to for instant relief. Now, allergy experts are warning consumers that the medicine may actually be doing more harm than good.

Approved as an over-the-counter drug in 1980, Benadryl is known as a "first-generation" antihistamine that works by binding to and blocking the body's histamine receptors. Histamine is produced during allergic reactions in one's blood vessels, airways, nerves and brain.

Due to its formulation, allergy experts from Johns Hopkins University and the University of California, San Diego are now expressing concern that the side effects outweigh the benefits of the drug.

Side effects of diphenhydramine include drowsiness (because the H1 receptors are blocked and it crosses the blood-brain barrier), mild sedation, elevated heart rate, blurry vision, and in some case, cardiac effects that can quickly turn dangerous. Due to these extreme side effects, "second-generation" antihistamines were created that cross the blood-barrier at a much lower level and thus, don't have such extreme side effects. These include allergy medicine like Claritin and Allegra.

The study urges that Benadryl be phased out or at least be moved behind the pharmacy counter since users are not always aware how severe the side effects can be on their bodies, with extreme drowsiness causing the most accidents.

The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology and the American College of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology even stress the importance of prescribing second-generation antihistamines over first-generations ones to mitigate any negative reactions.

"The presence of effective and safer second-generation antihistamines, frequent and sometimes severe adverse reactions to first-generation agents, as well as its demonstrated abuse potential, strongly suggest it is time to remove diphenhydramine's availability from both the prescription and over-the-counter markets," the study concluded.

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HEALTH

AI-Powered Breast Cancer Detection Takes Leap Forward

One of the largest health networks in Southern California, managing nearly 600,000 members, has announced that RadNet's EBCD program will now be included as a benefit in their members' health plans.

Regal Medical Group, Lakeside Community Healthcare and ADOC Medical Group, affiliates of Heritage Provider Network (HPN), make history as the first providers to offer the AI-powered breast cancer detection service to all of their mammogram-eligible patients. These medical groups contract with most major health insurance carriers. Additionally, RadNet will launch an ongoing patient-outreach program to increase compliance within these medical groups and improve patient outcomes.

RadNet's EBCD program uses AI to help its breast radiologists detect even subtle lesions by pointing out areas of suspicion that are not always visible to the human eye. After the radiologist reads the exam, the AI acts as another set of eyes, and performs an additional review. If there is a suspicious finding, a second radiologist is brought in to consult, providing yet another set of eyes on the imaging.

"The closest we can come to a cure is early detection," explained Dr. Jason McKellop, Medical Director at Breastlink Tarzana. "EBCD delivers that extra layer of scrutiny, and many thousands of patients, to this point, have benefitted from its use."

RadNet's EBCD program uses AI to help its breast radiologists detect even subtle lesions...

Since rolling out the EBCD program, impact analysis on clinical performance has shown a 21% increase in cancer detection in all women, and a 23% increase in breast cancer detection in women with dense breasts. EBCD has assisted radiologists in detecting over 500 cancers. (Statistics based on data gathered over a two-year period of clinical use.)

It is estimated that one in eight women will develop breast cancer during her lifetime, but when breast cancer is detected in its earliest stage, when treatment options are most optimal, the five-year survival rate is 99% (American Cancer Society).

To find a RadNet women's imaging center near you, visit radnet.com.

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The Reel History of the Valley

By Martin M. Cooper

The Valley is Ready for its Close-Up, Mr. DeMille

The first film critic to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize was Roger Ebert. The film critic for the *Chicago Sun-Times* for 46 years, he wrote "If you wanted to show a single year that demonstrated the full potential of the movies, 1939 would be it."

Whether that year's stellar cinematic output was the result of great scripts, talented directors, or simply good luck, that one year produced more great films than any other in the nearly 150-year history of motion pictures.

To prove the point, these are just 10 of the films released in 1939: *Gone With the Wind; The Wizard of Oz; Stagecoach; Union Pacific; Mr. Smith Goes to Washington; Wuthering Heights; Dark Victory; Ninotchka; Goodbye, Mr. Chips*; and *Destry Rides Again*…and fully half of them were filmed in and around the San Fernando Valley.

Bette Davis won one of her 10 Academy Award nominations for her role in Dark Victory. The Best Actress Oscar that year went to Vivien Leigh for Gone with the Wind, as Scarlett O'Hara.

The first film critic to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize was Roger Ebert.

So, let's start with one of the most popular – and highest-grossing – films of all time: David O. Selznick's Civil War epic: *Gone With the Wind*. Selznick leased the RKO Encino Ranch for filming portions of *Gone with the Wind*, notably the lumber mill and road to Tara scenes.

Although the film is set largely in Atlanta, Georgia, not a single shot was filmed in that state; most of it was lensed on Selznick's Culver City lot. However, when Scarlett O'Hara vows never to go hungry again, that early morning sunrise scene was filmed at Lasky Mesa in Calabasas. The field hands "Quittin' time" scene was shot in nearby Agoura Hills, while the final horse ride of Gerald O'Hara, played by Thomas Mitchell, was filmed in Calabasas, on Lasky Mesa, near the end of today's Victory Boulevard.

If there is one genre that the San Fernando Valley was famous for in the middle decades of the twentieth century, it was the Western. And perhaps the greatest of them all was partially filmed in the Valley.

A number of key scenes from John Ford's classic *Stagecoach* were filmed at the Iverson Ranch in Chatsworth. While much of *Stagecoach* was filmed in Monument Valley, Utah, several action scenes were shot in the San Fernando Valley, particularly close-up action, stunts, and inserts that could not practically be shot in Monument Valley.

Many close-ups of the stagecoach on mountain or canyon roads, and cliffside and rock outcropping shots were shot at the Iverson Ranch. Some of the tight, winding canyon shots of the coach were likely filmed at Iverson's at Garden of the Gods.

As is often the case with reference sources, there is disagreement where a specific shot was made. A good case in point is the setting of the Golden Spike in Cecil B. DeMille's *Union Pacific*, about the building of the first transcontinental railroad.

The International Movie Database (IMDb) lists the Paramount Ranch in Agoura as the site of the film's climactic scene. However, Larry Jensen's *Hollywood's Railroads, Vol. 1*, states that Paramount also staged scenes on the Southern Pacific Canoga Park/Burbank branch (now Pierce College) for the Golden Spike sequence.

"If you wanted to show a single year that demonstrated the full potential of the movies, 1939 would be it."

Hollywood trade publications from 1939 mention DeMille's production team constructing a large railroad set in Canoga Park for the spike ceremony scene.

The Douglas County Historical Society and other historical film sources confirm that Canoga Park was used to film parts of Union Pacific as a substitute for Utah landscapes during production in late 1938 and early 1939.

The unlikely pairing of Marlene Dietrich and James Stewart resulted in one of 1939's funniest films, Destry Rides Again.

Dark Victory was the vehicle for one of Bette Davis' Academy Award nominations. The film was shot entirely in the San Fernando Valley, largely on the Warner Bros. Burbank lot, the Warner Ranch, and several Calabasas locations.

Director George Marshall's film, *Destry Rides Again*, is no doubt the funniest film of these 1939 hits. *The New York Times* called it a "rollicking comedy." Much of the fictional town of Bottleneck was a constructed Western street on Universal's back lot. Most of the interiors, including scenes of the saloon, jail, and courtroom, were filmed on the studio's sound stages. The outdoor sequences were filmed not far away, on the Iverson Ranch.

Time magazine's 1989 retrospective article, "1939: Hollywood's Greatest Year," celebrated the 50th anniversary of that banner year, and dubbed it "Hollywood's greatest year... a stunning explosion of cinematic energy and artistry that has never been equaled." We may never see such a burst of creative energy, filmic craftsmanship, and fine acting, again.

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. An award-winning author, he has written four books, two of them on the San Fernando Valley. His next book, The 'Reel' Hollywood: The San Fernando Valley, the history of motion pictures in the Valley, will be out later this year.

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SCAN ME

& Juliet at Ahmanson Offers New Lease on Love

What would have happened if Juliet didn't end it all in Shakespeare's famous play? Find out the alternative to losing your life over love in the hilarious new musical from the writer of *Schitt's Creek*.

& Juliet at the Ahmanson Theatre follows Juliet as she ditches her famous ending for a fresh beginning and a second chance at life and love - her way.

The new story is accompanied by a playlist of pop songs as iconic as her name, including "Since U Been Gone," "Roar," "Baby One More Time," "Larger Than Life," "That's The Way It Is," and "Can't Stop the Feeing" - all from Max Martin, the songwriter/producer behind more number one hits than any other artist this century.

& Juliet is directed by Luke Sheppard with book by David West Read and choreography by Jennifer Weber.

It's on stage August 13 through September 7. For tickets visit centertheatregroup.org. The Ahmanson is located at the Music Center downtown Los Angeles, 135 N. Grand.

Conan and Javier Bardem laugh it up in Madrid.

Conan O' Brien Returns for More Hilarity in Fan-Fueled Travel Show

By Katie Sterling

There are travel shows that center around history, there are travel shows that center around food…and then, there are travel shows that seemingly have no sense of cohesiveness other than the fact that the ridiculousness is the theme. Such is the case for Conan O' Brien's travel show, *Conan O'Brien Must Go*, which recently debuted its second season. After all, who else but a 6'4" copper-headed comedian could present the quirks of a country quite like Conan?

Following the format of the first season, Conan is tasked with meeting various fans who have previously appeared on his podcast, "Conan O' Brien Needs a Fan." The show previews a small clip of their podcast chat, most often discussing a niche aspect of the fan's life or an interesting tidbit about the city they live in. It then cuts to Conan in said country meeting the fan IRL (that's "in real life" for anyone unhip to the kids' lingo these days) and partaking in some sort of wacky adventure.

While last season Conan visited Norway, Argentina, Thailand and Ireland, this season his passport stamps include Spain, New Zealand and Austria.

Perhaps the most noticeable difference in the second season is the addition of some celebrity friends native to the country Conan is visiting. The show is still very much about the fans, but given the caliber of Conan's Rolodex, it seems only natural he would recruit some other well-known faces to up the antics.

In the Spain episode, Javier Bardem goes on a bit of a culture tour of Madrid with Conan, while in the New Zealand episode, Taika Waititi joins him to try and break a Guinness World Record for most participants in a haka dance. And while not technically a celebrity to the majority of the world, Conan fans will certainly delight in seeing associate producer (and pseudo-frenemy of Conan) Jordan Schlansky pop up at various moments during the season.

At just under an hour, each episode is an entertaining escape from reality that transports you to a place that you may not have ever been before. While it may not be the most educational travel series, its goal is to truly just make the viewer laugh and in that, it succeeds. Conan isn't shy about putting on the ridiculous outfit, eating the questionable delicacies, partaking in ludicrous bits or lovingly heckling the fans he's traveled abroad to see.

Those who listen to the podcast may even delight in putting a face to the fans and seeing how an unexpected chat with a listener can eventually turn into an adventure. Who knows what fan, or what country, might be next?

For every wacky movement, there's one of warmth, for every slapstick bit, there's one of sincerity.

Conan O' Brien Must Go may have one less episode than the previous season (a combination of hosting the Oscars and sadly, losing both his parents during that time) but, good news for those that love the series, the show has already been renewed for season three. And if travel wasn't in the cards for you this summer, your remote can certainly serve as your passport, allowing you to travel the world without ever having to leave your couch.

It may be a ridiculous show, but it's fully aware of that fact and more delightful because of it. For every wacky movement, there's one of warmth, for every slapstick bit, there's one of sincerity and throughout it all, it's clear that Conan recognizes the importance of connecting with those whose support has allowed him to succeed. He just might lovingly make fun of them a bit at first.

Conan O'Brien Must Go is currently streaming on HBO Max.

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REAL ESTATE

Amestoy Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing and Louise Avenue Overcrossing

Survey on U.S. 101 Overcrossing Improvement Projects in Encino

Caltrans plans to enhance pedestrian access across the U.S. 101 freeway and is seeking input from the community regarding the pedestrian bridge at Amestoy Avenue and the Louise Avenue Overcrossing.

Caltrans is looking for community input to determine whether to upgrade the Amestoy Avenue bridge or demolish the bridge permanently. The Louise Avenue Overcrossing will be improved in either scenario.

The department is currently open to community feedback through an online survey at tinyurl.com/amestoybridgesurvey.

While the survey is being hosted via Microsoft Forms, an account is not required to submit responses. The survey will be open until August 31, 2025.

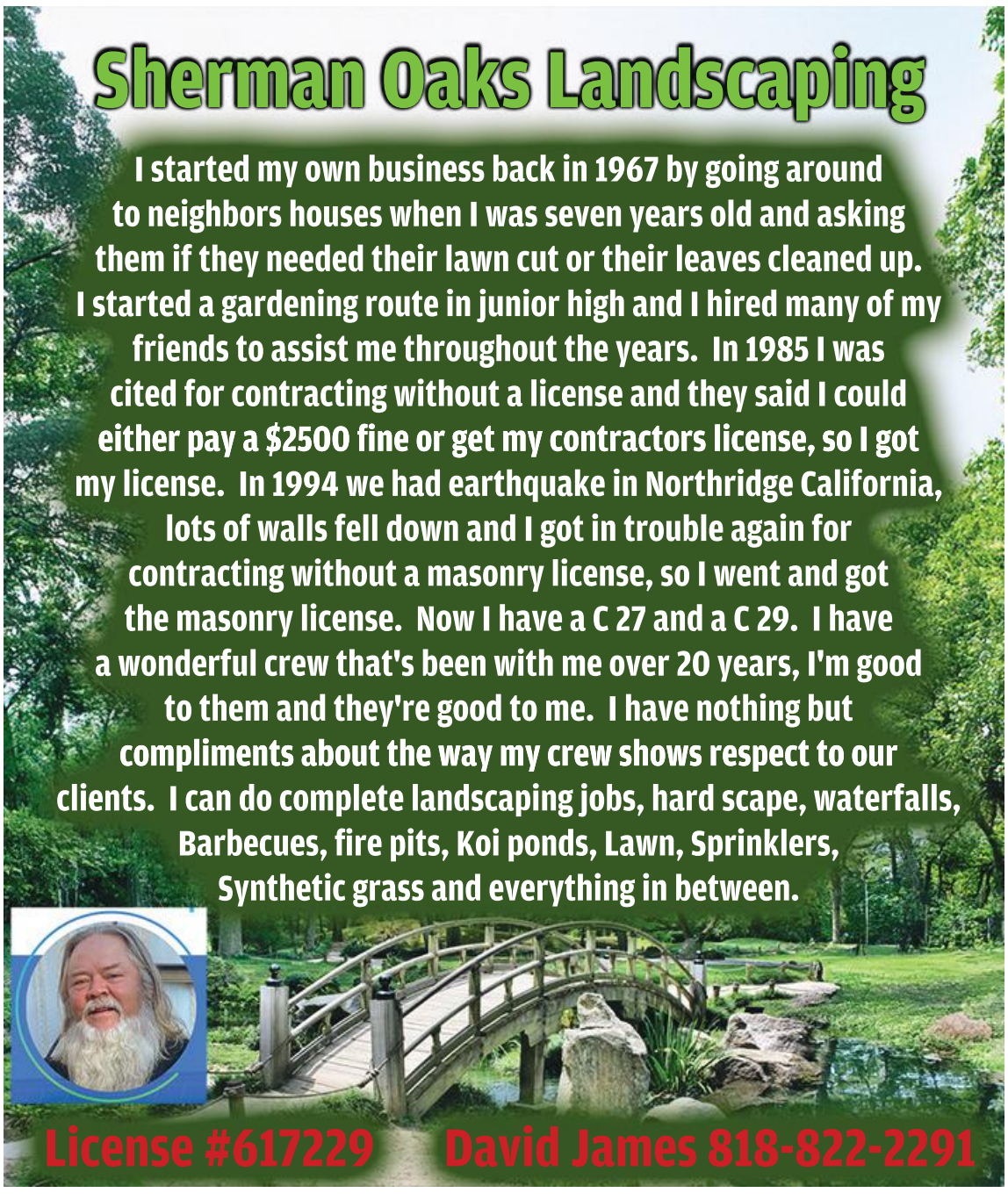
For more details on the project, visit dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-7/district-7-projects/d7-101-amestoy-avenue-pedestrian-overcrossing-and-louise-avenue-overcrossing.

Local Audubon Society to Hire Goats to Help Clear Sepulveda Basin Brush

The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society has recently secured funding to assist with the use of goat herds to clear brush and invasive plants in the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve.

Other Southern California cities (La Canada Flintridge, San Clemente, San Francisco, Hidden Hills, Palos Verdes) have hired professional goat herds to clear flashy brush in their areas and keep the wildfires at bay.

"Goats can easily keep our parks safe while lending a hand to our hardworking firefighters. SFV Audubon is offering this support to LAFD, Recreation and Parks, or any official entity that will take responsibility for getting the basin cleared and safe for our wildlife as well as residents" stated Katheryn Barton, President of San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.



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