It's That Time of Year! Halloween Horror Nights Return to Universal

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Nightrek Report: The September Sky

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Fiddler on the Roof and the Art of David Labkovsky at Soraya

See page 7

North Valley News

Volume 3, Number 17 September 4, 2025

Serving Porter Ranch, Northridge, Granada Hills & Chatsworth

News in Brief

405 Freeway Weekend Closures Set

Caltrans announced extended weekend lane reductions on the 405 Freeway through the Sepulveda Pass. The freeway will be reduced to three lanes in each direction and motorists are strongly encouraged to seek alternate routes and explore public transportation options to reach their destinations. The work will start at 10 pm Friday, September 19, through 5 am Monday, September 22. Northbound I-405 will be reduced to three lanes between Santa Monica Boulevard to just north of Sunset Boulevard. Santa Monica Boulevard on-ramp closed. Wilshire Boulevard off-ramp closed. Eastbound and westbound Wilshire Boulevard on-ramps to northbound I-405 closed. Sunset Boulevard on/off-ramps closed. Sepulveda Boulevard/Moraga Drive off-ramp closed, Southbound I-405 will be reduced to three lanes just north of Sunset Boulevard to eastbound Wilshire Boulevard. Sunset Boulevard/Church Lane on/off-ramps closed. Westbound Wilshire Boulevard on-ramp to southbound I-405 closed.

North Valley Chamber Hosting Casino Night

The North Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce will hold their annual "Havana Nights" casino under the stars on Friday, September 19, at 7 pm. The event will feature a casino, classic cars, cocktails, a cigar lounge and Cuban food. It will be held at 9015 Wilbur Avenue in Northridge. Proceeds will benefit the North Valley Foundation, which focuses on philanthropic efforts that uplift and serve the broader community. Tickets are available at nvrcc.com.

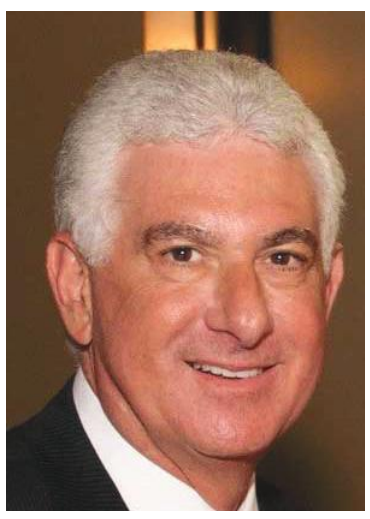
Firefighter Injured; Man Stuck in Tree Rescued

Emergency Responders' News: A firefighter was injured Tuesday while fighting a house fire on Christine Street in Chatsworth. LAFD responded to the single-family, two-story home around 10:45 am and found heavy fire on the first floor. One of the 37 firefighters on the scene was treated for a burn injury on the site.

In lighter news, a North Hills man was rescued Thursday after he got stuck in a tree trying to rescue his cat. Firefighters went to the scene in the 8900 block of Burnet and found the man in the 60-foot pine tree. His cat was shown at the top of the tree, just chillin'.

Armida Colmenares-Stafford

Dennis DeYoung



Steve Fazio

Jorge Rabaso

Sharon Udkoff

Fernando Award Finalists Named

The Fernando Award Foundation announced five Valley leaders as official finalists for this year's Fernando Award, honoring volunteer leadership in the San Fernando Valley. This is the award's 67th year.

Each year, except for 2020 due to COVID, community organizations and businesses nominate outstanding individuals to be considered for this lifetime achievement award.

Nominees are evaluated based on their volunteer engagement, length and number of years of volunteer service, volunteer leadership roles, and volunteer mentorship. They will be honored and the 2025 Fernando Award winner announced on Friday, November 6 at an event at The Skirball Center.

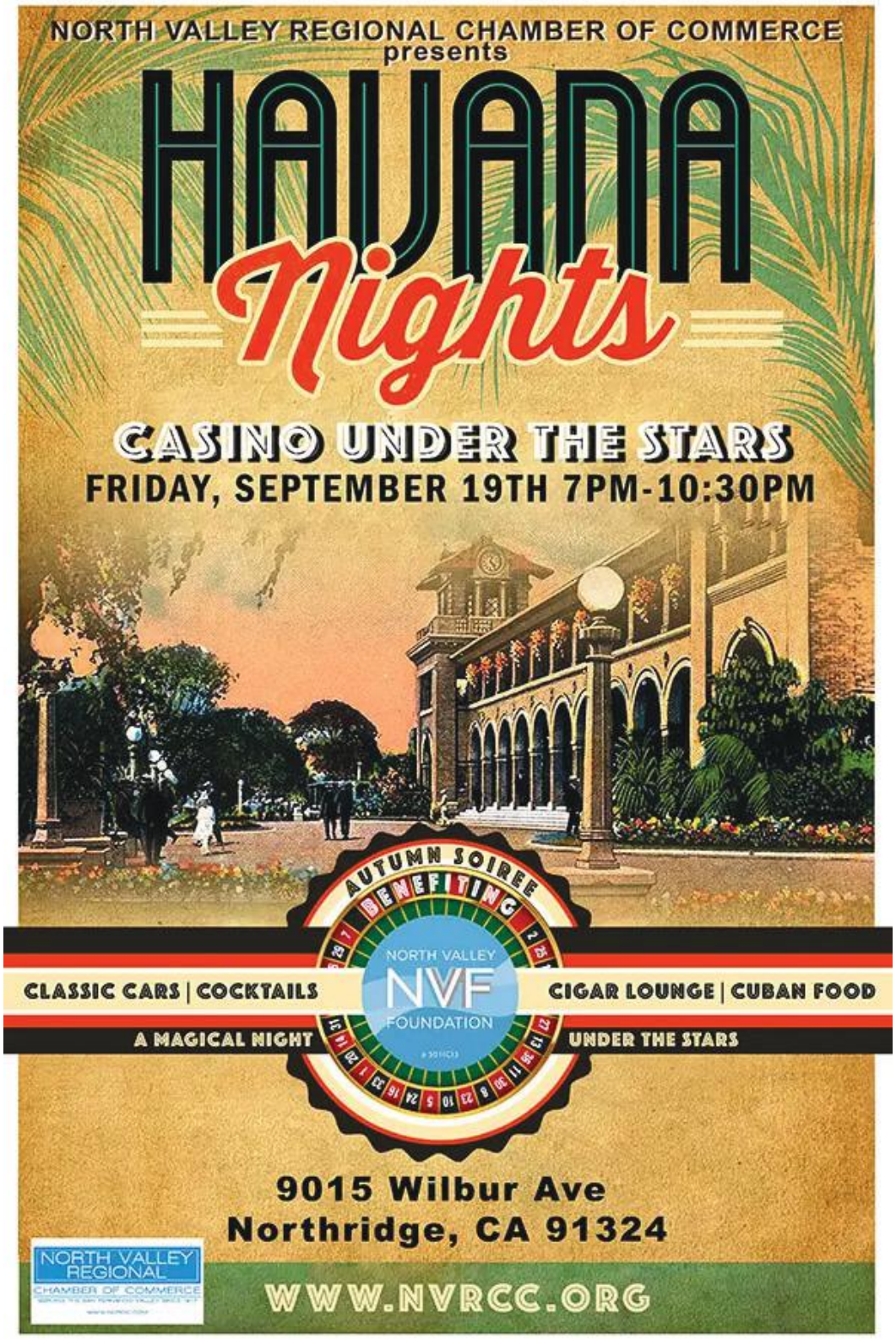
The five finalists are Armida Colmenares-Stafford, nominated by the Valley Economic Alliance and the Annenberg School of Nursing, Dennis DeYoung, nominated by Keith Nathaniel and CSUN, Steve Fazio, nominated by Dale Surowitz and Rickey Gelb, Jorge E. Rabaso, nominated by Teylez Perez and Claudia Shah, and Sharon Udkoff, nominated by Los Angeles Jewish Health and Los Angeles Valley College.

Armida Colmenares-Stafford is a First Vice President with Columbia Bank.

Dennis DeYoung is a Certified Financial Planner with LPL Financial, LLC, in Northridge, with over 42 years of experience in the investment advisor and financial planning field.

Steve Fazio is the owner of Fazio Cleaners, headquartered in Woodland Hills with locations across Los Angeles and Nevada.

Sharon Udkoff is a CPA.



Community Calendar

NORTHRIDGE: Postal Annex is hosting a grand opening free shredding event on Saturday, September 13, at 1 pm. Enjoy snacks and refreshments, special offers, raffle prizes and swag bag giveaways (while supplies last). The ribbon cutting and shredding event will be held at 18543 Devonshire, near Smart & Final.

PORTER RANCH: Logix' Porter Ranch branch will celebrate their 10th anniversary on Wednesday, September 10, from 4 to 6:30 pm. The free event will feature a free beer tasting with 8one8 Brewing and delicious bites from Claudine Kitchen & Bakeshop. The branch is located at 19765 Rinaldi Street, Suite B. For more information call (800) 328-5328.

NORTHRIDGE: Have coffee with a cop on Tuesday, September 9, at noon. Join your LAPD Senior Lead Officers at Starbucks, 19301 Nordhoff Street and learn about crime in your area and what LAPD is doing to fight it.

NORTHRIDGE: UCLA Health will offer a free seminar on simplifying Medicare. Get questions answered and learn about the basics of Medicare and UCLA Health's Medicare Advantage Plan. The meeting will be held on September 17 at 6 pm at Mimi's Diner, 19710 Nordhoff Place. RSVP at (877) 412-0630.

PORTER RANCH: Join the Porter Ranch Branch Library for sensory, small group storytime for babies, toddlers and kids on Wednesday, September 10, at 4 pm. This is an alternative to the popular morning storytimes. This smaller, more intimate program is perfect for children who may get overwhelmed by large crowds. The library is located at 11371 Tampa Avenue. For more information call (818) 360-5706.

WOODLAND HILLS: You can experience a crystal healing sound bath at the Native Spirit Lodge in relaxing reclining chairs. No yoga mats! The body's main energy centers are associated with specific musical notes and frequencies which can be utilized in sound healing practices such as sound baths. These notes and frequencies are believed to resonate with and balance the corresponding chakra, influencing physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Sound baths are held daily in a specially dedicated room. For more information please call (818) 703 7046.

ENCINO: The Southern California Garden Club kicks off their 99th season on Tuesday, September 16, at 9:30 am at Sepulveda Garden Center (16633 Magnolia Blvd.) in Encino. Nicholas Staddon will present the history of horticultural therapy. See the full itinerary of the day at socalgardenclub.org. Attendance is free and all are welcome.

Congressman Brad Sherman

TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

WEDNESDAY ✦ SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

7:00 – 8:00 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 (855) 920-0548 any time during the Town Hall. RSVP at: BradSherman.house.gov/RSVP

People in the News

Congressman Brad Sherman, at right, will host a Telephone Town Hall on Wednesday, September 17, at 7 pm. Sherman wll make opening remarks and then answer questions on any issue facing Congress.

To participate call (855) 920-0548 any time during the Town Hall. To RSVP email bradsherman.house.gov/RSVP.

Sherman has served in the House of Representatives since 1997. He has held over 250 Town Hall meetings durng his time in Congress.

Alicia Sullivan, above, is an impressive, repeat recipient of the Gelb Scholarship Education Award, provided by the Rickey & Robbi Gelb Charitable Foundation Inc. Sullivan's educational career began at Pierce Community College, where she received four associate degrees.

She transferred to CSUN and received her bachelor's in criminology with a minor in Communications. Sullivan went on to receive her master's in criminal justice with a specialization in Law Enforcement and Corrections Administration from the University of Arizona Global Campus. She is currently a Research Assistant with Northeastern University - School of Law. She plans to attend law school and/or receive her PhD in a field similar to her previous education.

"The Rickey & Robbi Gelb Charitable Foundation Inc. couldn't be more delighted with the small part they played in supporting Alicia through her academic journey," said Rickey Gelb.

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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.

• As writers we love our puns... so here are some from longtime reader Margaret Hampton:

- The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.

- I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

- She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.

• As my daughter heads back to college and I write out the bills, I asked her why she couldn't have chosen Bible College. It's cheaper because they only have one book, the test has only 10 questions and if you flunk out you're forgiven!

• Why did Beethoven kill his pet chicken? It kept saying "Bach, bach, bach!"

• A reader called in to ask if one in five people suffer from diarrhea, does this mean fouM in five enjoy it?

• Turrell also asks readers if they've heard about the new restaurant that opened on the moon. The food's okay, but there is no atmosphere.

• Thought for today: Happiness is good health and a bad memory.

• Local banker Mahsa Saam offers this joke. "For most women, men are like bank accounts - no money, no interest."

• Which leads us to the old Yiddish proverb..."With money in your pocket, you are wise and you are handsome and you sing well too!"

Valley News Group

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Word on the Street

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

Back to school isn't what it used to be. I remember the excitement of ordering new clothes from the Sears catalog, getting brand new shoes, picking out new school supplies and spending too much time picking out just the right Peachee folder. I walked to school by myself, and knew most of the neighbors along my route. My biggest worry in first grade was how to advance to the next reading level in the SRA folder. My friend was telling me the realities of sending kids to school today. Her kindergartener came home proud to have won an award her first day. She won "most quiet" for having tucked herself up on a toilet seat pretending to hide from attackers. In kindergarten. For both her children she bought bullet-proof inserts for their backpacks so they could use them as shields in case of a mass shooting. With so many school shootings our children are learning real-life lessons - instead of growing up in the safe bubble we did. I'm glad my daughter has graduated and is out of school. Sad that I worry less about her being in the real world than I would if she were still in school. She went to UCSB, and graduated just a year before the troubled West Hills boy shot up that campus. When we were in grade school, we had to "duck and cover." Like that would save us from nuclear fallout if the Russians bombed us. But there the threat was far away. Here it's sitting in the seat next to you. I have no answers. But I do think that like the homeless problem, it is a mental health issue. We have to start addressing the roots of the problems, instead of dealing with the aftermath. I guess I'm old enough now to remember "simpler, gentler times." But I do think it's a travesty that a six-year old's first gold star should be – not for spelling – but surviving.

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Why Contracts Should Be Strategic Tools, Not Just Paperwork

By Janice L. Miller, Esq.

In the digital age, contracts are too often relegated to dusty file folders. But in reality, contracts are powerful leverage points: they shape relationships, streamline operations, mitigate risks, and unlock revenue.

1. The High Cost of Treating Contracts as Mere Formalities

Treating contracts as administrative checkboxes comes with a steep price. Organizations lose around 9% of annual revenue on average due to contract mismanagement, according to reports from Procurement Tactics. In large firms, inefficiencies can erode up to 40% of a contract's value without close governance (Gitnux, Contract Management Statistics). The implications are serious. Forty three percent of organizations struggle with compliance, and 40% admit they lack clarity over who's responsible for contract-related tasks.

Moreover, locating terms or obligations can be time-consuming. Professionals may spend up to two hours digging for specific clauses.

2. Strategic Contract Management Delivers Real Value

The upside of proactive contract governance is clear. Companies with robust contract management processes tend to enjoy higher profitability, faster cash flow, lower administrative costs, and improved risk management. In fact, research shows that organizations with effective contract management practices see up to 5% higher profitability and 7% annual revenue growth, while also realizing cash faster, lowering operating costs, and capturing greater value from agreements, according to Gitnux. These aren't fringe benefits. They are competitive differentiators.

3. Reimagining Contracts as Business Drivers

Strategic contracts are not just about compliance. They can actively drive business outcomes. For example, performance-based contracting (PBC) ties compensation to measurable outcomes rather than deliverables, aligning incentives and driving better performance. According to the Financial Times, in industries like defense, PBC has delivered both lower costs and higher system readiness compared to traditional models.

Relational and "vested" contracts push this concept further by embedding shared goals, governance frameworks, and flexibility directly into agreements. By creating win-win structures, companies such as Microsoft, FedEx, and P&G have shown how contracts can transform from transaction documents into frameworks for innovation and growth (Zoho Contracts, The State of Contract Management 2025). Similarly, supplier relationship management (SRM) strategies anchored by strategic contracts enable businesses to deepen collaboration, reduce risks, and co-develop solutions rather than simply enforce obligations.

4. The Future: Smarter, Strategically Responsive Contracts

The next wave of contracts will be even more strategic as AI becomes embedded in contract drafting, negotiation, and risk analysis. Generative AI tools are already helping legal and procurement teams identify risks, flag nonstandard clauses, and accelerate redlining. According to Contract Management Online, analysts project the Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) market will grow to nearly $3 billion by 2027, expanding at double-digit annual rates as more organizations adopt these systems.

This shift marks a fundamental evolution. Contracts become dynamic governance tools. They enable organizations to not only reduce liability and improve compliance but also to recover hidden value, support collaboration, and provide real-time business insights.

Contracts as Strategic Assets

Contracts should never be thought of as dusty paperwork. They are living frameworks that define relationships, ensure transparency, and position businesses for growth. By embedding data-driven processes to prevent revenue leakage, adopting AI-powered CLM systems to increase efficiency, aligning incentives through performance-based agreements, and fostering collaboration through relational models, organizations can transform contracts into engines of value.

In other words, when contracts are treated as strategic assets rather than afterthoughts, they start becoming a source of competitive advantage for any type of business.

Disclaimer: This article is not meant as legal advice. It is solely for educational purposes.

Janice L. Miller Esq. is the managing partner of Miller Haga Law Group, LLP in Calabasas, CA. She is a highly recognized legal advisor, published author, noted speaker, and panelist with over 25 years of experience as an innovative general counsel in business, real estate, entertainment, and intellectual property.

VALLEY ENTERTAINMENT

New and Returning Haunts Kick Off Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios

Get ready to scream!

Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios Hollywood kick off this Thursday, September 4 and will run until Sunday, November 2. The torturous debauchery includes new and returning favorites for attending guests to delight in and dread!

Amazon MGM Studios' supernatural cult horror classic *Poltergeist* will bring guests "into the light" only at Universal Studios Hollywood's Halloween Horror Nights event. Considered one of the "scariest films of all time" when it debuted in 1982, the haunted house will transport guests into nightmarish scenes with terrifying characters from the movie, including the iconic Freeling family home.

Located on the historic Universal backlot, "Terror Tram: Enter the Blumhouse" will enable visitors to disembark the Studio Tour tram and set off on foot to encounter some of the most iconic villains from Blumhouse's popular horror franchises over the past 15 years, including The Grabber from *The Black Phone*, the possessed from *The Exorcist: Believer*, the diabolical *M3GAN*, the ruthless killers from *The Purge* franchise, Blissfield Butcher from *Freaky* and Babyface Killer from *Happy Death Day*, among others.

Guests who elect to upgrade their Halloween Horror Nights experience by purchasing the R.I.P. Tour will have an exclusive opportunity to meet and scream with select characters featured on Terror Tram. General Admission guests will encounter a special photo op upon disembarking the tram.

"The Purge: Dangerous Waters" stunt show returns to the WaterWorld venue, taking guests on a fiery, rocket-fueled adventure while they fight to survive the night.

Completing this year's line-up, horror fans will encounter four petrifying scare zones throughout the event. As they begin their terrifying evening at Halloween Horror Nights, guests will need to dodge a troop of chainsaw killers in "Chainsaw Clownz" and escape a maniacal fun house in "Carnival of Carnage." After surviving this year's haunted house, "Monstruos 3: The Ghosts of Latin America," guests will stumble upon a dimly lit street to brave the "Noche de Brujas" scare zone. The ever-popular "Murder of Crowz" flocks back to Halloween Horror Nights and will do anything to defend their nest.

These exciting experiences join previously announced haunted houses, including Prime Video's critically acclaimed series *Fallout,* Blumhouse's hit movie *Five Nights at Freddy's*, cult classic horror film franchise *Terrifier*, WWE's supernatural pro wrestling group "WWE Presents: The Horrors of The Wyatt Sicks," the infamous killer Jason Voorhees in "Jason Universe," the original haunted house "Scarecrow: Music by Slash," featuring a soundtrack by Grammy® Award-winning guitarist and songwriter SLASH, and "Monstruos 3: The Ghosts of Latin America," the third installment in the *Monstruos* trilogy.

(Continued to page 7)

New Art Exhibit at Soraya in Conjunction With Fiddler on the Roof – Through the Eyes of David Labkovski – "Sholom Aleichem and his Heroes"

The exhibit " Through the Eyes of David Labkovski - Sholom Aleichem and His Heroes" will be on display in The Soraya Gallery in Northridge September 13 to December 31, debuting with three performances of *Fiddler on the Roof* in Yiddish.

Shalom Aleichem (1859-1916) was a renowned Yiddish author and playwright, best known for his stories about Tevye the Dairyman, which was adapted into the Broadway classic *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Through his storytelling, Sholem Aleichem commemorates the past, while David Labkovski (1906-1991), uses his art to document over five hundred years of Jewish life in Eastern Europe before the Holocaust.

Through an art exhibit curated by the David Labkovski Project, a unique fusion of literature and visual art that preserves generations of cultural heritage while providing a deep understanding of historical events and their importance today is presented.

Lithuanian-Israeli artist Labkovski was dedicated to the commemoration of the Jewish "world that was." Labkovski turned to Aleichem's stories as his muse to remember the past, to be swept back to his own childhood. The parallels between Labkovski's Aleichem series and his work depicting his own memories of prewar life are unmistakable. The settings and the characters from his illustrations are intentionally interchangeable with his work representing the "real" townspeople, as if they are one and the same—his love for the characters and for his community can be seen in every brushstroke and pencil line. We meet them all as they are walking in the streets, selling their wares, or enjoying a moment of gossip.

Aleichem captures the zeitgeist of Jewish life at the turn of the century. The stories may be specific to a time and place, but the quirks and peccadillos of the characters, the humanity Aleichem shares, are universal and eternal.

Painting of Tevye by David Labkovski.

His humorous tales address complex issues: antisemitism, emigration, modernization and poverty. His characters play the cards they've been dealt, just as his readers were facing the same challenges. Aleichem's world was the world before the Holocaust. In the aftermath, his stories take on new meaning; his words resurrect a world that no longer exists.

The multigenerational exhibit at The Soraya is open to the public and appeals to audiences of all ages.

Among Aleichem's most beloved characters is Tevye from *Fiddler on the Roof,* whose trials and tribulations continue to resonate with audiences worldwide. Tevye's stories are filled with humor and tragedy, unfolding in a classic Aleichem style that captivates readers through winding, immersive storytelling. In *Tevye Strikes It Rich*, Tevye recounts his journey from a log-hauler to a dairyman, after a fateful act of kindness rewards him with money, food, and a dairy cow.

The exhibit at The Soraya will be open to the public for self guided tours and private group tours can be scheduled. The multigenerational exhibit appeals to audiences of all ages as Aleichem's stories have universal appeal and humor with many of the same issues from the past relevant to life today.

The Soraya at California State University at Northridge is a world class venue. It houses over 3,500 seats and has had, and will continue to have world class performers.

It is located at 18111 Nordhoff Street. For more information visit the soraya.org.

Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios

(Continued from page 6)

Adding to the scares, guests also can experience select theme park attractions open during the event, including SUPER NINTENDO WORLD, "Jurassic World—The Ride," "The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™," "Transformers™: The Ride-3D," "Revenge of the Mummy—The Ride" and "The Simpsons Ride™."

A variety of Halloween Horror Nights ticket options for Universal Studios Hollywood are available, including General admission, Universal Express, After 2 P.M. Day/Night, the Early Access Ticket, which provides entry to select haunted houses beginning at 5:30 pm (subject to change), in advance of the scheduled 7 pm event opening time, the R.I.P. Tour and popular passes, Frequent Fear Pass and Ultimate Fear Pass, which enable guests to experience the scares again and again.

For tickets to Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios Hollywood, visit universalstudioshollywood.com/hhn/en/us.

Playhouse Presents War of the Worlds

The West Valley Playhouse will present a retelling of Orson Welles original 1938 radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds*.

It is directed by Jon Berry and will take the stage September 5 through 28 at Woodland Hills United Methodist Church, 5650 Shoup Avenue. It runs Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 3 pm.

The adaptation was written by Joanne Zahorsky-Reeves and stars Diane LeMoine, Jim Miller and Denice Stradling.

Tickets are available at wvplayhouse.com or by calling the box office at (818) 884-1907.

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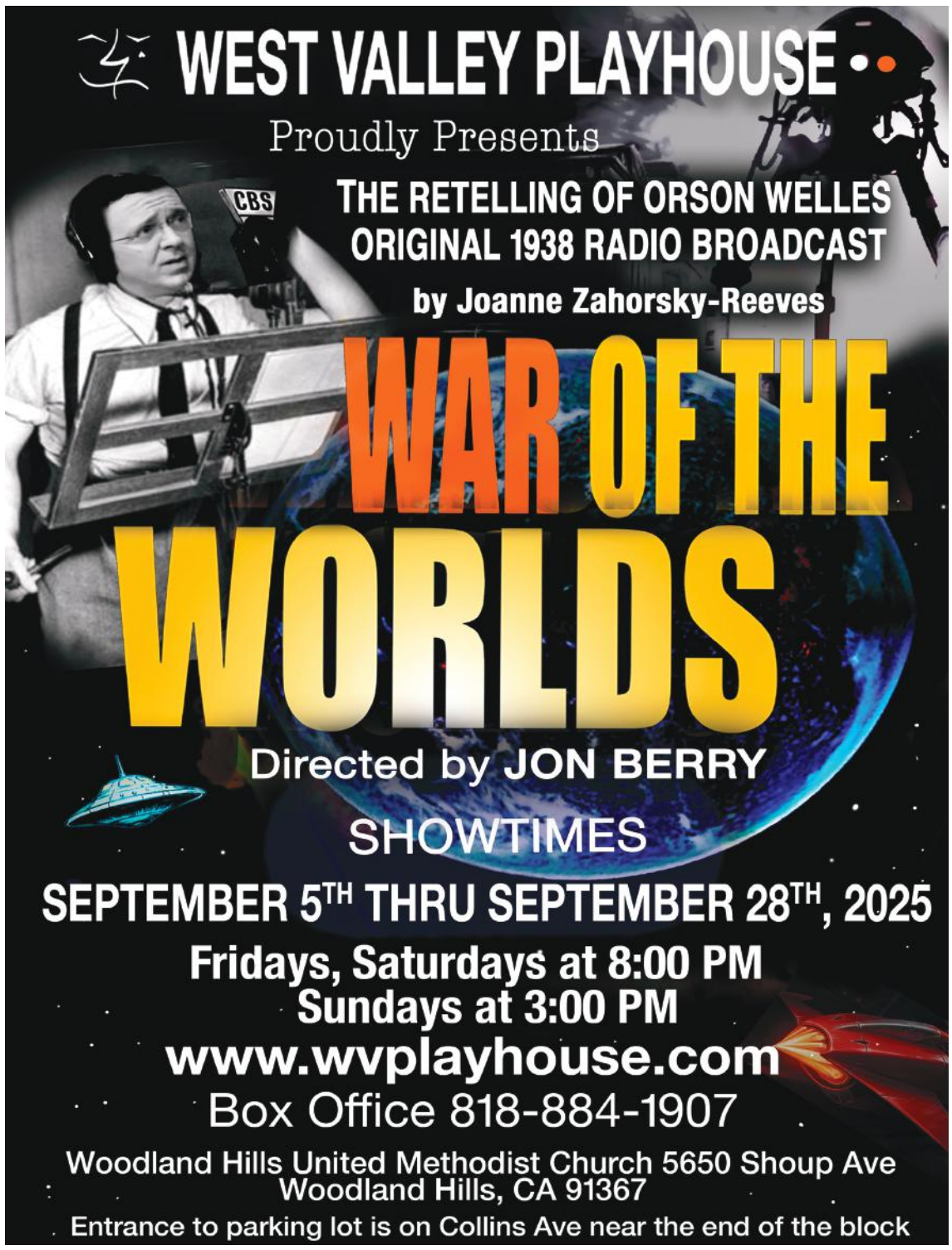

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Lack of Shut Eye Can Lead to Dementia

If you do not get seven to nine hours of sleep at night habitually, read on for new medical information that could threaten your health in your future.

People age 50 or 60 who regularly slept six hours or less each night were more likely to be diagnosed with dementia than those whose regular shut-eye pattern ran the prescribed health seven or more hours of nightly sleep.

Results of one of the longest running trials with human participants have been published in the scientific journal *Nature Communications*. The study, which started in 1985, covered a time frame of over 35 years with 8,000 adult participants supported by the University College London.

A group of European researchers looked at the survey data and linked the data with dementia diagnoses in electronic health records. Since inception of the study, participants have been surveyed every four to five years.

Results as follows: 50-year olds who were sleeping six hours or less a night had a 22% higher risk of dementia later in life while 60-year olds were 37% morel ikely to develop the disorder.

The British civil servants reported their sleep duration, and some wore sleep trackers overnight to confirm that their self-reporting was accurate.

While the authors cautioned that the findings can't establish whether less sleep causes dementia, they said the new study adds to sufficient shorter-term research showing that too little sleep is directly linked to the development of the disorder.

Other studies have shown that interruptions preventing people from getting a good night's sleep are also linked to eventual onset of dementia.

Past research also suggests that obesity, high systolic blood pressure, and mental health disorders like depression increase the risk of sleep issues.

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The Power of Expanding Your World as You Age

By Carol Pilkington

As we grow older, it's not uncommon for our world to begin feeling smaller. Retirement, the loss of loved ones, mobility challenges, or changing social circles can lead to a sense of shrinking connection and purpose. Yet, this stage of life also holds a powerful opportunity, perhaps the most meaningful one of all, to grow from the inside out and make your world bigger in new and deeply fulfilling ways.

Lifelong learning and personal growth are not just for the young, they are essential for emotional vitality, mental sharpness, and spiritual richness at any age. In fact, the desire to continue learning, discovering, and connecting is a vital sign of resilience and inner strength.

When you pursue something new, whether it's a language, a spiritual practice, an art form, or even a renewed interest in people, you signal to yourself and the world: I'm still becoming. You shift from a focus on what has ended to what is still possible.

Growth doesn't need to be grand. It could be as simple as joining a discussion group, trying a new form of creative expression, revisiting an old passion, or engaging in deep, reflective conversations. These small acts have the power to reawaken curiosity and forge meaningful connections.

Making your world bigger is also about how you relate to yourself. As the external world quiets down, the inner world becomes louder and more important. This is a perfect time to explore questions like: Who am I now? What truly matters to me? What legacy do I want to leave—not just in things, but in the way I live?

Aging is not a decline; it is a refinement. And growth is not about fixing anything; it's about revealing the deeper layers of who you've always been. When you continue to learn and open your heart, you bring new color to life's later chapters, creating a rich and expansive world that lives not just around you, but within you.

Carol Pilkington, Certified Senior Advisor, is a Spiritual Counselor/Teacher and a Foundation for Senior Services Certified Specialist. With 300+ certified specialists, FSS supports and advocates for seniors in need. Contact FSS for assistance at (855) 836-0807.

Free Cyber Safety Seminar from SAGE

SAGE Learning in Retirement is offering a free Cyber Safety seminar on Tuesday, September 9, at 11 am.

Hear from Los Angeles County District Attorney expert investigators. Learn about real-world cyber crime cases and how to reduce your risks. Get tools to defend against cyber crime.

The seminar will be held at the Episcopal Church of St. Andrew and St. Charles at 16651 Rinaldi Street in Granada Hills.

SAGE (an acronym for study, activity, growth and enrichment) is a self-supporting group of retired and semi-retired people who share a passion for learning and meet to exchange knowledge and develop new interests.

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Black Bear Diner - Tarzana
Meeting Room
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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 877-412-0630 (TTY 711).

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REAL ESTATE

Neighborhood Watch Meeting Set

LAPD Senior Lead Officer John Parker will hold a Basic Car 17A35 Neighborhood Watch meeting on Tuesday, September 9, at 6:30 pm.

Learn about crime in your community and what LAPD is doing to fight it. The Neighborhood Watch meeting will be held at St. Euphrasia Church, 11779 Shoshone Avenue in Granada Hills.

For more information call (424) 364-9377. or email Parker at 36560@lapd.online

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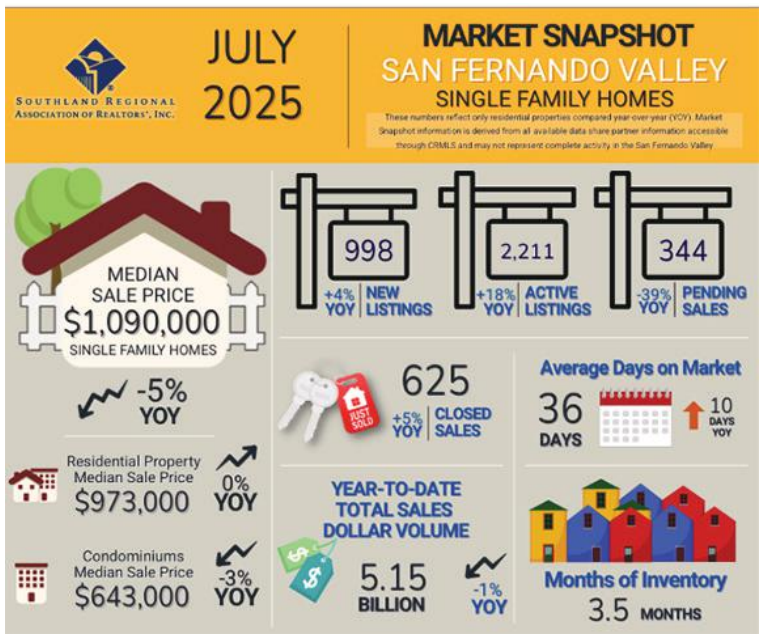

Inventory Hits One Year High

Existing single-family home closed escrows increased during July compared to a year ago while the collection of home and condominium active listings hit its highest level in 14 years, the Southland Regional Association of Realtors has reported.

Local Realtors assisted the close of escrow of 627 single-family homes last month, a total that was 4.7% higher than a year ago and the highest monthly tally since June 2023. While welcome news, the home sales total remained below levels set during the COVID pandemic in the early years of this decade and pales compared to historical highs that had monthly totals of more than 1,200 closed escrows.

Condominium closed escrows during July came in at 132, down 14.3%.

"While interest rates on home mortgage recently dropped, condominium sales and overall activity slowed due to rates that were still too high for middle- and entry-level buyers," said Anthony Bedgood, President of the 10,000-member Southland Regional Association of Realtors. "I keep hearing the word 'fragile' when speakers describe the condition of the residential real estate market."

"There's too much uncertainty about where the economy is headed, about home prices, and about job security," Bedgood said. "While some people always find an opportunity, most people unsurprisingly want certainty and consistency when it comes to finances and buying a home."

Bedgood and Valerie Biletsky, SRAR's Chief Executive Officer, agreed that buyers who are willing to plunge into the market will find an array of options.

"Home and condo active listings are at levels not seen in many years," Biletsky said. "And it appears the inventory will continue to swell well into the future."

The Association, which serves the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys, reported 838 active listings of condominiums – up 57% from a year ago. New listings during July increased 30%.

Similarly, the 2,204 single-family homes listed for sale on the association's MLS increased 17.8%. New listings increased 4%.

At the end of the month there were 3,042 home and condo active listings available – a total not seen since 2011. That represented a four-month supply at the current pace of sales, which is close to what market experts believe represents a balanced market, where neither buyer nor seller hold a clear negotiating advantage

The median price of the 627 homes that changed owners last month was $1,095,000, down 4.7% from a year ago and down from the record high $1,150,000 set in June. The condominium median price of $643,000 fell 2.6% compared to the July 2024 record high $660,000.

According to a new report, over 43,000 Californian households relied on private mortgage insurance to achieve homeownership during 2024 with downpayments as low as 3%. California ranked third in low-down payment homebuyers using private mortgage insurance.

SRAR's Income-to-Loan guide for July calculated an income of $297,929 was needed to qualify for an 80% loan of $876,000 on a San Fernando Valley median-priced single-family home of $1,095,000.

With the national average interest rate at 6.80% last month, the income needed to qualify was down 6.8% from a year ago. The monthly PITI — principal, interest, taxes and insurance payments — totaled $7,198.

As of August 4, mortgage rates on a 30-year mortgage had plunged to a 10-month low of 6.57%, down from 6.74% on July 28.

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Sam Williamson
Senior Economist, First American

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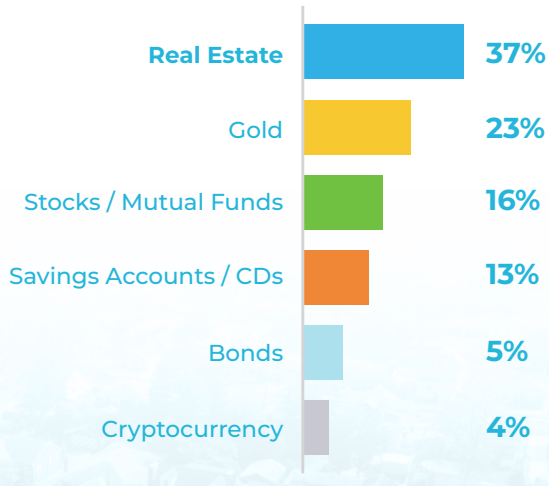
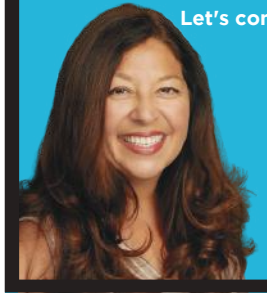


If you've been trying to decide if it makes sense to buy a home today, let this reassure you. **Homeownership wins in the long run.**



Let's connect so you have expert advice on how to reach your homebuying goals this year.

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Nighttrek Report: The September Sky

By Neill Simmons

The highlight of September is the return of the ringed planet Saturn. After 9 pm look east to see the planet rising. Saturn will be at its brightest on Saturday night, the 20th. At this time of the year, Saturn is between the constellations Pisces and Aquarius. In October, Saturn will be fully in Aquarius. It takes over 29 years for this planet to orbit the Sun. If you have binoculars, one of Saturn's moons, named Enceladus, can be spotted. Saturn is not a perfect sphere as its north pole is 90% of the equatorial diameter. Saturn's winds blow at over 1100 miles per hour, the fastest in the solar system. One day on Saturn is just over 10 hours long. Look on Monday, the 8th, when the Moon and Saturn will appear to be close to each other.

The full Moon on September 7 is called the "Corn Moon." This name comes from Native American traditions, as corn was often harvested at this time of year. It is also sometimes called the "Autumn Moon." If you are traveling to Asia, Australia, or parts of Europe and Africa, the full Moon will appear red due to a Total Lunar Eclipse. This is also known as a "Blood Moon." Unfortunately, the lunar eclipse will not be visible in the Americas.

Mars is low in the west in September and appears as a tiny red spot. On Wednesday, the 24th, Mars will be near the thin crescent Moon. Mars is known as the "Red Planet" due to the iron oxide in its soil. It has the largest volcano and canyon in the solar system. It has two moons, Phobos and Deimos, and its seasons are similar to Earth's but much longer.

Dawn Patrol: The planets Jupiter and Venus are a great sight in the east after 4 am until dawn, which is about 5:30 am. Both are super bright with Jupiter appearing to be above Venus. To the right of Jupiter is the Orion constellation.

On Sunday afternoon, September 21, there will be a partial solar eclipse, which will cover about 10% of the Sun. It should only be seen with good eclipse glasses! Next year, on August 12, 2026 there will be solar eclipse in Greenland, Iceland and Spain lasting about two minutes. This is the first mainland eclipse in Europe since 1999. Also, many people are making plans now for the August 2, 2027 solar Eclipse. It will last over six minutes and 21 seconds long. It starts in the Atlantic Ocean and goes through Gibraltar, Egypt and parts of Africa. There will be many cruise ships traveling to this event.

Every night, look straight up to see the famous asterism, the "Summer Triangle." The three stars that make up this formation are called Vega, Deneb, and Altair. An asterism is a recognizable patter or group of stars that is not an officially designated constellation. Another asterism in same area is the "Northern Cross" which is located within the constellation Cygnus the Swan. Also, the dwarf planet Pluto is in the center of this asterism but cannot be seen with the naked eye. Pluto is primarily known as the largest dwarf planet in our solar system and for the controversy surrounding its demotion. It was once considered the ninth planet but was reclassified in 2006 due to new definitions of a planet.

The next two months will bring us a lot of solar activity with some spectacular auroras. Most of the action will be above Bakersfield and all the way to Canada. The Aurora Borealis, or northern lights, are natural light displays in the sky caused by charged particles from the sun colliding with Earth's upper

atmosphere. We are hoping one might show up here in Southern California.

Another great sight to see in September is our spiral galaxy, the "Milky Way." It is bordered by Sagittarius on the left and Scorpius on the right in the west. It is best to get out of the city lights to see the band of stars.

In the East, the Great Square of Pegasus, the Winged Horse, is a large, prominent asterism in the autumn night sky, composed of four bright stars that form a square or diamond shape. Notice that the square is balanced on one corner and inside of the square there are no stars visible. The Great Square serves as a guide for astronomers to locate other celestial objects, most notably the Andromeda galaxy.

Mark Saturday, September 13, on your calendar as a fun and local "star party" will come back to Paramount Ranch. The Ventura County Astronomical Society is putting on "An Evening Under the Stars" with many telescopes and special events. You can also bring your own telescope. The location is in Agoura Hills and there is plenty of room to park. It starts at 7:30 pm but get there before dark to take full advantage of the evening. Night temperatures can be chilly so dress accordingly. This event is free.

When not stargazing, Neill Simmons is an Investment Executive with LPL Financial in Woodland Hills. If you have any astronomy or financial questions, he may be reached at (818) 936-2626 or emailed at: neill.simmons@lpl.com.

Neighborhood Council Meetings

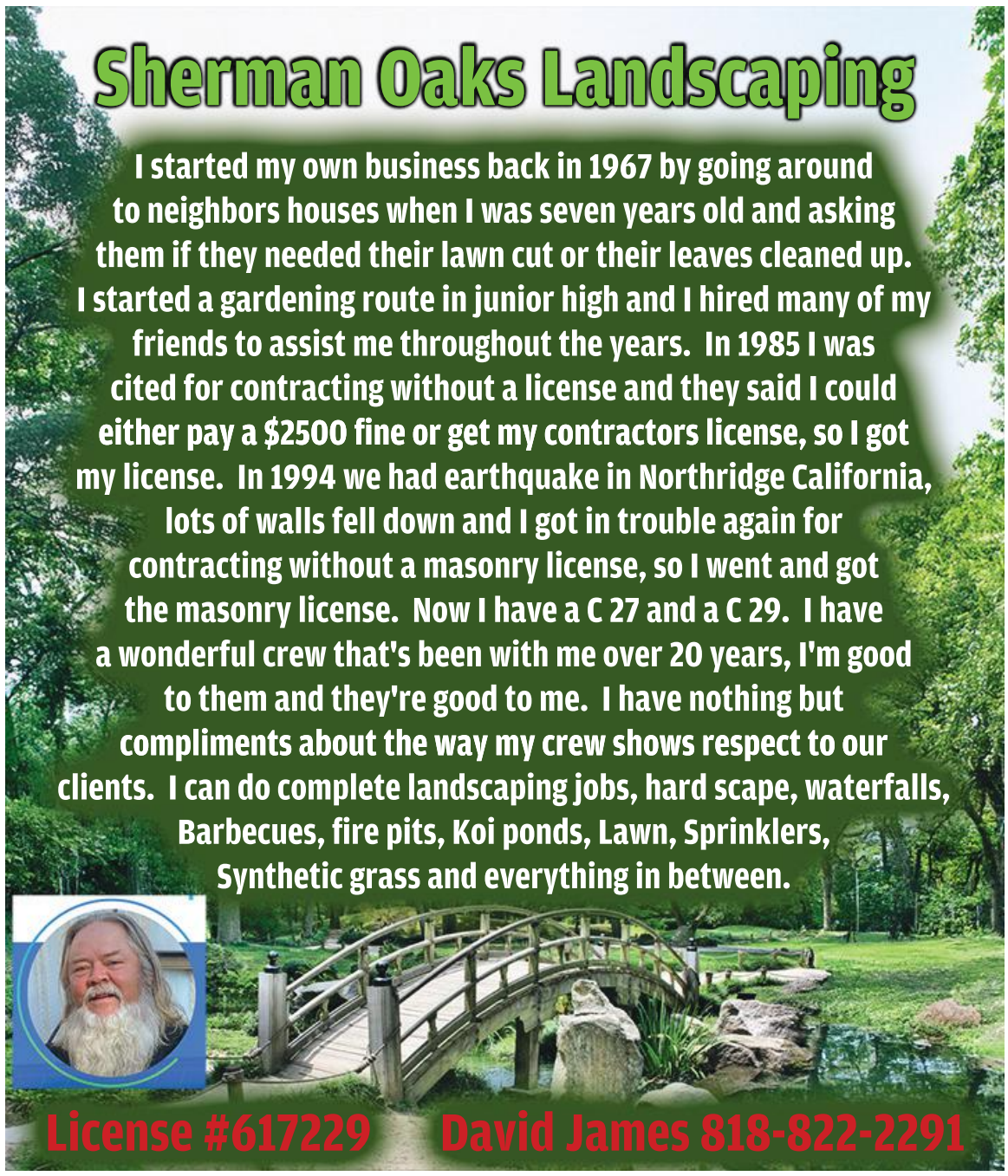
Northridge East Neighborhood Council will hold a general meeting on Wednesday, September 17, at 7 pm.

The meeting is open to the public and will be held on Zoom. For the Zoom link visit nenc-la.org.

Northridge West Neighborhood Council will hold a general meeting on Tuesday, September 9, at 6:15 pm.

The meeting is open to the public and will be held on Zoom. For the Zoom link visit northridgewest.org.

Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council will hold a general meeting on Wednesday, September 10, at 7 pm. The meeting is open to the public and will be held at Castlebay Lane Elementary, 19010 Castlebay Lane.



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