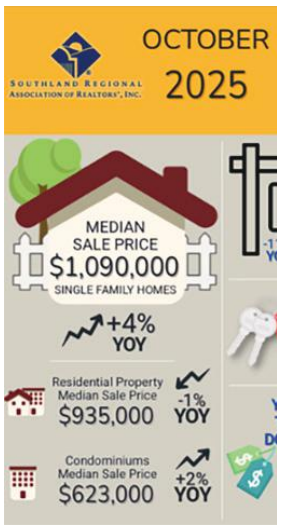


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# North Valley News

Volume 3, Number 21 November 20, 2025

Serving Porter Ranch, Northridge, Granada Hills & Chatsworth


## News in Brief

### Congressman Brad Sherman Responds to Plane Photos

**Congressman Brad Sherman is responding to news reports that he was looking at pornography on his iPad on a commercial flight. A fellow passenger had taken photos of Sherman looking at pictures of women clad in only their underwear. The Congressman said the his X algorithm was responsible for the pictures popping up on his device and said, "Simply put — Donald Trump Jr, the White House and MAGA are trying to divert from releasing the Epstein files. This was nothing more than scrolling through Twitter - and unfortunately Elon Musk has ruined the Twitter algorithm to give people content that they don't ask for or subscribe to. 99% of the things I see on Twitter involve absolutely no risqué content; I often see offensive antisemitic and conspiracy-theory posts. Don Jr. and the White House press office are pushing this story when there is no story. Shame on Don Jr., shame on the White House, shame on MAGA."**

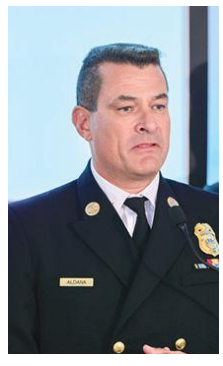
### Granada Hills Tree Lighting December 5

**The annual "Rita's Tree" Lighting ceremony in Granada Hills will take place on Friday, December 5, from 6 to 7 pm. The event will include the lighting ceremony, light refreshments and holiday caroling. It is produced by the Rotary Club of Granada Hills, Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council and Granada Hills Chamber. It will be held at Veterans Memorial Park, Chatsworth Street and Zelzah Avenue.**

### Seniors Invited to Free Thanksgiving Dinner

**The Rotary Club of Calabasas will host their 35th annual Thanksgiving luncheon for seniors on Thursday, November 27. The complimentary holiday meal will be prepared by the Sagebrush Cantina staff and served by volunteers from all over the community, including Rotary club members. Turkeys have been donated by various Rotary clubs, including Woodland Hills. St. Bernardine Church donates all the pies, and the preparation and labor is donated by the Sagebrush Cantina team, under the direction of owner Donal Tavey and manager Mario Romero.**

**Seniors from the community, assisted living and retirement centers are invited as guests. Doors open at 11 am with lunch served at 11:30 am. Buses will transport guests from various senior centers in the valley. The Sagebrush Cantina is located at 23527 Calabasas Road. Seniors interested in attending should call (818) 564-6475.**



**Impact Award winners above from left: Fred Gaines, Brandon Boeckmann, Kathleen Sterling, Waltona Manion. At left, L.A. County Sheriff Robert Luna, L.A. County Fire Captain Andres Aldana. At right, L.A. County Fire Chief Anthony Marrone, LAPD Chief Jim McDonnell.**

PHOTOS: IMAGESBYNICK

## Impact Award Winners Honored

The Fernando Awards bestowed their annual awards on local Valley volunteers on November 7. They honored Armida Colmenares-Stafford with the 2025 Fernando Award, and also presented eight Impact Awards. The Impact Awards were started in 2018 to recognize individuals, teams or local businesses who demonstrate outstanding achievement in community engagement, volunteerism and leadership.

This year's honorees are Kathleen Sterling, Waltona Manion, Fred Gaines, Galpin Motors, L.A. County Fire Department, L.A. County Sheriff's Department, Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles Fire Department.

Sterling is the award-winning publisher of *Valley News Group*, which includes *Valley Vantage, Calabasas Enterprise, Warner Center News, Encino Enterprise* and *North Valley News*. She has been dedicated to community journalism and focusing on the Valley's local news since 1982.

Manion has been a community activist and volunteer for over two decades, with groups such as Los Angeles Valley College's Citizens Building Oversight Committee, Valley Glen Neighborhood Association, Encino Chamber of Commerce, local schools and more.

Attorney Fred Gaines served twice as mayor for the City of Calabasas, and has been an advocate for the Mountains Restoration Trust, LA Jewish Health, VICA and Valley Economic Alliance.

Brandon Boeckmann and Galpin Motors were recognized for their history since 1946 of community service, supporting tens of thousands of educational, spiritual, cultural, charitable and civic institutions through the Valley.

The LAPD, LAFD, County Sheriffs and Fire Departments were all honored for their tireless work during this year's wildfires, protests and more.

# Community Calendar

**PORTER RANCH:** The Northwest Valley Chamber, Granada Hills Chamber and North Valley Regional Chamber will share a multi-chamber networking breakfast on Thursday, December 4, at 9 am. The cost is $25 for chamber members and $30 for non-members. The breakfast will be held at Pillars Cafe, 19700 Rinaldi Street. Register at nvrcc.org.

**NORTHRIDGE:** LAPD Senior Lead Officer Sandra Zamora will hold a LAPD Devonshire Basic Car 17A67 meeting on Wednesday, November 26, at 6 pm. The meeting link is lapdonlineestrgeacc.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net. For more information call Zamora at (818) 832-0827 or email her at 35947@lapd.online.

**NORTHRIDGE:** The Northridge Branch Library will host "Tea and a Tale" on Tuesday, December 2, at 4 pm. Brew some tea, relax, and listen to a serialized live reading of *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins. You can dial in by phone or use video conference. For the Zoom link visit lapl.org/northridge.

**PORTER RANCH:** The Vineyards at Porter Ranch will hold their holiday tree lighting ceremony on Thursday, December 4, at 6 pm. The event will include live performances, holiday characters, giveaways and kids crafts. There will be complimentary family photos by the Christmas tree. The Vineyards is located at 20065 Rinaldi. Sponsored by UCLA Health.

**NORTHRIDGE:** Postal Annex will hold a knife sharpening event on Saturday, November 22 from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm. Each attendee can bring two items to sharpen, including knives, scissors, shears and clippers. Postal Annex is located at 18543 Devonshire Street near Smart & Final. For more information call (818) 514-3250.

**NORTHRIDGE:** LAPD Devonshire PALS is hosting a toy drive for local needy families in the North Valley. Drop off new, unwrapped toys at Devonshire Police Station, 10250 Etiwanda Ave., Northridge, LAPD Youth Center, 8721 Wilbur Ave., Mechanics Bank, 10820 Zelzah Avenue, Granada Hills, Ken's Cleaners, 16924 San Fernando Mission Blvd., Granada Hills or Chick-fil-A Northridge, 8875 Tampa Avenue. Toys will be given away December 13 at 8721 Wilbur Avenue.

**NORTHRIDGE:** The San Fernando Valley Master Chorale and five other incredible choirs from across the Valley will host "Gloria! A Festival of Choirs." Experience the joy of the holidays as over 130 voices come together to perform John Rutter's radiant "Gloria"—with full brass quintet—along with beloved holiday favorites, both traditional and reimagined. The concert will be held Saturday, December 6, at 6 pm at Northridge United Methodist Church, 9650 Reseda Blvd. All tickets are $15. Order at sfvmc.com.

# Volunteer Cleaning Communities Host Community Litter Pick Up

If you were anywhere near Tampa Avenue on Saturday morning, you might've thought a small army in yellow had taken over the Valley.

In a way, they had.

Nearly 100 volunteers — moms, dads, students, retirees, service club regulars — all walking the nine-mile stretch from Rinaldi to Ventura Boulevard with grabbers in hand and smiles on their faces.

Two hours. That's all it took for Volunteers Cleaning Communities (VCC) to turn one of the Valley's busiest corridors into something the community could be proud of again.

The day began the way all good neighborhood efforts do: with donuts, friendly greetings, and the kind of local banter you only hear when people show up for something bigger than themselves.

At three check-in stations along Tampa, longtime VCC volunteers handed out souvenir T-shirts, pick up equipment, and street assignments with military precision and grandmotherly kindness. Soon, teams from CSUN, Granada Hills, VCC volunteers, Chatsworth Kiwanis, Shepherd Church, Our Lady of Grace, Rotary, and plenty of solo residents were fanning out — bending, grabbing, hauling, and laughing as they worked. If you slowed your car long enough, you could feel the pride. And so many cars honked their horns to acknowledge the appreciated efforts of the groups.

Almost 100 volunteers showed up to clean litter from Tampa Avenue, above. Volunteers Cleaning Communities founder Jill Mather, below left. The crew hits the streets, below right.

PHOTO: MarkHovater

When the dust settled — or rather, when the trash was bagged — the numbers told their own story: 207 large bags filled, more than 30 illegal dump sites reported, and one long stretch of Tampa looking the best it has in a long time.

VCC with hundreds of volunteers has marched down many Valley streets before — Ventura, Topanga, Nordhoff, DeSoto — and each time the crowds grow a little bigger, the friendships a little deeper. They'll be back again in April for Earth Month. And if you ask the folks in those yellow shirts, they'll tell you it's not just about cleaning a street. It's about cleaning up a community, one block — and one good conversation — at a time. Come join them and volunteer for an event. For more information visit www.vcc.world.

# 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.

• Jokestor Jerry Humes makes a solid point when he highlights that Thanksgiving is the only holiday when you eat the mascot!

• Why did the police arrest the turkey? They suspected fowl play.

• Why don't turkeys eat on Thanksgiving? They're stuffed.

• Why did pilgrims' pants always fall down? Because they wore their belt buckle on their hat.

• After his family begged him to stop telling his "dad jokes" regarding Thanksgiving, the father replied that he couldn't just quit "cold turkey!"

• Babysitting in the 1970's: Parents actually said, "Here's our newborn, the number for poison control and $5 for pizza" to 12-year-old me whose main qualification was having successfully feathered my bangs that morning.

• Did you hear about the drunk optician? Two glasses and he made a spectacle of himself.

• And for all of you who lament the holiday hoopla: I haven't taken my Christmas lights down yet. They look so nice on the pumpkin.

• Venus de Milo's mother said, "You never call me. Can't you pick up a phone?"

## Guest Editorial:

# Want Your Grandkids to Grow Up in the Valley? We Need Middle Class War Bonds to Build the Future

**From Bob Hertzberg**

Who can come up with $160,000 for a down payment on an $800,000 three-bedroom after paying everyday bills? Our educated kids—nurses at Kaiser, teachers at Grant High, engineers at SpaceX—earn solid wages but can't scrape together that 20% down payment.

Under my new plan, which will require voter approval on the 2026 November ballot, qualified Californians put down just 3% cash, $24,000 of that $160,000, borrow the rest at fixed low interest rates, and build equity from day one.

By committing funds exclusively to new builds, we are not just subsidizing demand; we are incentivizing supply. Buyers get brand-new homes, row houses, townhomes, condominiums, and more. Homes that have never been lived in, with new appliances, modern layouts, and energy-efficient features that save money for years.

As a lifelong Californian and former representative of the San Fernando Valley, serving as your Assembly Speaker and Senate Majority Leader over a 30 year period in and out of government, I have watched our neighborhoods transform from tight-knit communities of dreamers into battlegrounds for affordability.

I worked for years in the legislature, and have continued to work as a private citizen, to build middle class housing at the scale and pace our kids need to stay in the Golden State. I'm fighting for what I call "Middle Class War Bonds" (officially the 2026 Middle Class Homeownership Act) on the 2026 ballot, because the middle class in this state is in danger of being wiped out.

Remember the California Dream? Work hard, play by the rules, and own a slice of paradise: a modest backyard for barbecues, a swing set for grandkids. That is the social contract we grew up on. But today, it is shattered.

We have poured billions into low-income subsidies and homelessness, vital work, no doubt. But the middle class, the "missing middle," gets crumbs. Existing programs are tangled in red tape, underfunded, and first-time or first-generation only, leaving families like yours behind.

**We have poured billions into low-income subsidies and homelessness. But the middle class, the "missing middle," gets crumbs.**

Home is where the wealth is. Home is a dream.

Homeownership is not luxury; it is skin in the game. It roots families in neighborhoods, fostering stability and pride. Owners invest in schools, parks, and Little Leagues, turning short-term renters into long-term stakeholders. And it is the surest path to wealth for the middle class: Equity builds nest eggs, funds college, weathers recessions. Without it, downward mobility festers, and faith in the system evaporates.

That is why our Middle Class War Bonds are laser-focused on you, Valley families. It authorizes $25 billion in revenue bonds, with not one taxpayer dime at risk. No dealing with government bureaucrats, you'll work with your local lender as you would on any conventional home loan.

This will spark 100,000 to 150,000 new homes statewide, including thousands in the Valley. It will create jobs for local builders in Northridge and bring more families walking down Sherman Way.

Join us on the CA Homes Coalition website (https://www.cahomescoalition.com), where we are rallying support.

Let us reclaim the California Dream, one Valley home at a time.

*Robert Hertzberg served the San Fernando Valley in both chambers of the California Legislature, in the Assembly from 1996 to 2002 and in the Senate as Majority Leader from 2014-2022. He served as the 64th Speaker of the California State Assembly, unanimously elected by both parties in 2000 and 2002. During his time in office he secured more than $1 billion in state funding to build Valley infrastructure, including school facilities, road improvements, and the creation of the G line.*

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BUSINESS

# The Life-Changing Work of the Guide Dogs of America

**By Danrochelle D. Yumul**

When someone takes their first confident step with a Guide Dogs of America dog by their side, you can almost see their whole world open up again.

For more than 70 years, Guide Dogs of America – Tender Loving Canines has been changing lives in the most heartwarming way, by pairing people with incredible service dogs who give them independence and connection. Whether it's someone who is blind or visually impaired, a veteran coping with PTSD, or a family with a child on the autism spectrum, these dogs bring comfort and security back into daily life. And the best part? Every dog is provided at absolutely no cost, along with lifelong support.

The journey to becoming a guide dog starts the moment each puppy is born. With a careful breeding program in place, the puppies begin learning from their earliest days, getting used to sounds, textures, and new experiences. At eight weeks old, they head off to live with volunteer puppy raisers who spend an entire year teaching them how to be confident, well-mannered, and ready for the world. They bring the puppies into grocery stores, malls, parks, and anywhere a future service dog might need to go. They learn how to handle loud noises and busy crowds. This year of training is the foundation for everything that comes next.

When the dogs return to campus for advanced training, they work with professional instructors who help them build the skills they need for their future partner. Guide dogs learn how to safely navigate streets, avoid obstacles, and make smart decisions that keep their handler safe. They learn tasks that support veterans and children with autism, like grounding during panic attacks, interrupting night terrors, or offering comforting pressure during overwhelming moments. Each dog is evaluated carefully so they can be matched with the right person.

Once a match is made, the real magic begins. Recipients spend several weeks living on campus, learning how to communicate with their dog and build trust as a team. This is when some of the most powerful transformations happen. Many people who have lost their sight describe their world shrinking over time until they're barely leaving their home. Veterans often feel disconnected or anxious in public spaces. Parents of children with autism may struggle with everyday routines or outings. But with their dog beside them, everything starts to change. Families begin enjoying activities they once avoided. Veterans rediscover calm and safety. Children feel more secure and supported. And for those who work with facility dogs, their presence can make speaking up or calming down so much easier.

"Watching that transformation, seeing someone's world open up again, is incredible. We hear so often that when a visually impaired person begins to lose their sight, their world slowly closes in. For our veterans, the world they once knew no longer feels like theirs, and many become so closed off, they won't leave their homes. Hearing their stories and seeing them six months or a year later, discovering just how much their lives have changed, is truly inspirational," shares Tracy L. Diaz, Director of Development and Marketing at Guide Dogs of America.

One of the biggest challenges Guide Dogs of America faces is simply getting the word out. Many don't realize GDA is a fully accredited, nonprofit organization that provides dogs at no cost. Awareness has grown for autism service dogs thanks to the documentary Unleashing Hope, which featured Rosie O'Donnell and her son's journey with a GDA dog.

There are also misconceptions, like the idea that modern technology replaces guide dogs. Sure, assistive technology and devices are helpful, but they can't offer companionship, emotional support, or real-time decision-making the way a guide dog can. A dog doesn't wait for an alert before acting; they're already guiding, adjusting, and caring.

When a guide dog is ready to retire, usually after six to eight years of service, many stay with their handler as a beloved pet. Others return to their puppy raiser, and some join new loving families within the GDA community. Not one GDA dog has ever ended up in

*(Continued to page 8)*


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# The Reel History of the Valley

By Martin M. Cooper

# Special Effects Made the Valley Special

While absolutes are often problematic when it comes to "firsts" in filmmaking, it is generally agreed that the first special effects date back to the French director Georges Méliès, the father of cinematic special effects. In his minute-long film, *The Vanishing Lady* (1896), a woman sits in a chair; Méliès covers her with a cloth; and when the cloth is lifted, she has vanished…the first stop-motion special effect.

There is a direct line from Méliès through George Lucas to the preeminence of the San Fernando Valley as the special effects capital of the world for motion pictures, television, video games, and other forms of moving images.

It was exactly 50 years ago – in 1975 – that a 31-year-old Lucas established a small special-effects shop in a warehouse at 6842 Valjean Avenue in Van Nuys, near the end of one of the Van Nuys Airport's runways.

Lucas' decision to move to the San Fernando Valley was a practical one: the Valley offered inexpensive industrial space, flexible zoning regulations, skilled machinists, creative designers, access to film labs, and proximity to Hollywood without being bound by studio bureaucracy. But the results were revolutionary.

He rented the warehouse space specifically to house his new firm, Industrial Light & Magic (ILM), and to produce motion-control photography, construction of miniatures, pyrotechnics, and visual and optical effects for *Star Wars* (1977). It housed a model shop, motion-control rigs, and other special effects.

Within that near-anonymous industrial block, a group of young tinkerers, engineers, and artists—John Dykstra, Joe Johnston, Richard Edlund, Lorne Peterson, and others—developed the Dykstraflex motion-control system, modernized miniature effects, and produced every space battle, ship miniature, and laser blast for *Star Wars*. Their work in Van Nuys didn't merely enhance the film; it redefined audience expectations for cinematic spectacle and permanently changed the trajectory of effects filmmaking.

It was in this laboratory-like climate that the foundation of the late-20th-century blockbuster effects were defined.

The Valley's importance extended beyond its facilities. It nurtured a collaborative culture that blended Hollywood's artistry with the practicality of aerospace engineering. Unlike traditional studio departments, Valley effects shops were garage-like environments where experimentation was encouraged and hierarchy was minimal. Many of the breakthroughs in motion-control, miniature dynamics, forced-perspective photography, and early optical compositing were not the result of formal R&D programs, but rather of crews improvising solutions with hardware-store materials and surplus aircraft parts. It was an environment that attracted a blend of artists and technical minds who thrived in such unstructured creative freedom.

In fact, it was the aviation and aerospace pioneers of the mid-twentieth century who laid the foundation for the motion picture technical achievements to come.

By mid-century, the Valley was dotted with aerospace and defense contractors—Lockheed, Hughes, and numerous subcontractors—whose machinists, optical technicians, and engineers became the future model builders, motion-control riggers, and camera technicians of modern special effects. This culture of mechanical expertise created a foundation that filmmakers would soon exploit.

*Star Wars'* breakthrough also catalyzed an entire ecosystem within the Valley. When Lucas moved ILM to Marin County after its first film, many of the original Van Nuys artists stayed behind, choosing to remain in the neighborhoods where they lived and had built a network of machinists, prop houses, and optical labs. The result was the creation of new Valley-based effects companies that would dominate the next decade. Perhaps most important of them was Apogee, founded by John Dykstra and other ILM veterans and located just blocks from the old ILM building. From *Battlestar Galactica* (1978) to *Firefox* (1982), *Spaceballs* (1987), and *Outland* (2009), Apogee transformed Van Nuys into a center of spaceship miniatures, pyrotechnic explosions, and motion-control wizardry.

*Georges Méliès' 1896 film, A Vanishing Lady, is considered to be the first film with special visual effects.*

*Mark Hamill (l.), George Lucas, and Harrison Ford on the set of Star Wars, the film that spawned a whole new level of special effects in filmmaking.*

**It was in this (Van Nuys) laboratory-like climate that the foundation of the late-20th-century blockbuster effects were defined.**

Today, much of the Valley's historic effects infrastructure still exists, even if the marquee companies have changed or dispersed. The original ILM building still stands. Many veterans of Apogee and other shops descended from ILM continue to live or work in the region. Small practical-effects studios, prop shops, and commercial VFX boutiques still line the industrial corridors of Burbank, North Hollywood, and Sun Valley. The Valley remains a hub for training the next generation of effects artists, serving as an intergenerational bridge between the analog and digital eras.

Anyone looking for the roots of today's special effects wizardry in films need look no further than some of these Valley-based companies whose people, processes, and procedures led to the big-screen wizardry enjoyed throughout the world: Lockheed (Burbank), Rocketdyne (Canoga Park), Litton (Woodland Hills and Canoga Park), and Garrett (Chatsworth).

Far from the glamour of Hollywood, the San Fernando Valley stands as one of the most important—if often underappreciated—birthplaces of modern movie magic.

*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 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. His fifth book, The 'Reel' Hollywood: The San Fernando Valley, the history of motion pictures in the Valley, will be out later this year.*

# It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Grinchmas at Universal!

Universal Studios Hollywood is set to sparkle this holiday season, welcoming guests to a wonder-filled celebration across the theme park where beloved traditions return to create unforgettable memories!

The spirit of the holidays echoes throughout the theme park, creating uniquely festive experiences at every turn. Universal Plaza, located at the heart of Universal Studios Hollywood, transforms into a dazzling holiday spectacle with the return of the beloved "Grinchmas" Who-bilation.

A whimsical 65-foot Grinchmas tree towers at the center of Who-ville adorned with hundreds of vibrant ornaments and thousands of shimmering LED lights. This topsy-turvy holiday icon serves as the centerpiece of the celebration, where nightly tree-lighting ceremonies, complete with a flurry of cascading snow, create a truly magical moment that captures the spirit of the season as the Who-inspired singing quartet perform legendary harmonies for an infectious Who-liday spirit.

From taking Instagramable photos with the mischievous Grinch™ and his loyal dog Max, and cozy story time with Cindy-Lou Who as she reads *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* to a cheerful visit at the Who-ville post office to send a postcard filled with three good deeds and decorating festive paper "Grinchmas" ornament, "Grinchmas" is a family tradition packed with whimsical fun.

"Christmas in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter" features a jubilant décor of twinkling lights, magical garlands and cheerful wreaths. The Frog Choir's traditional holiday a cappella performances will resonate with joy, as visiting witches, wizards and muggles wander Hogsmeade village in search of enchanting gifts and exclusive keepsakes while sipping a delicious cup of hot, cold or frozen Butterbeer™ .

Nightfall brings "The Magic of Christmas at Hogwarts™ Castle" to life with an electrifying light projection show, transforming the iconic Hogwarts™ School of Witchcraft and Wizardry into a visually dazzling display. Accompanied by a rich medley of music from the Harry Potter films, this immersive experience will envelop guests in a symphony of festive sights and sounds.

Before stepping into the Mushroom Kingdom at Super Nintendo World, guests will encounter two cheerful snowmen, one sporting Mario's signature red hat and scarf, the other donning Luigi's green cap and scarf, alongside a sparkling tree crowned with a Super Star. From December 1 through February 28, enterprising guests can unlock the exclusive "Winter Wonder" stamp, while those visiting during the month of December can earn a festive "Holiday Party" stamp.

Universal CityWalk Hollywood also ushers in the holiday season with a wonderous celebration featuring festive décor, highlighted by a majestic 40-foot Christmas tree. The seasonal festivities extend to Universal CityWalk's 5 Towers stage, where select evenings welcome curated live musical performances, dynamic DJ sets and engaging street entertainers.

Holidays at Universal Studios Hollywood is included with theme park admission and runs from Monday, November 24, through Sunday, January 4. More info at UniversalStudiosHollywood.com.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

## Guide Dogs (Continued from page 5)

a shelter. They're cared for their entire lives by people who adore them.

Guide Dogs of America proves every single day that the bond between a person and a dog can change everything. These dogs bring independence, comfort, and joy to people who may have felt their world shrinking. These dogs don't just change lives. They give people their lives back, one step, and one wag, at a time.

For information, visit guidedogsofamerica.org.

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

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# Grief and the Holiday Season

**By Sandy Rosenholz**

As the holidays steadily approach, many of us begin to prepare for the festive season just around the corner. For most, this time of year is celebrated with nostalgic traditions and rituals, dependent on loved ones and the people we cherish most.

However, for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, whether recent or long ago, this holiday season is now encapsulated by painful memories associated with a broken heart. While there are many different approaches to dealing with grief, the following five tips are some healthy ways to make it through the holiday season if you are suffering from a significant loss.

1. Create a new ritual or tradition.

Whether it be devouring mom's honey baked ham, dad sitting at the head of the table, or the family singing songs around the piano after dessert, these traditions can define holiday gatherings. However, once there has been a loss in the family, we may realize that those traditions will never be the same again. When this experience rings true for you, one solution may be to create a new tradition in lieu of the former one. A small adjustment like going out for dinner instead of eating in for the holidays can make a significant impact when you're missing a member of the family. 2. Don't Isolate.

Although we may have feelings that others do not want to be around us when we are grieving, it is important for us to connect with family and friends during such a difficult time. Being surrounded by those you care about can help you remember that you are not going through this painful experience alone.

Whether it's having a coffee with your sister or watching a movie at a friend's house, a little social interaction can go a long way. That being said, take the time you need alone to be with your feelings.

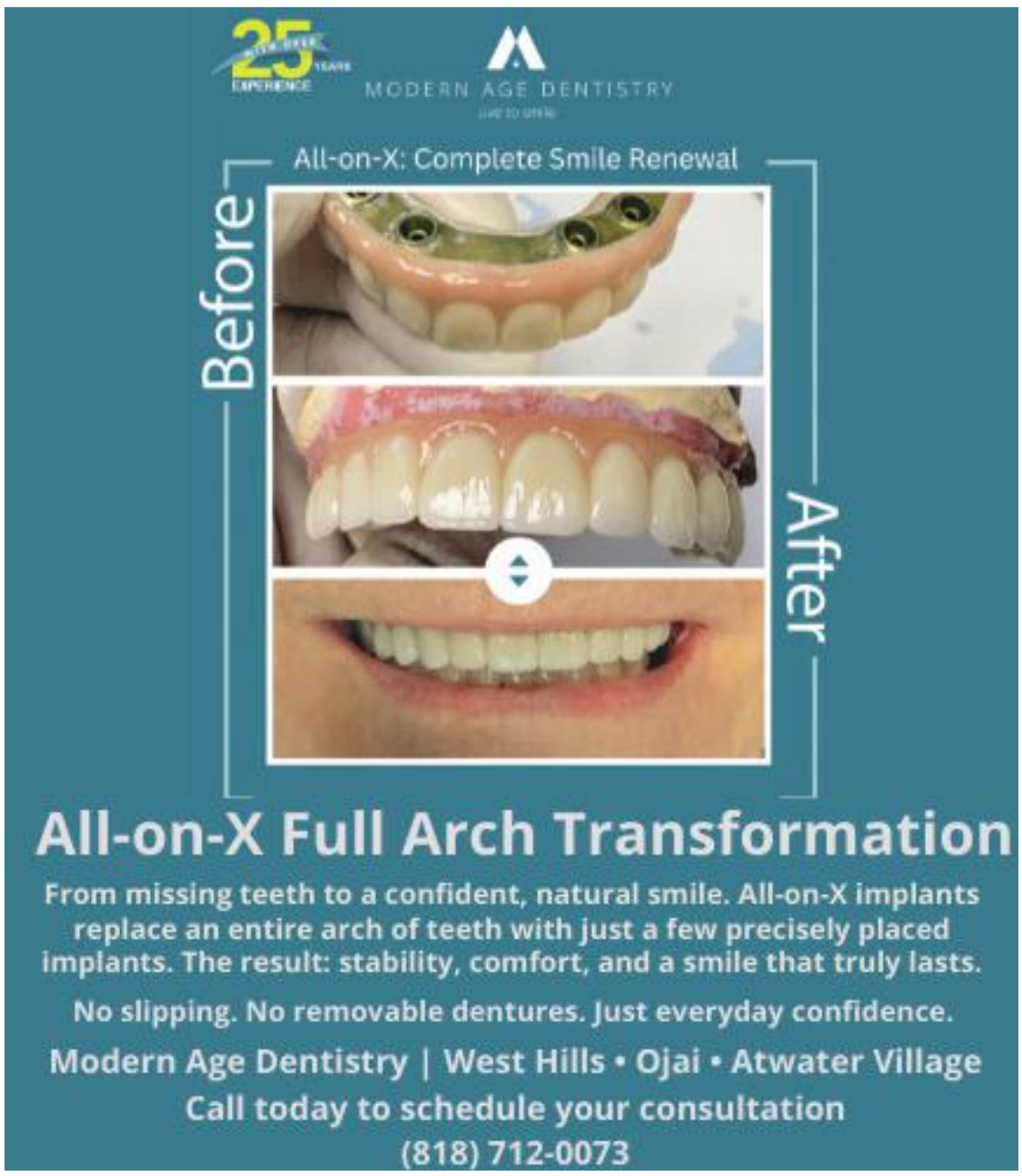
3. Be present behind the wheel.

When we are grieving, we can be much more prone to getting into car accidents. While driving, limit all distractions and remain present in the driver's seat by practicing mindfulness. Mindfulness uses the five senses to bring you back to the present moment, like focusing on the road ahead, feeling the texture of the steering wheel, or chewing a piece of gum.

4. Attend grief support groups.

While grief support groups do not provide long-term relief from grief, they can be beneficial for those that are grieving. Grief support groups allow individuals to process their feelings for an indefinite amount of time and connect with others that are also suffering from grief. Attendees have even been known to make friends amongst other members of grief support groups. Many grief support groups can be found at a very low cost or even free.

*For more information on this article or senior living, contact Sandy Rosenholz of Senior Resources, Inc. at (818) 359-2125 or online at SeniorResourcesCA.com.*



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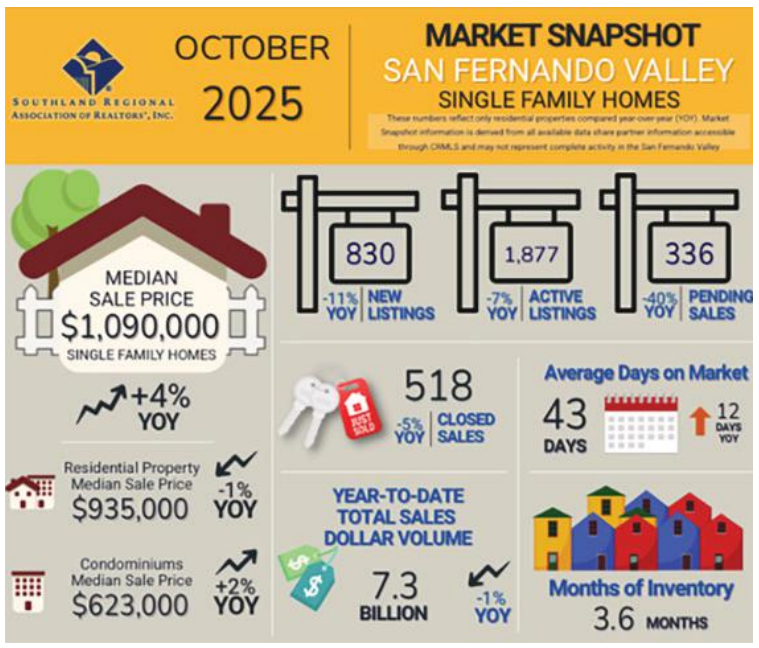


## Seasonal Forces Break Inventory and Pricing Fever in San Fernando Residential Market

After soaring to record or near-record highs for many months, the seemingly nonstop upward march of residential resale prices and an expanding inventory in the San Fernando Valley moderated during October, the Southland Regional Association of Realtors gas reported.

The association reported that the median price of single-family homes that changed owners during October came in at $1,090,000. That was up 3.8% from a year ago yet below the record high $1.15 million reported in September and June. The home median price has been above the $1 million mark for the last 23 months with many of those months pushing over $1.1 million.

The condominium record median price — meaning half the sales were lower and half higher — came in July 2024 at $660,000. It has fluctuated below that market ever since with October closed escrows producing a median of $623,000.

"Who could have foreseen that resale price would hit such levels, let alone have the Valley home median price settle above $1 million and higher," said Anthony Bedgood, President of the 10,000-member Southland Regional Association of Realtors. "Rising prices are a direct result of the Greater Metropolitan region's lack of affordable housing and a reflection of pent-up buyer demand. Existing owners listed enough properties this year to give buyers more options, a little more bargaining power."

The number of condominiums listed for sale throughout the Valley for the last four months was the highest in five years, surpassing pre-pandemic tallies. There were 868 condos active listings available at the end of October, up 43% from a year ago, yet down from the peak of 921 listings reported in September.

"This is the time of year when activity starts to wane," said Valerie Biletsky, the Association's Chief Executive Officer. "Examine a chart of historical activity and you'll see new and active listings and closed escrows peak in mid- to late-summer then drop in the fourth quarter of the year. This year it feels like the turmoil on the national scene along with economic uncertainties have accelerated the typical, seasonal trend."

Single-family home listings peaked in June at 2,331 and fell to 1,877 in October, which was down 6.8% from the prior year. 2025 is on track to be the best year for home active listings since 2019, SRAR statistics indicated.

Local Realtors assisted the close of escrow last month of 518 single-family homes, an increase of 5% from a year ago. The association also reported 187 condominium closed escrows during October. That was up 34.5% from the prior year.

Home and condominium pending sales – a measure of future closed escrows – reported at the end of October fell 35% compared to a year ago.

SRAR's Income-to-Loan guide for October determined that an income of $161,294 was needed to qualify for an 80% loan of $500,000 on a San Fernando Valley median-priced condominium of $625,000. With the national average interest rate at 6.57 in October – the lowest since December's 6.31% and well below the 7.79% of October 2023 – the income needed to qualify increased 3.2% compared to a year ago. The monthly PITI — principal, interest, taxes and insurance payments — totaled $4,032.

*Chartered by the National Association of Realtors in 1920, the Southland Regional Association of Realtors is the voice for real estate in San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys. It serves its 10,000 members.*


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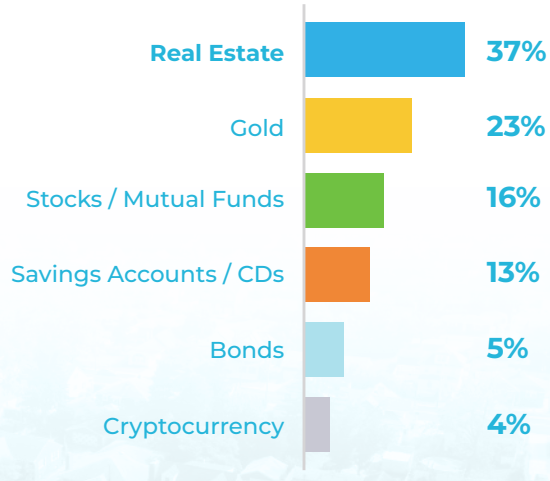


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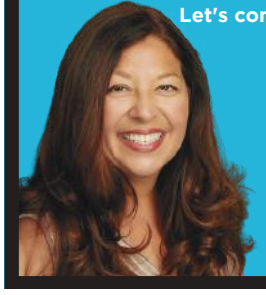

Let's connect so you have expert advice on how to reach your homebuying goals this year.

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## Single-Family Home in Granada Hills to Become Eight Small Lot Homes

A single family home in Granada Hills is going to be developed into a small lot subdivision, featuring eight connected single-family dwellings.

The 1940's home at 17719 W. Kingsbury Street will be demolished and the lot subdivided to permit the construction of eight adjoining three-story homes, each with three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a two-car garage.

The project is just south of the intersection of Chatsworth Street and White Oak Avenue, just west of a mixed-use apartment complex at Chatsworth and Encino.

It is being developed by Kingsbury Enterprises, Inc., and takes advantage of SB 684, state legislation that streamlines the approval of small lot homes.

## Tour Oakridge Estate December 7

The Oakridge Estate at 18650 Devonshire Blvd. in Northridge has a tour planned for Sunday, December 7, at 10 am.

Docents will lead the 75-minute tour of the home that was built for Barbara Stanwyck. She bought the land with her agent Zeppo Marx and they both built homes there and started a horse ranch called Marwyck which was a combination of their two names. After she married Robert Taylor she sold the house in 1941 to Jack Oakie who renamed it Oakridge.

There is a rich history to learn about this historical landmark. Oakridge was designated a Los Angeles City Historic Cultural Monument in 1990. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

Advanced registration is required and available at theoakridgeestate.org. Admission is $18 per person. Please arrive 10 minutes prior to check-in. Parking is up the hill at the driveway to the east of the park entrance.

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