How to Build Digital Resilience in Teens

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Shop Small to Make a Big Difference

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VICA Celebrates Community Leaders

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ENCINO ENTERPRISE

Volume 6, Issue 134 | A Compendious Source of Information | December 18, 2025

NEWS IN BRIEF

TSA to Charge $45 Fine if You Lack a Real ID or Passport

Holiday travelers need not fret at the moment, but starting in 2026 the TSA will impose a $45 fee on travelers without proper documentation. Set to take place in February 2026, travelers who do not present a Real ID or valid passport will be required to pay this fine before their trip. Travelers will pay via pay.gov before they travel to the airport, obtain a receipt and then show that proof to a TSA offficer during the typical security screening. Once an individual makes a payment, the receipt will be good for 10 days. If travel takes longer, an individual will have to buy additional passes, one for departure and one for return. A spokesperson for TSA noted that about 94 percent of the traveling public is currently compliant, meaning they have a Real ID or passport, and thus won't have to go through this process.

Investigation Underway Following Fatal LAPD Shooting in Reseda

Just after midnight on Monday evening last week, police officers responded to a call of an assualt with a deadly weapon suspect on the 18900 block of Sherman Way in Reseda. A perimeter of the area was sealed off until officers were able to locate the suspect with the aid of air support personnel. When officers confronted the man, an officer-involved shooting occured, and the man was announced dead at the scene. He has now been identified as Alex Canizalez, 39. No officers were injured and an investigaton is underway.

End-of-Year Messages from Encino Neighborhood Council, Encino Property Owners Association and Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce

Roy Nwaisser
President - Encino Neighborhood Council

As this year draws to a close, I look back on it with much gratitude despite the many challenges Encino faced, endured and overcame.

First and foremost, I am grateful for the LAFD and all the first responders who fought with incredible determination to protect Encino and refused to allow the Palisades Fire to get to us. While our hearts break for those who lost their homes, there are no words to express how thankful we are that Encino did not suffer the same outcome.

I am thankful for our community which rose up when called upon to demand change. Time after time, when we asked you to rally behind us, you answered the call. You sent hundreds of emails and repeatedly filled the Encino Community Center to the rafters. It resulted in extra resources being allocated to Encino, which led to the apprehension of crime rings and arsonists, a significant reduction in burglaries, a massive cleanup effort in the Sepulveda Basin,

(continued to page 4)

Rob Glushon
President - Encino Property Owners Association

For over 60 years, the Encino Property Owners Assn. (EPOA) has advocated on issues including public safety, zoning and development, traffic and other issues. With a volunteer 17-person Board of Directors and a record membership over 1,750 homeowners and residents, EPOA works tirelessly to protect Encino homeowners and residents.

In this past year, Encino faced unprecedented threats and challenges which included the Palisades Fire, a large spike in residential burglaries and a double-homicide, daily fires in the Sepulveda Basin from illegal encampments and State Housing legislation that would have allowed high density high-rise apartments in our residential neighborhoods.

In the face of such adversity, EPOA helped bring the community together with a loud voice that could not be ignored by our elected representatives.

In January, when most homeowners in Encino Hills had to evacuate from the Palisades

(continued to page 4)

Victoria Bourdas Martinez
CEO - Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce

As 2025 comes to a close, the Sherman Oaks/Encino Chamber of Commerce proudly reflects on a year marked by collaboration and community spirit. From dynamic networking events to impactful business initiatives, the chamber has continued to strengthen its role as a cornerstone for local businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, and residents alike.

This year, the chamber welcomed new members from a wide array of industries – from creative agencies and financial institutions to restaurants and professional services. Monthly mixers and networking lunches provided opportunities for members to connect, share insights, and foster partnerships that drive economic growth in the Valley across all industries.

In response to requests for guidance in today's economic climate, the chamber has revived two pre-Covid initiatives: the Restaurant Group and the School & Business Alliance. The Restaurant Group offers monthly

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Community Calendar

* The Cherry Blossom Garden Club will host a program entitled "All About Medicinal and Healing Herbs" on Wednesday, January 7, at 10 am. Marcella Ketelhut will share her research and recommendations regarding medicinal plants and herbs you can grow in the Valley climate. The event will take place at the Sepulveda Garden Center (16633 Magnolia Blvd.) in Encino. Attendance is free and all are welcome.

* ONEgeneration will hold their anual Holiday Show on Friday, December 19, at 1:30 pm at 18255 Victory Blvd. in Reseda. There is a suggested donation of $5 for entry and parking is limited on-site. There will be raffles, refreshments, singers and dancers getting the crowd into the holiday spirit!

* The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society will be taking part in the 2025 Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 20, from 8 am to 4 pm. Those interested in participating at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve will report all bird species observed, the individual numbers of each species, and the time you spent birding. For more info, visit sfvaudubon.org/event/2025-christmas-bird-count.

* It's the season of giving and the American Red Cross is asking that those eligible donate blood this month as the holidays are a typically low period of donations. Westfield Fashion Square will be hosting a drive on Tuesday, December 23, from 10 am to 4 pm. To schedule your life-saving appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

* Due to the holiday season, the end-of-month Executive Committee meeting of the Encino Neighborhood Council and all Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce events have been cancelled or suspended until January 2026.

People in the News

Credit: Curtis Dahl Photography

The National Charity League, Inc. - San Fernando Valley Chapter gathered at the Beverly Wilshire on November 29, 2025 for the 59th annual Charity Ball, presenting seven inspiring debutantes who have completed their six-year core mother-daughter program of leadership development, community service, and cultural experiences.

On the arm of their fathers, the San Fernando Valley Chapter Debutantes included (back row, left to right) **Miss Sophie Olivia Kaloustian, Miss Kaelin Brooke Schetter, Miss Laleh Sophia Mehdizadeh** and **Miss Sofia Francesca-Rose Boyd,** (front row, left to right) **Miss Eden Shir Zafrani, Miss Lauren Capri Babaian** and **Miss Lauren Isabelle Avedis.** This year's event was led by Charity Ball Directors Mrs. Shawna Dalton and Mrs. Heather Farley.

With a mission focused on fostering the mother-daughter relationship through philanthropy, leadership, and cultural activities, the San Fernando Valley Chapter has not only touched the hearts of its members but has made a profound impact on the community it serves.

The San Fernando Valley Chapter currently has more than 214 active and 302 sustainer members who provide hands-on volunteer service and financial support for 10 philanthropic organizations in the community.

The membership drive for the 2026-2027 year begins January 15, 2026. For more info, visit visitnationalcharityleague.org/chapter/sanfernandovalley.

The Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA) held their annual meeting and award presentations on December 11.

They elected and swore in the 2026 board of directors, presented scholarships to local students and awards to VICA members.

The 20th annual President's Award was given to **Mark Davis** of the Hilton Universal City. Davis was honored for his five decades of experience, his leadership with VICA and the Hotel Association and other nonprofits including Tierra del Sol, Valley YMCA and Boys & Girls Club. Melissa Garrett of United Airlines presented the award.

Miri Rossitto of COWE Communications was given the Harmon Ballin Community Service Award for her service on the boards of VICA, the Child Development Institute, the West Valley YMCA and Valley Economic Alliance. Zeyad Hakam of Bechtel gave Rossitto her award.

Jordan Duke of Granada Hills Charter received the VICA Membership Champion Award for his commitment to collaboration, advocacy and supporting the Los Angeles business community. He received the award from Theo Ossei Anto of GPSN.

Miri Rossitto accepts the Harmon Ballin Award from Zeyad Hakam.

Mark Davis accepts the President's Award from Melissa Garrett.

Craig Lally accepts the Robert E. Gibson Award from Jannelle Watson.

Jordan Duke accepts the VICA Memerbship Champion Award from Theo Ossei Anto.

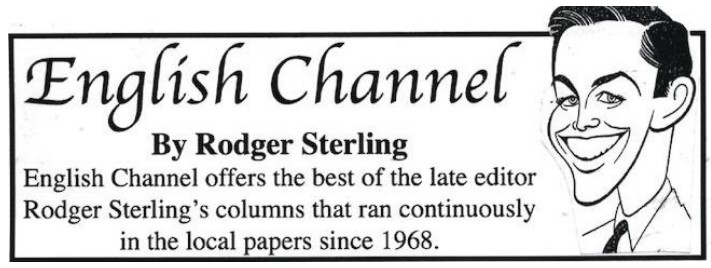
Craig Lally received the Robert E. Gibson Corporate Award of Excellence on behalf of the Los Angele Police Protective League, whose mission is to vigilantly protect, promote and improve working conditions, legal rights compensation and benefit for its members. Janelle Watson of Amazon presented the award.

Diana Duenas of The Gelb Group presented the Rickey M. Gelb Scholarships to Ester Yakhshyan of Los Angeles Valley College and Bryant Tran of USC.

Alina Barlow of UCLA received the Marvin R. Selter Memorial Scholarship and Venice Hernandez of Granada Hills Charter received the Melvyn A. Kohn Memorial Scholarship.

VICA is Southern California's most influential business advocacy group devoted to advancing the economic interests and opportunities of its members through effective legislative correspondence, civic leadership representation and conscious community engagement. VICA works to bring members together to improve, develop and connect community representatives, opinion leaders, and elected officials for engagement and collaboration.

For more information



• There are four stages of life and they all involve Santa.
1. You believe in Santa.
2. You don't believe in Santa.
3. You are Santa.
4. You look like Santa.

• So as we're all holiday shopping, I go to the grocery store and buy: a pound of sliced ham in a plastic bag, a loaf of bread in a plastic gag, a gallon of milk in a plastic jug, a pack of napkins in plastic wrap, a store-made salad in a plastic tub, plastic bottles of mustard and ketchup but they won't give you a plastic bag to hold it all.

• Yesterday my young son was chewing on an electrical cord. So I had to ground him.

• NASA is launching a satellite to say sorry to the aliens. They're calling it the Apollo G.

• I informed my family that someone in the the house was secretely an owl in disguise and our eldest daughter asked, "Who?" Honestly, I never suspected her...

• Q: What do you call a man who's finished digging? Ans: Doug.

• And some holiday haha's...

- How much does Santa pay to park his sleigh? Nothing, it's on the house.

- As a child I thought Silent Night lyrics included "Round Yon Virgin." I was like, how judgy? She just gave birth...

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End-of-Year Editorials Continued

Encino Neighborhood Council Continued

(continued from page 1)

the shut down of party houses, a traffic mitigation plan and more.

I have also seen countless acts of kindness from our community members. Encino is a strong, vibrant and supportive community. This is a blessing to us all.

Thank you to those who heard our call to action and then took action. Mayor Bass, LAFD, LAPD, LAHSA, Rec and Parks, Park Rangers, Assemblymember Gabriel, Senator Stern and Councilmember Raman. We have made significant progress, but there is still much more work to do, and I look forward to continued collaboration with them in 2026.

Encino is a strong, vibrant and supportive community. This is a blessing to us all.

Thank you to our partners in advocacy, especially the Encino Property Owners Association, who we stand side-by-side with on many of our shared priorities. And to our neighboring NC's for their vital partnership. Together, we are stronger and more effective.

Most of all, I am thankful for my team of tireless ENC representatives. For the Executive Board who never say no when I ask for help. For our Committee Chairs who keep the wheels turning. And for the Board members who put plans to action and are our direct connection to the Encino Community. Thank you.

As we enter the Holiday Season, I wish you and your loved ones a season filled with joy, blessings and peace. And I look forward to a better, safer more prosperous year in 2026!

In gratitude, Roy Nwaisser.

Encino Property Owners Association Continued

(continued from page 1)

Fire, EPOA leaders asked Mayor Bass for increased LAPD resources and the National Guard. As a result, Encino was the only evacuated area without any looting or burglaries.

In March, EPOA hosted a Thank You Event for our courageous firefighters that stopped the fire at Mulholland and for our police that protected our evacuated neighborhoods. This event was so successful that EPOA was able to donate surplus proceeds to Fire Station 86 and the West Valley LAPD Station.

In July, EPOA leaders again asked for increased LAPD resources in response to a large increase in residential burglaries, home invasions and the tragic murder of EPOA member Robin Kaye and her husband Tom Deluca. LAPD immediately arrested a suspect who the District Attorney's Office is currently prosecuting and the increased resources helped to significantly reduce the incidents of burglaries.

Thereafter, EPOA leaders organized together with representatives of the Encino Neighborhood Council and the Encino South Neighborhood Watch Facebook Group to demand that city officials take actions to remove illegal encampments in the Sepulveda Basin which posed a huge fire risk to the Encino community. As a result, Mayor Bass directed various agencies to come up with an action plan which was implemented several months ago. Though much more needs to be done, we at last have action and progress is being made.

In September, EPOA helped protect residents in the neighborhood south of Ventura off Rubio with negotiated community protection conditions in response to a high density apartment project on Ventura Blvd.

EPOA held record-setting monthly Zoom community meetings that helped inform Encino residents on critical issues of concern and holding our elected officials accountable.

EPOA held record-setting monthly Zoom community meetings that helped inform Encino residents on critical issues of concern and holding our elected officials accountable. Our January meeting with Mayor Bass, LAPD and LA Fire officials reached a maximum of 1,000 households. A similar Zoom meeting in July had over 750 households. In addition to Mayor Bass, speakers included Councilmember Nithya Raman, State Senator Henry Stern, Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, new LA Fire Chief Jamie Moore and Sheriff Robert Luna.

Our work is never ending but the reality is that we are all stronger together and need to advocate and fight to protect the Encino community.

To join or get involved, email info@encinopoa.com or go to our website at encinopoa.com

Sherman Oaks Encino Chamber of Commerce Cont'd

(continued from page 1)

collaboration for a growing and competitive food service industry, while the School & Business Alliance builds partnerships between local businesses and schools to strengthen the future workforce.

The highlight of the year was the 33rd Sherman Oaks Steet Fair, held in October on Ventura Blvd. The event drew close to 100,000 attendees and showcased local businesses, offering residents and visitors a chance to discover new products and services while supporting the local economy. It also featured professional entertainers including David Hernandez, *American Idol* Season 7 Finalist, as well as 10 local schools who wowed the crowds with 15 performances.

Monthly mixers and networking lunches provided opportunities for members to connect, share insights, and foster partnerships that drive economic growth in the Valley across all industries.

Beyond business, the chamber remained committed to beautifying the community through our 501c3 foundation working with local artists to paint utility boxes. We recently unveiled the first three boxes in Encino with more on the way.

The chamber also partnered with local nonprofits to provide our members with opportunities to participate in food and clothing drives for those affected by the wildfires, volunteer opportunities including the LA Homeless Count, Shine LA Day with the Mayor's Office and the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association, as well as holiday toy, food, and toiletry collections.

As we prepare for the new year, the chamber is excited for our annual Disaster Preparedness Drill on Saturday, March 28th, and the 34th Sherman Oaks Street Fair on Sunday, October 18th. We are also thrilled to launch programs focused on innovation and advocacy. Plans include additional industry-specific networking groups, business walks with our local elected officials, and hosting a state of the community luncheon.

The Sherman Oaks/ Encino Chamber of Commerce thanks its members, partners, and the entire community for making 2025 a year of progress and connection. Together, we look forward to building an even stronger, more vibrant local economy in 2026.

For more information or to get involved, visit www.shermanoaksencinochamber.org.

Iconic Brands of the SFV: How the Valley Helped Shape American Culture

By Miri Rossitto

The San Fernando Valley is a cultural incubator. For decades, the Valley has provided the space, workforce, and audiences that allowed brands to grow from local favorites into nationally (and globally) recognized names. These iconic brands didn't simply operate in the Valley. They were shaped by it, reflecting its diversity, creativity, and everyday rhythms of life.

Bob's Big Boy (Burbank) embodied postwar Southern California life. The Burbank location, opened in 1949, arrived at a time when the Valley was booming with young families, car culture, and optimism. Its drive-in roots aligned perfectly with the Valley's sprawling layout and car-centric lifestyle. Over time, Bob's Big Boy became a social hub where families celebrated milestones, classic car enthusiasts gathered weekly, and Hollywood insiders met casually outside studio walls. Its preservation amid changing trends turned it into a time capsule of Valley nostalgia, making it one of the most photographed and beloved landmarks in the region.

For Warner Bros., the Valley offered something Hollywood itself could not: space. Wide tracts of land, access to varied landscapes, and proximity to a growing suburban workforce allowed studios to expand beyond cramped city lots.

The studio's long-term presence helped transform the Valley into the backbone of the entertainment industry. Entire neighborhoods grew around production schedules, and generations of Valley residents built careers in film, television, animation, and music. Warner Bros. is inseparable from the Valley's identity as a place where stories are imagined and made.

Ventura Boulevard is the Valley's long memory. Running through multiple neighborhoods, it has long served as the region's commercial and social backbone. From old-school diners and record shops to modern cafes and boutiques, the Boulevard has adapted without losing its soul. It became iconic through continuity. Locals growing up with it, working along it, dating along it, and returning to it generation after generation. Ventura Blvd. represents the Valley's blend of tradition, reinvention, and community-driven commerce.

Mission Foods reflects the Valley's multicultural foundation. As SoCal's Latino communities grew, the demand for accessible, authentic staple foods grew with them. Mission helped bridge cultural traditions with large-scale food production, making tortillas a household staple across America. In 1977, GRUMA acquired the old Mission Tortilla Factory.

The Valley's central location, logistics infrastructure, and diverse workforce allowed Mission to scale efficiently while staying connected to its roots. Its success highlights how the Valley quietly influences what and how the nation eats.

Monty's Steakhouse earned its iconic status through longevity, consistency, and community connection. For decades, it was a gathering place for Valley families, business leaders, and longtime locals, a place where birthdays, anniversaries, and milestone dinners became traditions.

Its classic steakhouse atmosphere reflected the Valley's mid-century growth era, when neighborhood restaurants served as community cornerstones. With the flagship located in Woodland Hills, Monty's represented familiarity and reliability, securing its place as a true Valley institution remembered fondly across generations.

Circus Liquor (North Hollywood) is unmistakably Valley. Its towering clown sign is a beacon along Burbank Blvd and Vineland Ave. Featured in countless films, TV shows, and music videos, it often serves as visual shorthand for "Los Angeles," even though its soul is purely Valley. Its endurance in an era of redevelopment and chain retail cemented its status as a cultural landmark.

K-mart's connection to the Valley reflects the region's role in American retail. As suburban life expanded, the Valley's growing neighborhoods and families became ideal testing markets for big-box retail models. Valley Kmart locations became community anchors, places where everyday life happened. While the brand's national story evolved, its Valley footprint remains part of the collective memory of shopping trips, first jobs, and shared routines.

The Valley does not chase relevance. It outlasts it.

The Valley consistently produces iconic brands because

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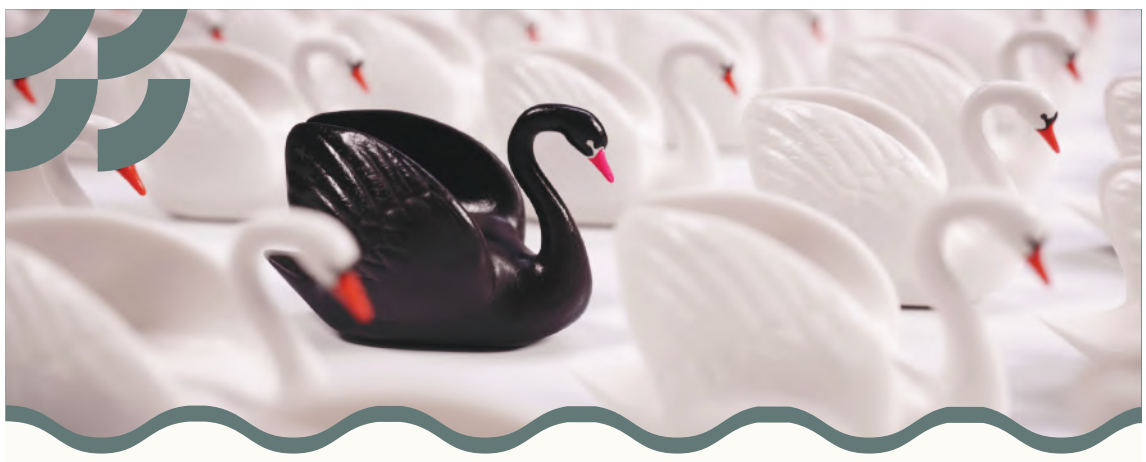

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HEALTH

How to Build Digital Resilience in Teens

As a clinical psychologist, I've learned that building digital resilience requires a relationship-based approach, not fear-driven strategies.

By Dr. Kanchi Wijesekera

Technology is everywhere, and for today's teens, it's nearly impossible to escape. Unfortunately, this has contributed to many adolescents losing connection to the relationships, purpose, and community that give life meaning and keep them emotionally grounded. At the Milika Center, we see this often: young people exhausted by comparison, overwhelmed by constant validation-seeking, turning to AI chatbots for companionship, and struggling to rest because their minds never fully log off. Neuroscience shows that adolescents are wired for belonging and reward, making social media and AI especially compelling.

As a clinical psychologist, I've learned that building digital resilience requires a relationship-based approach, not fear-driven strategies filled with strict bans, surprise phone sweeps, or escalating consequences. Teens are resourceful and often find creative workarounds to bans, such as hidden apps or borrowed devices.

We see tech use as not just behavior to manage—it can signal deeper emotional needs such as recognition, connection, and a sense of belonging. What helps teens heal isn't stricter rules; it's reconnection...with themselves, their families, and a meaningful offline identity. When monitoring feels excessive or punitive, it can drive secrecy, increase conflict at home, and strain the very relationships meant to keep them safe. Parents' worries are so valid; the digital world can feel unsafe and unpredictable. However, rules delivered without emotional safety often land as control, not care.

Digital resilience works best when it's grounded in relationships where boundaries are collaborative, conversations feel safe, and parents model self-regulation before expecting it from their teens. Adolescents are at a developmental stage where they seek independence and autonomy, so they need guidance that supports their growth rather than shaming them.

Parents can begin with small, meaningful shifts. Co-create a family technology agreement so expectations feel shared, not imposed, giving teens a sense of partnership in their own safety. Establish device-free zones, especially bedrooms and dinner tables, as predictable pockets of offline connection. Model digital balance yourself; teens notice when parents avoid doom-scrolling and choose intentional tech use. Try brief daily check-ins—just a few minutes of genuine presence can reduce defensiveness and rebuild trust. Help strengthen teens' offline lives through sports, art, volunteering, or other mastery-based experiences, helping anchor their identity beyond the algorithm.

We can't simply tell teens to disconnect. We must help them reconnect—with themselves, their families, and the parts of their lives that aren't measured in likes and notifications.

Dr. Kanchi Wijesekera is a compassionate clinical psychologist and mother of two dedicated to fostering resilience and mental well-being. She founded the Milika Center for Therapy & Resilience in Encino to provide a supportive, healing space for individuals and families. Previously, she served as the Outpatient Director of Clinical Psychology at the UCLA Pediatric Heart Center and provided care across UCLA's pediatric specialty clinics. She also supported physicians-in-training at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine. A sought-after CBT expert, Dr. Kanchi specializes in anxiety, depression, trauma, children and adolescents, maternal mental health, physician wellness, and resilience training, helping clients overcome challenges and thrive in life.

To learn more, call 310-800-7112. Milika Center for Therapy and Resilience is located at 16055 Ventura Blvd. in Encino.

KEEP ON WRITING COMEBACK STORIES

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HEALTH

The Centers for Disease Control Reverses 30-Year Vaccine Recommendation

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently voted to reverse an almost 30-year recommendation that newborns receive the first dose of the Hepatitis B vaccine within 24 hours of birth. Conversely, public health officials are urging the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, who made this ruling, to uphold the vaccination recommendation.

Hepatitis B is a viral infection that can easily spread during childbirth or through contact with infected fluid (like saliva or blood). Seventy percent of people who have Hep B are unaware of it, but 90% of infants who catch Hep B develop chronic infection. Symptoms can include jaundice, fatigue, abdominal pain and more, but is preventable by a safe vaccine.

The new recommendation states that pregnant women who test negative for the viral infection should consult with their doctor, suggesting they wait until the baby is at least two months old (when routine infant vaccination typically begins). The panel, appointed by Health Secretary and vaccine skeptic Robert F. Kennedy Jr., voted 8-3 on the matter. The decision still needs official sign-off from the CDC's acting director, who tends to follows the panel's recommendation.

"Ending the recommendation for newborns makes it more likely the number of cases will begin to increase again. This makes America sicker. Acting CDC Director O'Neill should not sign these new recommendations and instead retain the current, evidence-based approach," Senator Bill Cassidy said. President Trump applauded the decision, stating the CDC "made a very good decision to END their Hepatitis B Vaccine recommendation for babies, the vast majority of whom are at NO RISK."

Health insurance plans say they will continue to cover the Hepatitis B vaccine in their coverage through 2026 and encourage individuals to talk to their doctors.

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LEISURE CARE

The Reel History of the Valley

By Martin M. Cooper

A Garden Like No Other

The Garden of the Gods sounds as if it should be located in a valley somewhere in Greece. In reality, it's a lot closer, and its importance in history is not cemented by Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades, but rather by William S. Hart, Tom Mix, and John Wayne.

Located in the northwest corner of Chatworth, this 23-acre portion of the famed Iverson Ranch, with its distinctive sandstone rock outcroppings, has been the setting for more Western motion pictures than any other single location.

From 1912 through the mid-1960s, the sound of stagecoach wheels clattering over the rocks, the ricocheting of six-shooter bullets, and the cadence of horses' hooves on the dusty trail were the prevailing sounds of this area of the ranch.

Some of the Western stars whose films were shot in the Garden of the Gods included Hoot Gibson, Roy Rogers (whose ranch was just five miles from the Garden), Randolph Scott, and John Wayne.

The area also stood in for Asia, Africa, and the South Seas. A few non-Western films shot partially or completely at the Garden of the Gods include *Man-Woman-Marriage* (1921), Buster Keaton's *Three Ages* (1923), *Noah's Ark* (1928), *The Fighting Seabees* (1944), *The Saga of the Viking Women and Their Voyage to the Waters of the Great Sea Serpent* (1957), *The Female Animal* (1958), *Panic in Year Zero!* (1962), *Panic in the City* (1968), and *The Harpy* (1971).

One of the most popular television programs of all time was *The Lone Ranger*, whose opening and closing scenes were filmed on the ranch.

It was near the Nyoka Cliff area that perhaps the most iconic footage in all Western television history was shot: the 40-second opening sequence of *The Lone Ranger,* with Silver, the "fiery horse with the speed of light," rearing on his hind legs to the strains of Rossini's William Tell Overture. The masked rider opens the program in front of what is now known as the Lone Ranger Rock, located in the Lower Iverson Gorge on the southeastern side of the gorge next to Nyoka Cliff.

The Garden of the Gods appears at the end of each *Lone Ranger* episode when he and Tonto ride up the trail, away from camera, ready for their new adventures. They are riding up between the two large rock formations that make up the Garden of the Gods.

But it wasn't only Westerns that the Garden hosted. Republic Pictures, headquartered at the old Mack Sennett studio, less than a dozen miles from Iverson, used the area for dozens of serials. One of these was *Perils of Nyoka*, a 1943 Republic serial starring Kay Aldridge, which was likely the most popular of the jungle-set films of the era. The serial ran a total of 261 minutes over 15 chapters, just perfect for the Saturday-morning matinees.

The plot: Nyoka (Aldridge), with help from Larry Grayson, attempts to discover the golden tablets of Hippocrates, which contain the medical knowledge of the ancients and are buried with a treasure trove. In search of the tablets, they travel from the African jungle to the Arabian desert where Queen Vultura (Lorna Gray) and her Arab cohort are also searching for them. Of course, Larry saves Nyoka from the usual Saturday morning cliffhanging perils, including being captured by Vultura and her pet gorilla, Satan.

Larry and Nyoka track down Vultura, who has found the tablets. While Larry and the other expedition members engage Vultura's men, Nyoka and Vultura battle each other in one of the rare female-against-female fights in serial lore. The battle ends when Satan hurls a spear at Nyoka, misses her and unintentionally kills Vultura. Larry wins the battle against Vultura's men, shoots Satan, saves Nyoka, and retrieves the tablets.

And what ties *Perils of Nyoka* to *The Lone Ranger*? Clayton Moore. Kay Aldridge's friend Dr. Larry Grayson is played by Clayton Moore, in his 10th film role. He later gains fame playing the Lone Ranger for many years.

The Garden of the Gods is the only area of the Iverson Ranch that still allows public access; street parking is available on Redmesa Road in Chatsworth. The easy hiking trail of the Garden of the Gods is available for those who want to "return to those thrilling days of yesteryear" and imagine what it was like in the heyday of the Iverson Ranch.

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 January 2026.

Above: The Garden of the Gods is the only part of the famed Iverson Ranch still open to the public.

At left: Silver, the Lone Ranger's white stallion, is one of the best-known equines in film and television history.

For half a century, the Garden of the Gods was the location of almost every major Western star's movies… this plaque is their homage.

ENTERTAINMENT

Shop Small to Make a Big Impact: 2025 Valley Gift Guide

Give the Gift of Community

Open year-round, rain or shine, the ONEgeneration Farmer's Market is the ideal spot to check off multiple names on your holiday list. Shopping for a foodie, an oenophile, a crafter, a reader, a health nut or spa enthusiast? With a myriad of booths offering local goods, you'll not only find the perfect gift for everyone, but you'll be supporting small businesses and mom-and-pop shops. Each purchase also gives back to the ONEgeneration community who use those funds to support seniors in the area. Would you rather give the gift of time? ONEgeneration is always looking for additional support in the form of volunteerism. How about the gift of life? With frequent blood drives at the community market, you can gift someone life-saving blood and make a difference worth far more than a material item. The ONEgeneration Farmers Market runs every Sunday, from 8 am to 1 pm. Shop small and make a big difference in the community!

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WOODLAND HILLS

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Turquoise symbolizes good fortune, healing, protection and spiritual connection - and all turquoise necklaces are 50% off for the holidays at Native Spirit Lodge in Woodland Hills.

Come shop their large selection of beautiful gift items, from sound bowls (shown above) to crystals, Kachinas, crystal bracelets, intention stones and more.

Choose the perfect gift for that spiritual someone from semi-precious stones, incense burners, sage and incense to tarot and oracle decks.

Native Spirit Lodge owner Greywolf can guide you to the right gift, explaining the meaning of all the intention stones and crystals - and the native lore behind them.

Native Spirit Lodge is located at 22559 Ventura Blvd. They are open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 7 pm. They are open Christmas week but closed Mondays and Christmas Day.

Sound baths are only $20 and are held Wednesday to Friday at noon, Saturdays at 4 pm and Sundays at 12 pm. Drum circles are free and are held Saturdays at 11 am.

For more information call (818) 703-7046.

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Give the thrill of racing their own track with a gift certificate to Circuit Sim Racing!

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No experience is necessary. Circuit Sim caters to all skill levels, from serious enthusiasts to novices just looking to have fun.

Circuit Sim is located at 21522 Ventura Blvd. Call (818) 805-3355 or visit circuitsimracing.com.

Sabzalijamaat designed home at 4939 Petit Ave in Encino. Photo credit: CRMLS

One-Of-A-Kind Encino Estate Up for Sale for $4.9M

A one-of-a-kind estate built by 35-year-old architect Sam Sabzalijamaat has been listed for $4,950,000 by Nanette Basin and Karin "Basin" Miller, agents affiliated with the Studio City office of Coldwell Banker Realty. Located at 4939 Petit Ave. in Encino, Calif., the elegant main residence has six bedrooms, five bathrooms and a half bath. Its guest house, with a separate address, includes one bedroom and one bathroom.

Showing the warmth of organic modern architecture and stunning new luxury construction, the gentle curves of the home's exterior can be found in details throughout the house, such as the fireplace, the curved corners of rooms and even the concrete steps throughout the exterior. Overlooking a private deck and Japanese landscaping, the sleek kitchen features a center island, quartz countertops, white oak cabinets and stainless steel appliances, including a Wolf eight-burner range with double oven. Both the kitchen and dining area have custom-designed light fixtures.

The living room has a fireplace and huge sliders leading out to the extensive grassy grounds. Showcasing floor-to-ceiling windows that slide open for viewing the amazing grounds, the opulent primary suite boasts a separate area for lounging with a spacious side balcony, two custom walk-in closets with extensive built-ins and gorgeous primary bathroom with double sinks, a vanity area, soaking tub and an oversized shower with dual rain heads and seating benches.

On the second level, there is a sitting area or library with a dramatic skylight and two more bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms. An airy floating staircase connects the two levels. The grand living space is accentuated with high ceilings, extensive use of glass and infused with a spectacular amount of natural light. An exceptional park-like oasis, the grounds offer an immense pool with a spacious Baja shelf and a spa, stainless steel BBQ, meat smoker, refrigerator, pizza oven and stainless steel sink. At the back of the private grounds, a nearly 800-square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU) looks like a mini version of the main house with the same unique wood exterior and curves inside and out. The ADU's floor plan includes an extensive kitchen with a quartz center island, living room and sliders that open to the patio, creating a perfect indoor-outdoor flow.

To view the property, see coldwellbankerhomes.com/ca/encino/4939-petit-ave/pid_67316503.

Iconic Brands of the SFV Cont'd

(continued from page 5)

it offers something rare: scale without detachment. It is large enough to support innovation, yet intimate enough to create loyalty. It blends creativity with practicality, entertainment with industry, nostalgia with reinvention.

These brands are iconic because they grew with the Valley, not ahead of it. What endures here is built through daily use, shared routines, and quiet loyalty. Culture is not imported or announced. It is made incrementally, through storefronts, studio lots, and stories repeated often enough to stick.

Once something takes root in the San Fernando Valley, it does not fade into memory. It becomes part of the landscape we all recognize.

Miri Rossitto is the founder and CEO of Cowe Communications. Follow them on all social @CoweOfficial or visit their website cowe.com for more business tips.

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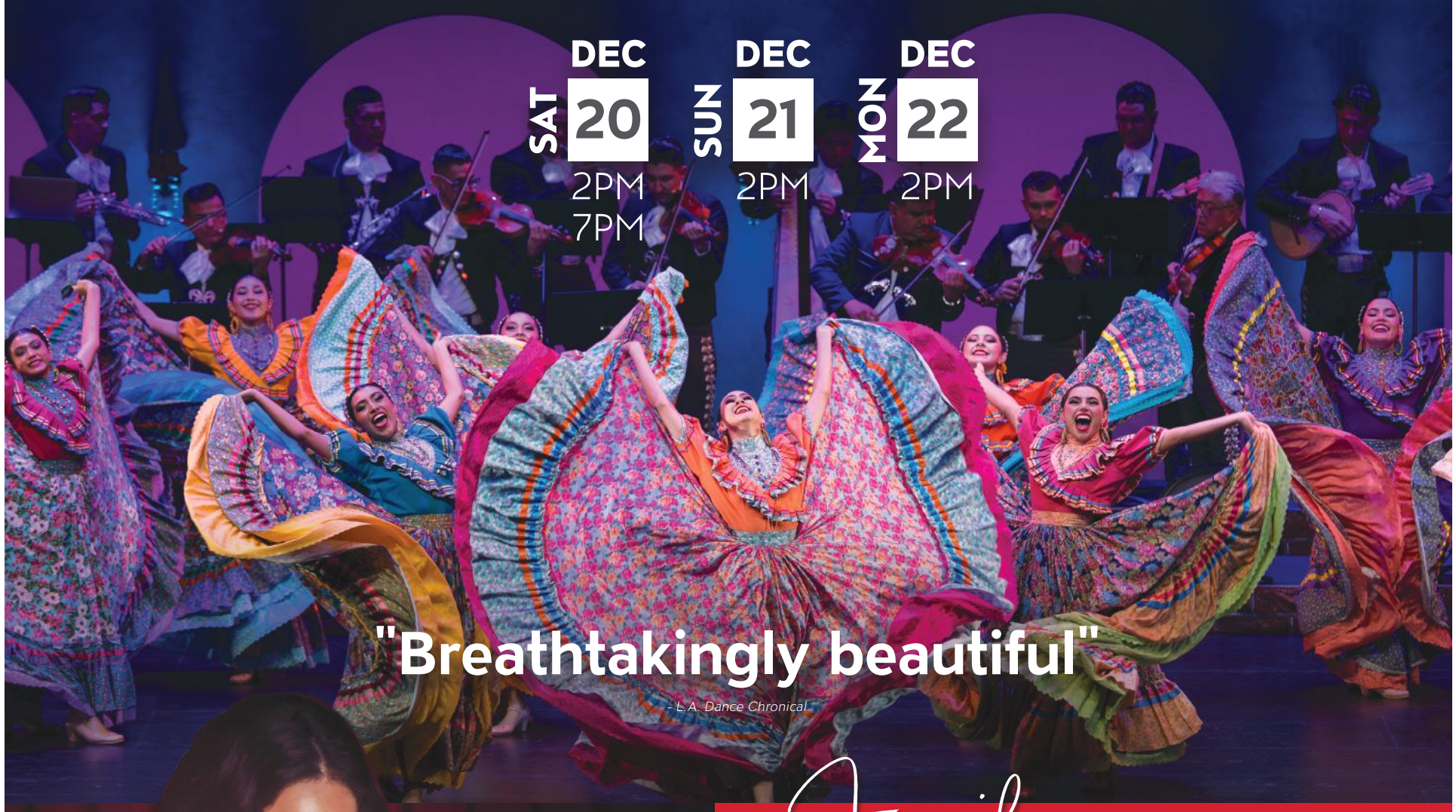

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