NCL Presents 2025 Debutantes
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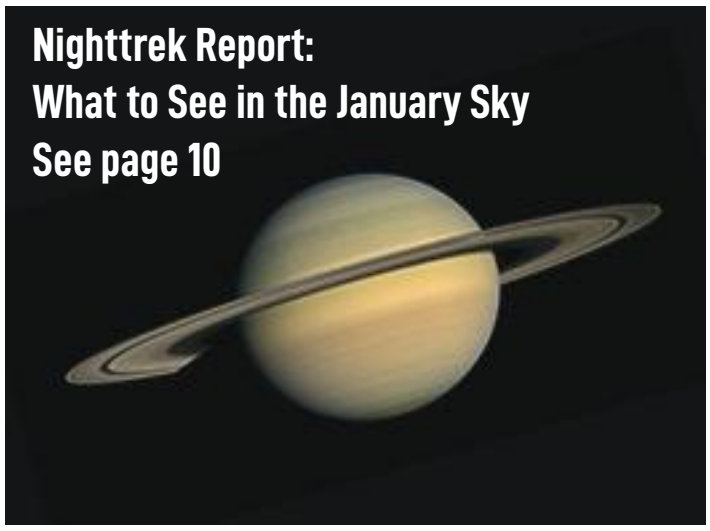

Top North Valley Headlines of 2025
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North Valley News

Volume 3, Number 24 January 9, 2026

Serving Porter Ranch, Northridge, Granada Hills & Chatsworth

News in Brief

Congressman to Host Town Hall

Congressman Brad Sherman, at right, will host a Telephone Town Hall on Wednesday, January 21, at 7 pm. Sherman will make opening remarks and then answer questions on any issue facing Congress. To participate call (818) 214-8555 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 252 Town Hall meetings during his time in Congress.

Meet New Fire Captain Jaime Moore

United Chambers of Commerce is hosting their annual board installation luncheon and celebrating new Los Angeles Fire Chief Jaime Moore on January 26. Meet the new fire chief and learn about his efforts to improve wildfire response across the city. The event will be held at CBS Studios' Carla's Cafe, 4024 Radford Avenue in Studio City, beginning at 11 am. Former Councilman and UCC Vice Chair Dennis Zine will be Master of Ceremonies. No walk-ins allowed. Purchase tickets at unitedchambers.org.

Nominations for Inspirational Women of the Valley Now Open

The United Chambers of Commerce announced their 12th annual Inspirational Women of the San Fernando Valley Awards will be held on May 7. The event will recognize women who have inspired, achieved, and made the Valley a better place. Honorees will be selected from a wide array of industries, including, but not limited to, business, social services, health care and medicine, education, community advocacy, arts, government and non-profit, among others. Nominations and self-nominations are welcome and must be submitted no later than March 5 at 5 pm. The nomination form is available at form.jotform.com/260010138648147.

Vigil Held for Northridge Man Killed by ICE Agent

A candlelight vigil was held Sunday night at the Village Pointe complex in Northridge to grieve Keith Porter Jr.

Friends, relatives and co-workers of his from Home Depot joined the impromptu memorial service and wrote messages to Porter on a small board above his photo.

Porter was shot by another resident of the complex, an off-duty ICE agent.

The unidentified agent claimed that he heard the sound of "multiple" gunshots from within his home that seemed to be getting closer. He said he confronted Porter, identified himself as law enforcement, and Porter then fired towards him, prompting the officer to return fire.

LAPD arrived on scene and found Porter deceased.

Witnesses to the event say

Keith Porter Jr.

Porter was firing a rifle into the air to celebrate the new year, not aiming it at anyone.

Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin told CBS News that the agent confronted Porter after hearing the gunshots.

Najee Ali of Project Islamic Hope said, "We believe that Keith Porter Jr. was unjustly shot and killed by an overzealous off-duty ICE agent. In a public statement, the Department of Homeland Security claimed that Porter Jr. was an 'active shooter.' That claim is false and misleading."

Black Lives Matter, of which Porter was a member, organized Sunday's vigil and is calling for an independent investigation and is demanding a federal investigation into the agent responsible for the killing. Firing guns into the air is a felony due to the risk of people being hurt or killed, and the shooting is under investigation by LAPD Robbery Homicide, as well as the FBI, Department of Justice and Homeland Security since a federal agent was involved.

Summer Concert Season Announced

Valley Cultural Foundation (VCF) is excited to announce the return of its legendary free Summer Concert Series at Warner Park, marking an incredible 51 years of music, community, and memorable moments.

This season promises a vibrant lineup of 10 unforgettable Sunday concerts, featuring a dynamic mix of crowd-favorite tribute bands and rising stars.

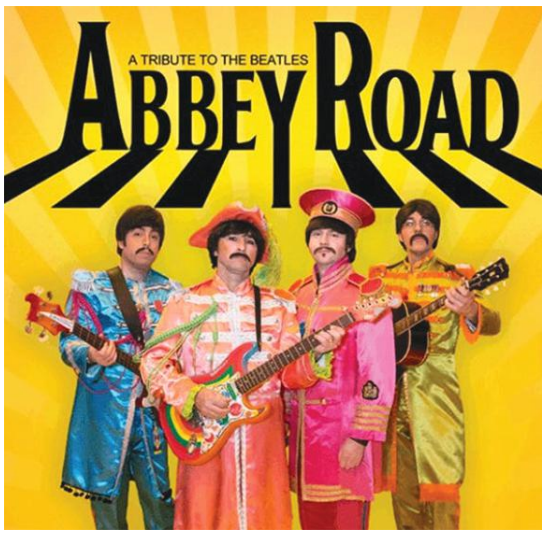
Each concert starts at 5:30 PM with an Emerging Artist Showcase, spotlighting fresh, original talent before the main act takes the stage around 6:30 PM. It's the perfect blend of discovery and nostalgia—all in one summer evening!

In addition to the music, concertgoers can explore local vendors, indulge in various food trucks, and enjoy the festive atmosphere that's made this series a cherished Valley tradition.

So grab your blankets, rally your friends and family, and come early to snag the best spot in the park.

The 2026 Warner Park Summer Concert Schedule includes:

- June 14: Dog n Butterfly (Tribute to Heart).
- June 21: Red Corvette (Tribute to Prince).
- June 28: Cali Country All Stars (Country Tribute).
- July 12: Flashback Heart Attack 80's (80's Tribute).



The Beatles tribute will take the stage July 26.

- July 19: Ridin' The Storm Out (Tribute to REO Speedwagon).
- July 26: Abbey Road (Tribute to The Beatles).
- August 2: New Romantics

(Continued to page 6)

COMMUNITY

Holding an Event in 2026?
Let North Valley News Know!

If your event is open to the public and located in the North Valley, we can include it in our calendar listings.

Email information to
northvalleynewspaper@gmail.com

Community Calendar

GRANADA HILLS: LAPD Senior Lead Officer John Parker will hold a Basic Car 17A35 Neighborhood Watch Meeting on Tuesday, January 13, at 6:30 pm. The community meeting will be held at St. Euphrasia Catholic Church, 11779 Shoshone Ave.

NORTHRIDGE The Village at Northridge is hosting a Healing Arts Fair on Tuesday, January 13, from 1 to 2:30 pm. Start 2026 with intention! Tours of the community are also available. The Village is located at 9222 Corbin Avenue. Call (818) 740-5836 to RSVP.

CHATSWORTH: The Friends of the Chatsworth Library will hold a giant book sale on Saturday, January 17, from 2 to 4 pm. The library is located at 21052 Devonshire Street.

NORTHRIDGE: A Northridge East General Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21, at 7 pm. For agenda and Zoom link visit nenc-la.org.

PORTER RANCH: The Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council will meet on Wednesday, January 14, at 6 pm. The in-person meeting will be held at Castlebay Charter Elementary, 19010 Castlebay Lane. For agenda and Zoom link visit prnc.org.

GRANADA HILLS: "From Parthenia to Donmetz: The Stories Behind the Valley's Street Names" with Mark Tapio Kines will be the feature at the Granada Hills Library on Saturday, January 17, at 3:30 pm. Learn about how we got the street names we have in the Valley. The library is located at 10640 Petit Avenue.

CANOGA PARK: Canoga Park Women's Club will host a PJ Party Bingo Night on Friday, January 16, from 6 to 9 pm. Wear something cozy and enjoy pizza, salad, dessert and bingo. A $25 donation includes a book of 10 bingo games and dinner. There will be prizes and a raffle. Reservations are a must by calling (818) 727-0720 or emailing cpwc.rsvp@gmail.com. The club is located at 7401 Jordan Avenue.

NORTHRIDGE: Teens ages 11 to 16 are invited to learn robotics and programming skills at Northridge Library, through Tinkercard Circuits, a free browser-based tool that works on Chromebooks and smartphones. Participants will learn how to build and program virtual circuits and more. The workshop will run on Tuesdays and Saturdays in January. This program is hosted for teens by teens. The first session will be held January 13. The library is located at 9051 Darby Avenue.

Congressman Brad Sherman

TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

WEDNESDAY ✦ JANUARY 21, 2026

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 (818) 214-8555 any time during the Town Hall

RSVP at: BradSherman.house.gov/RSVP

National Charity League Presents 2025 Debutantes

The National Charity League, Inc. - San Fernando Valley Chapter gathered at the Beverly Wilshire last year 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 National Charity League membership drive for the 2026-2027 year begins January 15, 2026. For more info, visit visitnationalcharityleague.org/chapter/sanfernandovalley.

Students in the News

Dan Daniele, Kendra Minadeo, Caeden Cattaneo and **Christian Elian**, all of Granada Hills, **Kenia Sanchez, Pearl Cayabyab, Kishan Prasad**, all of North Hills, plus **Kristyna Bell** of Porter Ranch, **Ashley Kazar** of Northridge and **Jacob Johnston** of Chatsworth were all named to the Fall 2025 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, New Hampshire.

•••

Fnu Dinesh Kumar of North Hills completed requirements for a degree from Trine University at the end of the Fall 2025 semester. **Dinesh Kumar** earned a degree in Master of Science in Information Studies at Trine.

•••

Vana Varvarian of Granada Hills was named to PennWest University's Fall 2025 Dean's List.

•••

Katelyn Brough of Sherwood Forest and **Mckenna Brough** of Sherwood Forest were named to the Dean's List at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennesee.

•••

Husna Firdose of Northridge graduated with a degree in Communication Science & Discord from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, during commencement exercises in August.

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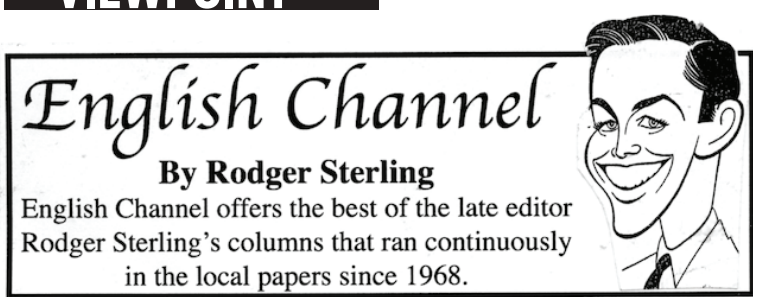
VIEWPOINT



• Lance is not a common name these days. But in medieval times people were named Lance a lot.

• As people age, do they sleep more soundly? Yes, but usually in the afternoon.

• Chuck Underhill gets into the act with this one. The doctor tells the patient he has good news and bad news. The good news is the patient has 24 hours to live. The bad news? The doc forgot to tell him yesterday.

• Chuck says he went to his doctor for an ailment and was told to knock off all his bad habits, eat oatmeal and drink water for better health. "I feel a lot better now," he reports, "since I went to another doctor."

• With New Year's resolutions on our minds, Scott Harbin says he knows a man who gave up smoking, drinking, sex and rich food. Scott says he was healthy right up to the time he killed himself.

• Do you think it's strange that sick people have to walk all the way to the back of a drugstore to find medicine, while healthy people can buy cigarettes right up front?

• As we go into the new year, don't want to burst your bubble but statistics show that we keep only 8% of our new year's resolutions. That's okay - if it's the 8% I really need to accomplish!

• Question of the day: Why are there self-help groups?

• Here's one for the kiddies. A> If a man dies in England who was born in China, reared in France, worked in South America and married in Japan, what is he? A> Dead.

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Top North Valley Headlines of 2025

FIRE SPECIAL: How to Prepare, Recover, Give Back
What Exactly Does Containment Mean?
Valley News Group Wins Google Award for Fire Coverage
North Valley Residents Get Wildfire Relief Funds
Councilman John Lee: No Toxic Waste at Sunshine Landfill
Homeowners Lose Appeal on Circle S Ranch Affordable Housing
LAPD Topanga Using Drones to Fight Crime
Chatsworth Celebrates Day of the Horse
Tired of Hitting Manholes on Topanga?
Jill Mather Named Inspiring Woman of the Valley
The Valley's Most Neighborly Town, Granada Hills, Kicks Off Centennial
Volunteers Rally for West Valley All-Street Cleanup
Heroes in Education to Honor Local Teachers
L.A. City Council Explores Legal Action Against Edison for Hurst Fire
Local Educators Honored by North Valley Chamber
Chatsworth Basketball Star Out of Coma, Released from Hospital
John Lee Celebrates Young Filmmakers at Soraya
Longtime Canoga Park Resident and Vet Honors Fallen Heroes
Peaceful Protests Spread Across the Valley
Summer Solstice Celebrated at Chatworth Nature Preserve
Memorial Garden Planted at New Horizons
Three Teens Shot in Northridge
City Reports Homeless Numbers Came Down
Arrest Made in Murder of San Fernando Child
Gun Violence Hits North Valley
Valley Home Prices Hit Record High
Turn on the Tap! Water Restored to North Valley
Back to Back Attempted Robberies in Northridge
405 Freeway Weekend Closures Set
Northridge Hospital Celebrates 70!
Soraya Announces 25-26 Concert Season
Travel Back in Time to Canoga Park Museum
Chatsworth Celebrates Pioneer Day
"Reel" History of the Valley: A Tale of Two Chatsworths
Volunteers Cleaning Communities Celebrates Five Years of Cleaning Up Valley
John Lee Invests in Solar Streetlights in Granada Hills
Granada Hills Hosts Annual "Rita's Tree" Lighting
Three Murders Lead North Valley News
Sierra Canyon Sued Over Sexual Misconduct
Councilman Lee Responds to Fraud Allegations
Volunteers Cleaning Communities Honored at City Hall

Need to Pick Up a Paper? Visit These Merchants

Northridge Library
Chatsworth Library
Nat's Diner
Brent's Deli
Ralphs Markets
Vons Markets
Albertsons
Logix Credit Union
Jon's Market
Starbucks Vineyard
IHOP
Soleil Hotel
Northridge Hospital
North Valley Chamber
Granada Hills Chamber
Handel's Ice Cream
PorterValley CountryClub
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What Your Brand Needs in 2026

By Miri Rossitto

If your brand feels busier than ever but harder to explain, you're not alone.

As we move into 2026, brands are navigating AI acceleration, shifting platforms, economic uncertainty, and increasingly selective audiences. There's more content, more tools, and more noise than ever. And yet, the brands that win won't be the ones doing the most. They'll be the ones doing what matters most. In 2026, clarity, trust, and intentional connection will define brand success.

Clear Positioning—Fast

Your audience shouldn't have to work to understand what you do. If your brand relies on vague language or broad promises, you're losing attention before it ever turns into trust.

Clear positioning means knowing exactly who you serve, what problem you solve, and why your approach matters, without buzzwords or over-explanation. This year, focus beats flexibility. The brands that stand out are comfortable being specific.

Consistency Across Every Touchpoint

Your brand isn't just your website or your logo. It's every interaction someone has with your business. When your messaging shifts across platforms or teams, trust erodes quietly. Brand clarity requires alignment: the same story, values, and tone everywhere your brand shows up. If your internal teams can't describe your brand the same way, your audience won't either.

Lead With Humanity in an AI World

AI can help you move faster, but it can't replace perspective, empathy, or judgment. In 2026, your advantage isn't automation; it's intention. The brands that resonate use AI to support their voice, not replace it. Audiences are increasingly sensitive to content that feels generic or disconnected. Your brand should sound human because that's what people trust.

Treat Trust as a Growth Strategy

Trust is now a competitive advantage. Audiences are cautious. They're paying attention to consistency, transparency, and follow-through. Saying less and standing behind it matters more than reacting to everything. Strong brands earn credibility, not chase relevance.

Internal Alignment Before External Impact

Your brand will never be stronger externally than it is internally. When teams aren't aligned on values and messaging, customers feel it. In 2026, brand strength depends on shared understanding across leadership, marketing, sales, and operations. When your people believe in the brand, delivering it becomes natural.

Build Community, Not Just Reach

Algorithms change. Communities last. In 2026, brands that invest in real relationships, through owned channels, partnerships, and consistent presence, build resilience. Community isn't about constant engagement. It's about meaningful connection and trust over time. Loyalty follows when people feel seen and valued.

Fewer, Stronger Brand Moments

More content doesn't mean more impact. Audiences are overwhelmed, and focus is the differentiator. Every campaign, message, or initiative should reinforce your positioning and values. If it doesn't move the brand forward, it's noise.

Growth That Aligns With Your Brand

Growth without alignment leads to dilution. Every new product, partnership, or pivot shapes perception. In 2026, strong brands let their identity guide decisions and not the other way around. When growth aligns with purpose, it feels intentional and credible.

The Bottom Line

The brands that succeed in 2026 won't be louder. They'll be clearer. Clarity builds trust. Trust drives growth. And brands that invest in both now won't just keep up with change, they'll lead the charge.

Miri Rossitto is the founder and CEO of Cowe Communications. Follow @CoweOfficial or visit cowe.com for more.

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VALLEY ENTERTAINMENT

PHOTO: RogerMastrioanni

Chloë Cheers (Younger Allie) and Kyle Mangold (Younger Noah).

The Notebook Swoons Audiences at Pantages

The Notebook: The Musical, based on the best-selling novel by Nicholas Sparks that inspired the iconic film, will make its L.A. Premiere at the Hollywood Pantages Theatre from January 6 to 26.

The Notebook tells the story of Allie and Noah, both from different worlds, who share a lifetime of love despite the forces that threaten to pull them apart.

In 1940's South Carolina, mill worker Noah Calhoun and rich girl Allie are desperately in love. But her parents don't approve. When Noah goes off to serve in World War II, it seems to mark the end of their love affair. Allie becomes involved with another man But when Noah returns to their small town years later, on the cusp of Allie's marriage, it soon becomes clear that their romance is anything but over.

"Full of butterfly-inducing highs and beautiful songs" (*Entertainment Weekly*), *The Notebook* is a deeply moving portrait of the enduring power of love. Chris Jones of *The Chicago Tribune* says *The Notebook* is "absolutely gorgeous, not to be missed," and *The New York Daily News* calls it "a love story for the ages."

The Notebook is directed by Michael Greif (*Dear Evan Hansen, Next to Normal, RENT*) and Schele Williams (*The Wiz, Aida*), and features music and lyrics by multi-platinum singer-songwriter Ingrid Michaelson, book by Bekah Brunstetter (NBC's *This Is Us*), and choreography by Katie Spelman.

Portraying the young couple throughout the years are a variety of actors to represent them as they age.

Older Noah is played by Beau Gravitte, Middle Noah played by Ken Wulf Clark and Younger Noah played by Kyle Mangold. Older Allie is played by Sharon Catherine Brown, Middle Allie is played by Alysha Deslorieux and Younger Allie is played by Chloe Cheers.

The Notebook is two hours and 20 minutes, including a 15-minute intermission and is recommended for ages 10 and up.

Tickets start at $57. To see showtimes and available tickets, visit broadwayinhollywood.com or call the box office at (323) 468-1770.

Valley Cultural Foundation's Summer Concert Season

(Continued from page 1)

(Tribute to Taylor Swift).

- August 9: Start Me Up (Tribute to The Rolling Stones).
- August 16: Super Soul Group (Tribute to Motown).
- August 23: Led Zepagain (Tribute to Led Zeppelin).

All opening acts will be announced at a future date.

VCF offers a convenient season-long parking pass for just $125, giving you access to parking for all concerts. Individual parking donations are also available at each event. Parking is located in the adjacent structure directly behind the stage on Califa Street, between Topanga Canyon Blvd. and Owensmouth Ave.

Since 1975, Valley Cultural Foundation has been dedicated to providing live entertainment programs and cultural events that reflect the rich diversity of the San Fernando Valley—uniting talent, community, and local business.

For more information, contact VCF at (818) 704-1358 or visit www.valleycultural.org

VALLEY ENTERTAINMENT

Cross the Pond for Christmas! A London Adventure

By Kathleen Sterling

Now that the holidays are over and you've done the family thing - too much food, too much stress and too much chaos - it's never too early to plan next year!

This holiday my daughter and I canceled Christmas (we actually postponed it; we're not that callous) and traveled across the pond to celebrate.

Christmas in London is crazy, crowded, loud and fun. Everywhere you go the stores try to outdo each other with window displays and the streets are filled with seasonal lights and Mariah Carey blasting from every pedicab.

Regent Street and Oxford Street are shoppers' mecca, and we hit every store in town - Harrods, Selfridge's, Marks & Spencer, Primark and Marks & Spencer again... and again.

Gifts, goodies and our annual Christmas candle were on the list. Those who know me know I pack an extra suitcase to drag to London!

Home base this year was a new hotel, as our old favorite was under renovation. We actually have a new favorite in The Mandeville, tucked in between Mayfair and Marylebone. Its main draw was its walking distance to Bond Street and Regent Street. Plus, being just five minutes from a tube stop makes it the perfect central location.

This boutique hotel had large rooms (a necessity for two women with four suitcases and lots of shopping bags), lovely amenities and God bless the Brits, a deep tub!

They gave us the room with the lighted Christmas tree right outside our window so we were totally in the holiday spirit!

Their breakfast buffet was included and offered a huge choice of breakfast items. They also offered what looked like a lovely afternoon tea and a Christmas dinner, but we had made other plans.

When I was a student at Cambridge years ago, British food was an oxymoron. Truly awful mixed grill of meat, potatoes and more potatoes.

It's come into its own, and we carefully had planned our dining out to visit as many of our favorites as we could in one week!

Our first stop was Dishoom Covent Garden for their Bombay cuisine. While we had made a reservation, the line trailing down the block was a testament to how popular this restaurant has become. We craved the special lamb dish they offer, as each location has their own chef specialty and we couldn't stop thinking about this biryani dish since our last visit. That along with prawns, ruby chicken, samosas and a chocolate pudding with chili ice cream, we were in heaven.

After dinner we hit the Covent Garden market to sit in the courtyard and listen to an opera singer while having an after-dinner drink.

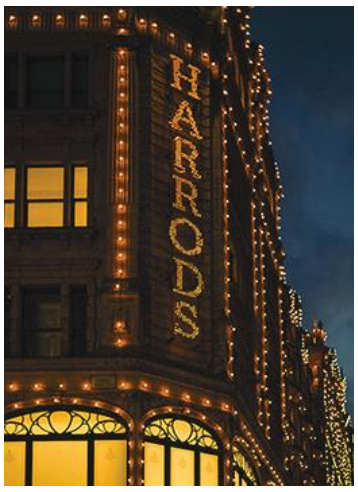
The gorgeously rustic Maggie Jones had reopened after a fire, so we got traditional British cuisine one night, with Stilton mousse, roast rump of lamb, cabbage and a bread and butter pudding to fill us up.

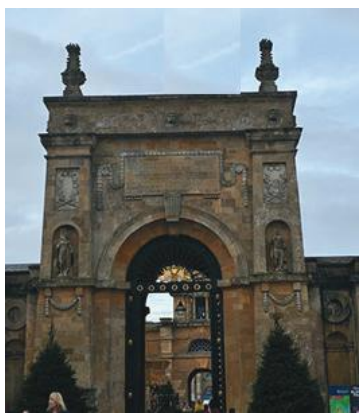
We did a lot more than eat and shop!

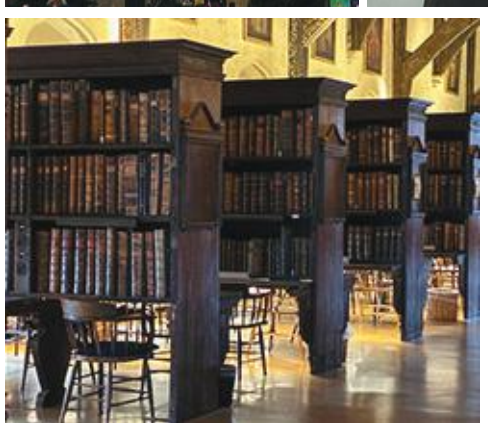
London is theatre, and so many of the plays on offer we'd seen in Los Angeles, so we laughed and went to see Paddington. No lie, it was such a fabulous production and great story I absolutely loved it more than the will-go-unnamed play I'd just seen in L.A. Plus they gave us a goodie box that naturally had to include a marmalade sandwich and a drink of choice. Tip: Get the marmalade martini!

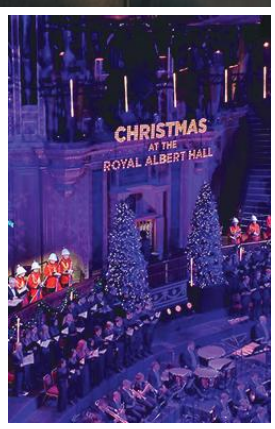
I snuck in a quick visit to The National Portrait Gallery, one of my favorite stops every trip. I spent just a few hours at the gorgeous Cecil Beaton exhibit viewing his photographs and costume designs for *Gigi* and *My Fair Lady*.

A day trip to Oxford was a treat for the train ride itself through the countryside. Just an hour outside of London, we took a tour of the Bodleian Library. Founded in 1602 by Sir Thomas Bodley, it is not only a culturally and historically important site, but still serves as the main library for Oxford University. Our 60-minute tour with an amazingly knowledgeable guide showed us the gorgeous old rooms, but also gave us highlights of those that have studied and written there, including Oscar Wilde, J.R.R. Tolkein and C.S. Lewis.









The library holds over 13 million books and manuscripts, from antique tomes that are secured by chains to the bookshelves to modern classics. It is primarily a research library used by students and scholars from all over the world.

The library is so gorgeous it has been used as a backdrop for many films, including *Harry Potter, X-Men* and *A Discovery of Witches*.

Just outside of Oxford is Blenheim Palace, where Winston Churchill was born. The palace was decorated for the holidays but you could see the bones of the impressive structure and gilded state rooms underneath all the decor. Blenheim has become a popular Christmas spot as they not only deck out the mansion each season in a magical theme (this year was Wizard of Oz), but adorn the gardens with a festive light display and Christmas market. The best part of our visit was the Churchill exhibit in the basement, showcasing a timeline from his birth in the library there through his war years and time as prime minister.

The expansive grounds are also gorgeous, but the inclement weather had us regrettably missing the maze.

Another exhibit of "Servants' Tales" was like walking through the kitchen of Downtown Abbey. It told the stories, lives, workloads and scandals of the servants toiling above at the palace. Worth the hour train ride out of London to see.

No visit to London is complete without high tea, and The Ritz offered a special Christmas edition with carolers and special treats. A meal in itself, we took an afternoon off and enjoyed our tea sandwiches, scones and pastries. They brought us so much we saved it for our Christmas Day picnic!

A tradition in Britain is the Sunday roast. We booked the Savoy Grill for our repast, and enjoyed Gordon Ramsay's classic British cuisine - Beef Wellington for Kate and the dry-aged sirloin with Yorkshire pudding for me. Along with a Buck's Fizz (basically a mimosa) we enjoyed fine dining for an afternoon.

Brits respect their heritage and so many of their great old buildings are re-purposed into something new - while keeping the old. The Booking Office at St. Pancras station is a restaurant and bar that was indeed the old train station booking office, and all the old ticket windows still line the back of the bar. At 5:05 pm every night, a bartender makes and lights up a rum punch and everyone gets a free drink. The tradition honors the opening of the St. Pancras Hotel on May 5, 1873.

Another fun find is Cahoots, a bar situated in an abandoned tube station. The 1940's-themed bar offers up live music, spirits and souvenir ceramic mugs of Queen Elizabeth, Vera Wang and Winston Churchill.

Our last meal was at one of our favorites - Cafe Murano. Angela Hartnett has several locations serving her fresh, seasonal Italian cuisine, with homemade pasta and absolutely some of the world's best olive oil (we had to buy a bottle to bring home). With good red wine, arancini and pasta under our belts, we were ready to close out our London holiday.

Pretty much everything closes down Christmas Day, so for our last afternoon we planned a picnic in Hyde Park before carol service at Westminster Abbey. With snacks from Marks & Spencer and our Ritz pastries, we joined the throngs of Londoners walking the park before sitting down to their Christmas dinner.

On Boxing Day we loaded up our suitcases with goodies and memories to bring home and actually celebrate Christmas on New Year's with the family. We are already planning next year's holiday getaway - though we promised everyone we'd be home for Christmas Day 2026!

Clockwise: Homemade pasta at Cafe Murano; Making rum punch at The Booking Office; The Mandeville Hotel; Sunday roast at The Savoy Grill; Shopping at Marks & Spencer; Christmas Eve carols at Royal Albert Hall; the rustic Maggie Jones restaurant; Bodleian Library; Blenheim Palace; Tea at the Ritz; Harrod's landmark department store.

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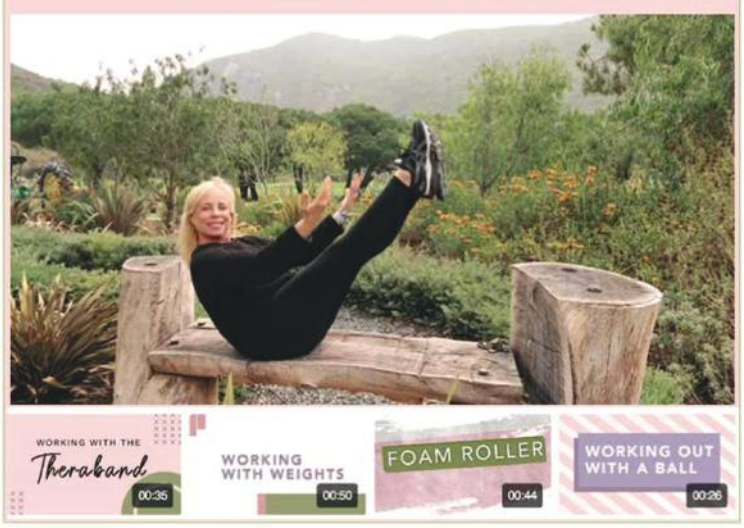

Dignity Health Spread Holiday Cheer With Service

This past holiday season, Dignity Health, a member of CommonSpirit Health, proudly continued its enduring tradition of community service and healing by extending support to thousands of families across California with essential provisions and heartfelt gifts for the holidays.Through the tireless and collective efforts of dedicated employees, physicians, volunteers, and invaluable community partners, Dignity Health successfully provided tens of thousands of meals and gifts to individuals and families most in need.

"The holiday season reminds us all of the profound importance of community and compassion, core values at Dignity Health," said Julie Sprengel, California President, CommonSpirit Health. "Our incredible teams across California, alongside our partners, once again demonstrated extraordinary dedication. They selflessly worked to ensure that communities received not just gifts and meals, but a true sense of hope and belonging. Our commitment to 'humankindness' truly shines brightest when we come together to uplift those most vulnerable in our communities."

Throughout the holiday season, Dignity Health's commitment to humankindness manifested through a series of impactful initiatives, including:

- Nourishing Communities: Through partnerships and employee efforts, they delivered essential food provisions and meals across California, including large-scale Thanksgiving dinners, and collected thousands of pounds of non-perishable food, ensuring that many families did not go hungry during the holidays.
- Bringing Holiday Cheer: Teams orchestrated numerous drives, distributing over 4,240 holiday gifts and toys to children and families. Beyond toys, hundreds of coats, shoes, blankets, emergency kits and other critical winter items were provided to individuals and families in need.
- Empowering Families: Dignity's facilities collectively adopted over 150 families, offering comprehensive support that included food boxes, personalized gifts, and household necessities, allowing them to experience a brighter, more joyful holiday season.
- Deep Community Engagement: From distributing gas cards to help community members attend vital doctor's appointments, to arranging for home installations for at-risk individuals, and hosting celebratory holiday jams for hundreds of children, thier efforts extended far beyond traditional donations, directly addressing diverse community needs with "humankindness."

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CDC Lowers Vaccine Recommendations for Children

In an unprecedented overhaul of vaccine recommendations for children, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently announced a major shift in suggested vaccines. While the vaccine schedule for children has typically consisted of 18 shots, the health agency is now only advising shots against 11 diseases.

The recommended shots that are still in rotation include those combating measles, mumps, rubella, polio, pertussis, tetanus, diphtheria, Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib), pneumococcal disease, HPV and chickenpox. Shots for RSV, meningitis, dengue, hepatitis A and B are only encouraged for high-risk groups. Additionally, the CDC suggests that families use "shared clinical decision-making" with their doctor to decide on flu, COVID-19 and rotavirus vaccinations.

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and federal officials stress that the change aligns with Denmark's approach to vaccines (which is a limited approach) and is meant to restore trust in public health that was lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Helen Chu, an infectious disease professor at the University of Washington, stated, "The abrupt change to the entire US childhood vaccine schedule is alarming, unnecessary, and will endanger the health of children in the United States."

Parents who still wish to have their children fully vaccinated will still have access to those shots, but may have to explicitly ask for them at the pediatrician's office. Insurers should still cover the cost of those shots without cost-sharing.

Parents who still wish to have their children fully vaccinated will still have access to those shots.

Where this new schedule may cause disruption, is that it could eventually heavily influence insurance coverage and school requirements. Schools and daycare centers typically follow the recommendations of the CDC and this new schedule could raise the risk of disease outbreaks.

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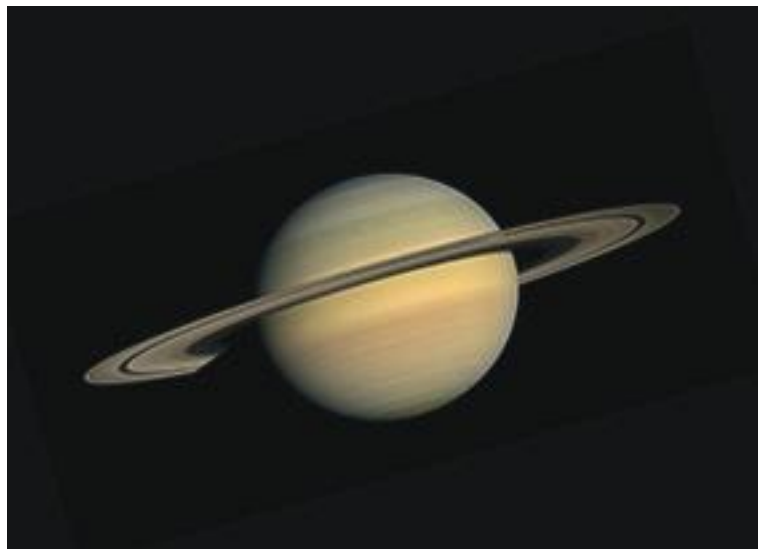

The planet Jupiter is the highlight of January.

Nighttrek Report: What to See in the January Sky

By Neill Simmons

The highlight of January is the majestic planet, Jupiter. It will be at its brightest in the east on Saturday the 10th. Make sure to get your binoculars in order to see Jupiter's four biggest moons – Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto. Also notice two twinkling stars to the left of Jupiter. These are Castor and Pollux, the famous twins of the constellation Gemini. Castor is not actually a single star, but a system of six stars that are so close together, they appear as one. It was one of the 48 constellations described by the second century astronomer Ptolemy, and it remains one of the 88 modern constellations today. Its name is Latin for twins.

The year begins with January's Wolf Full Moon on the 3rd, named for the howling wolves often heard during midwinter. On February 1st the Snow Full Moon will appear, reflecting historically heavy snowfall in our local mountains. Although the Moon shines bright in the night sky, it doesn't produce its own light. We see the Moon only because it reflects light from the Sun. The temperature on the Moon varies from super hot to super cold. When the Sun hits its surface, temperatures can reach a scorching 260° F. But when the Sun goes down, temperatures can plummet to around -243°F. Brrr

Make an effort this month to spot the brightest star in the sky, Sirius. Sirius is twice the size of our Sun and 25 times brighter. It is located to the right of Jupiter and is part of the constellation Canis Major. Bright stars, such as Sirius, were important to the ancient Polynesians for navigation of the Pacific Ocean. Sirius is located approximately 8.6 light-years away from Earth. A light-year is the distance light travels in one Earth year, which is about six trillion miles!

Every night in January, the famous Orion the Hunter constellation is visible in the southeast. Look for the three bright stars in a row which is Orion's belt. An important star in Orion is Betelgeuse located in Orion's left shoulder. It's a variable star, so a change in its brightness isn't unusual. But Betelgeuse is now dimmer than it's been for several years. Is it possible that this is a sign

Get your binoculars out to see Jupiter's four biggest moons on January 10.

of instability in this old red supergiant star? And could it mean Betelgeuse will explode and die soon? When will it happen? The answer is: Maybe today. Maybe a thousand years from now.

A very interesting sight comes on Friday, January 23, when the Moon and the planet Saturn will appear to be near to each other. Saturn is one of the most fascinating planets in the solar system, known for its massive size, iconic rings, and unique atmospheric features. About 750 Earths would be able to fit inside Saturn. We are unable to stand on Saturn. It is made of gas, mostly hydrogen and helium, and does not have firm ground. Saturn has the highest number of moons in our solar system at 274. Titan, Saturn's largest moon, is the only moon in our solar system with an atmosphere.

The City of Calabasas Senior Center is presenting an astronomy talk on Thursday, January 22, at 2:30 pm. The winter sky, Vandenberg rocket launches, and NASA happenings will be discussed. Call (818) 224-1777 for more information. A nominal fee will be charged.

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.

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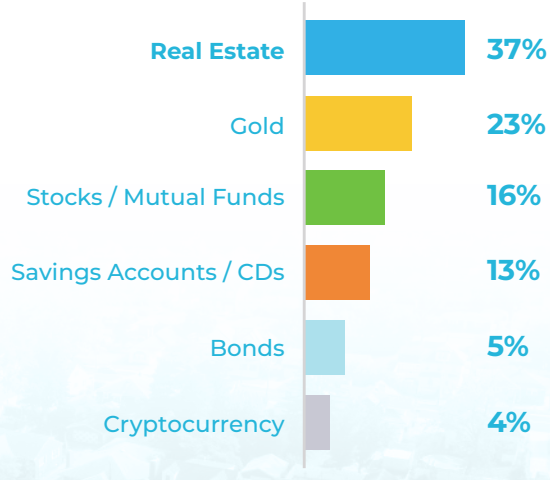
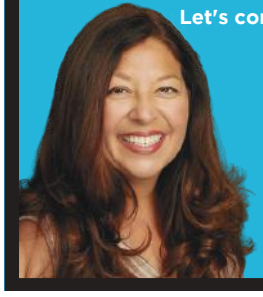


If you've been trying to decide if it makes sense to buy a home today, let this reassure you. **Homeownership wins in the long run.**



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

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Free Class Offered on "ABC's of Commercial Real Estate"

The Southland Regional Association of Realtors will host a class on the "ABC's of Commercial Real Estate" on Wednesday, January 21.

This class is designed to give you practical insights you can use right away! Whether you're looking to expand your expertise, explore new opportunities, or stay competitive in a fast-changing market, you won't want to miss this session.

The key class takeaways and learning objectives include:

-What is the difference between residential and commercial real estate?

-Who the players are in the industry

-Who are the buyers and sellers of investment real estate, and what are their needs?

-Analyze the financials of properties

-What financing is available?

-What are the different property types?

-Who do you need to have on your team?

-How do you get started?

Featured speaker will be Brian Hatkoff, CCIM with Hatkoff Investments.

The class will be held at the Southland Regional Association, 7232 Balboa Blvd. Lake Balboa.

It is open to everyone. To register visit srar.com.

SFV Audubon Society Leads Bird Walk in O'Melveny Park

The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society will lead a bird walk in O'Melveny Park on Tuesday, January 20, at 8:30 am.

O'Melveny Park and the trails which begin there into Bee Canyon provide an interesting contrast. The park is home to an orange grove and trails through sycamores and alders. The Bee Canyon trail is chaparral and riparian area set between high rock walls. The last rest area for birds going north over the Santa Susana Mountains, this is an excellent migrant trap.

Take the 118/Ronald Reagan Freeway and exit at Balboa Blvd. Turn north, driving two miles to Sesnon, turn left going west 0.6 miles, turn right at park entrance. Meet in the parking lot.

Events may be canceled due to inclement weather. To confirm a walk will take place call (747) 237-3720.

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