



# The Gazette.

5 CENTS

MARCH-APRIL 2006

YEAR 12, NUMBER 2

# COWBOY UP!



## Memories Of The Place I Called 'Melody Ranch.'

By **GENE AUTRY**,  
Singing Cowboy.

Exclusive.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE  
OLD TOWN NEWHALL GAZETTE,  
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1995.

Under A Blazing Newhall Sun,  
Director John Ford Punished  
The Duke For Staggering Onto  
The Set Several Hours Late.

When I bought the old Melody Ranch, as I called it, from Monogram Pictures, it had been used for the filming of hundreds of Western movies with stars like Harry Carey, Johnny Mack Brown, Bob Steele, Tom Tyler and many more.

My first feature picture for Republic Studios, "Tumbling Tumbleweeds," had been filmed at the Placerita Canyon ranch in 1935. Years later, in 1958, John Wayne and I worked there together for the first time in a television special called "The Western" for the NBC series, "Wide, Wide World."

Directed by John Ford, the 90-minute show was essentially a his-



**GENE AUTRY, 1907-1998.**

tory of the Western movie, with a cast that included Walter Brennan, Ward Bond, James Arness, Gabby Hayes, James Garner and dozens of familiar cowboy and Indian faces.

The novelty of working for the first time with John Wayne at Melody Ranch, more than twenty years after we were the first two players under contract when Republic Pictures was formed in 1935, would have been reason enough to remember that day. But what has stayed with me in the years since then was the unique relationship between John Wayne and John Ford.

John Wayne was a man without pretense. He could be tough and

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 10.**

## Best Festival In The West Gallops Into Newhall.

By **MICHAEL FLEMING**,  
Cowboy Festival Manager,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

CITY TO HOST WESTERN POETS, SINGERS  
AND MUSICIANS AT MELODY RANCH.

Shine up those spurs and dust off those ten-gallon hats — the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival is riding back into town!

The best performers in Western entertainment will help celebrate the city of Santa Clarita's Thirteenth Annual Cowboy Festival from April 26 through April 30 at the Melody Ranch Motion Picture Studio and other venues in Santa Clarita.

The Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival attracts Western singers, balladeers, storytellers and poets from all over the country who embody the spirit of the Old West. It is considered one of the premier festivals of its kind.

"The Cowboy Festival has become a tradition in Santa Clarita," said Mayor Laurene Weste. "We attract visitors from all over the country and beyond who love the cowboy way of life and the celebration of Santa Clarita's Western heritage."

City Manager Ken Pulskamp is credited with starting the Santa Clarita festival after visiting a similar event in Elko, Nevada. The city held the first annual festival months after the devastating Northridge earthquake of 1994. Finding its original festival site — the Hart High School auditorium — in shambles, the city scrambled to find a new venue. The Veluzat family, owners of historic Melody Ranch, generously offered their property for the event.

The studio is the current home to the  
**CONTINUED ON PAGE 8.**



**COWBOY POET WADDIE MITCHELL RETURNS TO TEASE AND PLEASE HIS MELODY RANCH THEATER AUDIENCE.**

**Old Town Newhall Gazette.**

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# Old Town Newhall Gazette.

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LEON WORDEN, Editor and Publisher.

## EDITORIAL.

# Look North.

The ink is barely dry on the specific plan for Old Town Newhall and already the city of Santa Clarita is at work on a second specific plan.

This time they're looking at "North Newhall" — the 213-acre swath of mostly vacant land east of San Fernando Road between Thirteenth Street and the Circle J community (see story, page 3). You might know it as the "Glaser property" or the "Cowboy Festival parking lot." Today half of the land is controlled by Casden Properties Inc., a development company that bought it from the Glaser family in 2004.

The decision to draft a specific plan is yet another sign that the city is done with the "anything goes" type of development that Santa Clarita Valley residents came to know under county rule and in the early years of cityhood. Just like the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan, this approach will enable property owners, city planners and residents to work together to "concept" the best development for the area.

Should there be homes? Should there be retail stores? Should there be offices? Should there be an entertainment complex? You'll have a say. Watch the Gazette for upcoming meeting dates. The City Council is expected to launch the specific plan process formally in April.

The process will cost something short of \$1 million. The city is asking Casden to front about half of the cost, and Casden has agreed. The other 40 to 50 smaller property owners will be expected pay their proportional share on the back end when they submit their projects for approval.

One idea that's being kicked around is a mixed-use development on some of the 213 acres, with residences upstairs and retail shops downstairs. If that sounds familiar, you may recognize it from the specific plan for Old Town Newhall. Or

you might have seen it in the plans for The Newhall Land and Farming Company's Soledad Village, to be built between Soledad Canyon Road and the company's Riverpark project.

As time goes on, we'll see more and more infill projects that build "up." Santa Clarita is largely built "out." Gone are the days of building vast, single-family housing tracts with neighborhood shopping centers surrounded by acres and acres of ground-level parking.

A specific plan is the perfect approach for the North Newhall property. Buildable land doesn't stay vacant forever. It's going to be developed. A specific plan gives the community a voice and, with careful attention, can lead to something that really complements the Old Town next door.

The city has tried several approaches over the years to improve living conditions for downtown Newhall residents, particularly those of modest means. Renters often find it difficult to persuade absentee landlords to maintain homes and apartment units properly.

In January the city hired a housing inspector who will go door-to-door to make sure homes — both rental and owner-occupied — meet all health and safety codes. The inspector will assess structural integrity and look for leaky roofs and plumbing, exposed electric wiring, unsealed windows, hot and cold running water and so forth.

He'll also make note of how the dwellings are being utilized. While there is no limit on the size of a family that can live in a home, occupancy limits apply when it comes to subletting to non-family members.

Inspections will be voluntary at first; then they will be mandatory, annual and unannounced. They will also happen in other parts of Santa Clarita. It's not an alien concept; apartment building

owners are used to annual impromptu health, fire and building inspections by the county of Los Angeles.

Kudos go to Newhall Redevelopment Committee member Amparo Cevallos for facilitating outreach about the inspection program to Spanish speakers in Newhall.

Three initiatives have entered circulation to limit the use of eminent domain. Two are sponsored by state Sen. Tom McClintock, R-Thousand Oaks; Orange County Supervisor Chris Norby; and Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association. The third is sponsored by Douglas Adams McNea, a congressional candidate in San Jose, and Karin Annette Hipona, a San Mateo school trustee.

The initiatives need 598,105 signatures to qualify for the November ballot. Taken together, they go beyond anything the U.S. Supreme Court contemplated in *Kelo v. New London, Conn.*, where the court held that a city could use eminent domain for economic development purposes as long there was an approved plan that complies with state law — similar to the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan.

According to the League of California Cities, the three initiatives "would significantly undermine the ability of the state and local governments" — such as the city of Santa Clarita — "to make public investments in roads, schools, housing and other essential infrastructure."

Moreover, as they apply to Old Town Newhall, the measures could "significantly limit efforts by cities and redevelopment agencies to revitalize blighted areas, thereby condemning many economically stressed neighborhoods to a continuing downward spiral."

Certainly there have been abuses of eminent domain in other communities. Those abuses should be addressed. Santa Clarita has not abused that power. So far, the city has used eminent domain just once for Newhall revitalization (part of the Anawalt property, for Metrolink parking); the owner was justly compensated.

For a city such as Santa Clarita that needs so many roads, and for a community such as Newhall that has struggled for years to arrest its "continuing downward spiral," further restraints can only hurt.



# From The Mailbag.

## How About A Venue For Foreign Films?

Dear Editor:

*Downtown is great for cultural events. What we miss are foreign movies. Why not have a Laemmle movie theater in this area? I have to go to Pasadena to enjoy international culture. Maybe it's something to think about. I am sure people from Santa Clarita would enjoy it.*

ANNE MARIE WHALLEY,  
Canyon Country.

## I Know Where To Put The Southern Hotel.

Dear Editor:

*As a resident of nearby Placerita Canyon, I want to thank you for the Old Town Newhall Gazette, which prominently featured many informative articles on the status of the downtown Newhall redevelopment project, the new Community Center, the future plans of Master's College, and so on (January-February 2006 issue).*

*One of the most interesting articles to me featured "the finest hotel south of San Francisco," the historic Southern Hotel, located for a rather short time in the late 1800s on what is now the corner of San Fernando Road and Market Street. The article states that Councilman Bob Kellar would like to see it rebuilt.*

*Further, what I also found most intriguing was your discussion about the future specific plan for the "northern gateway" to Old Town Newhall. Reference is made to the current zoning of the vacant ninety-five acres for a business park, as well as to the current landowner's proposal for a zone change to accommodate eight hundred to fifteen hundred townhouses, the latter of which is not welcome with open arms.*

*Why don't the powers that be connect the dots and place a replica of this fine old Southern Hotel on the*

*vacant ninety-five acres? Just consider the possibilities that this would bring.*

LINDA TARNOFF,  
Placerita Canyon.

## Longing For The Days Of Gene And Roy.

Dear Editor:

*I am seventy-two years old, and reading about Melody Ranch (on the Old Town Newhall website) brought tears to my eyes. Oh, but if only we could relive those days.*

HUNTER MILLER,  
Hideaway, Texas.

## Santa Clarita Valley Is Steeped In History.

Dear Editor:

*Love the great history of our valley. Have lived in the area for fourteen years.*

NICK VESTUTO,  
Castaic.

The Old Town Newhall Gazette welcomes your comments.

Letters express the opinions of their authors and are not necessarily the opinions of Old Town Newhall USA or The Gazette.

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# The Gazette.

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# An Update On Redevelopment.

By PHILIP ELLIS,  
Chairman, Newhall  
Redevelopment Committee.

Next Steps Involve Cleaning  
Up, Reaching Out And  
Strategizing Opportunities.

Have you been to Old Town Newhall lately? If you haven't, you should, because right now is a very exciting time for Newhall. The Newhall Redevelopment Committee, in partnership with the city of Santa Clarita and the community, continues to work diligently to complete the vision outlined in the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan.

Although a significant amount of work remains, there is a variety of things happening in Newhall right now. Most notable was the grand opening of the new Community Center next to the Jan Heidt-Newhall Metrolink Station. Hundreds of residents attended the event, and members of the Redevelopment Committee and city staff were on hand to answer questions about the redevelopment plan. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

In addition to attending the Community Center grand opening, the Newhall Redevelopment Committee is involved in several programs and activities:

◆ In an effort to reduce street peddling, the committee is proposing that the city of Santa Clarita adopt an anti-peddling ordinance. The ordinance would remove peddlers from the street, thereby eliminating the various "nuisance" merchandise they sell and, at the same time, improving the community's health and safety.

◆ In February, the committee met with the city's Community Preservation Division to discuss public outreach strategies. Part of the meeting focused on determining



ways to communicate effectively with residents in Newhall whose only language is Spanish.

◆ In March, the committee will join city staff members for a redevelopment training session. The training will provide information on the overall plan itself, the opportunities that will be provided to residents and businesses, and how to work with the development community in a redevelopment area.

◆ The city will hold another free cleanup event in Old Town Newhall in April. The event will be open to all Newhall residents. The last such event, held in November, was a resounding success. And all types of non-hazardous waste will be accepted. The exact date of the April event is yet to be determined. If you have questions, contact David Peterson of the city's Community Development Department at 661/284-1406.

◆ In the near future, the committee will conduct a strategic planning session with members of city staff. The goal will be to determine opportunities for portions of Newhall outside of the specific plan area. More information will be provided as the meeting draws near.

As you can see, there is plenty of work to be done, and the Newhall Redevelopment Committee is at the center of the effort to revitalize Old Town Newhall.

Hard work today will pay off in the future. We look forward to making a great community even better.

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# A 'North Newhall' Plan.

By JASON SMISKO  
And JASON MIKAELIAN,  
Planners,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

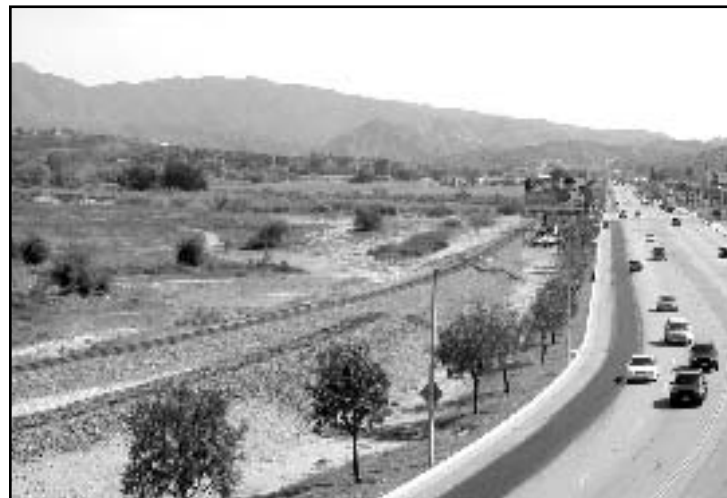
Process Will Explore  
Development Potential  
Of Mostly Vacant Land  
North Of Old Town.

Now that the city of Santa Clarita and the community have deemed the preparation and approval of the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan an overwhelming success, the city has initiated another specific planning process for two hundred thirteen acres north of Old Town Newhall.

It's called the "North Newhall Specific Plan." The rough boundaries of the project area are the Circle J Ranch boundary to the north, the Metropolitan Water District easement to the east and Newhall Creek to the west and south.

The specific planning process will allow the multiple stakeholders — who have varied opinions and ideas on the area's development potential — to work collaboratively to propose a project that the city and community can support.

City staff members will



'NORTH NEWHALL' PROJECT AREA AT LEFT,  
LOOKING SOUTH TOWARD OLD TOWN NEWHALL  
FROM THE WILEY-PRINCESSA BRIDGE.

work closely with the property owners and surrounding communities in developing the proposed plan. This will include an outreach program with various community meetings, workshops and public hearings.

The ultimate goal of this specific plan is to give property and business owners the tools needed to entice quality investment into the area, ensure a consistent development pattern with complimentary uses, preserve environmentally sensitive areas, and provide a mechanism to construct needed public improvements.

"Requests For Proposals" were distributed to ap-

propriate consultant firms in late February. The city hopes to award a contract at a City Council meeting in April. Property owners within the project area will receive a notice of the council meeting.

Although the process in developing the plan will be similar to the process that went into creating the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan, the North Newhall area is a unique part of the community with its own opportunities, objectives and issues.

Since the plan is in its earliest phases, no specific applications have been submitted, and there have been no formal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5.



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WILHELM FROHMANN, LEHRER

# Newhall: Hollywood's Back Lot.

By **ALEX HERNANDEZ**,  
Economic Development  
Administrative Analyst,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

**Haven't Been To  
Newhall Lately? You Can  
See It On Television.**

Newhall has long been home to many of the entertainment industry's most frequently filmed locations. Our community offers a range of backdrops, historic sites, scenic vistas, parks and an authentic Western setting.

Filming in Newhall varies from commercials to television shows; independent projects to feature films. The largest permanent film location in Newhall is the Melody Ranch Motion Picture Studio. The twenty-one acre back lot has been the site for more than two thousand productions since 1915. The ranch is the setting for present-day favorites including the Bruce Willis film, "Last Man Standing," and HBO's "Deadwood" series.

"Deadwood" films ap-



## LIGHTS, CAMERA—

Above: The Family Dentist Office on San Fernando Road doubles as a U.S. Post Office in the single-season "Push, Nevada," produced by Ben Affleck, Sean Bailey and Matt Damon. Upper right: Newhall Ice house is used in an episode of "NCIS." Right: A "unicorn" gallops through Newhall in a Wendy's commercial.

proximately nine months of the year at Melody Ranch, using nearly two hundred cast and crew members. The movie ranch consists of a Western street and an eleven thousand

square-foot sound stage that was added in 2000. Plans were recently approved and construction begun on a new, sixteen thousand square-foot sound stage to accommodate



## Recently Shot In Newhall:

- HBO's "Deadwood" series
- "CSI" episode
- "NCIS" episode
- "Without a Trace" episode
- "The Unit" episode
- MTV's "Pimp My Ride" episode
- MTV's "Date My Mom" episode
- Nickelodeon
- "Yours, Mine and Ours" feature film
- Hardee's commercial
- Wendy's commercial

growing production demands.

A television show called "The Unit" also films frequently in Newhall. It is set to debut this month on CBS. Starring Dennis Haysbert and Robert Patrick, "The Unit" chronicles the lives of the members of a Special Forces unit and their families. Local viewers may recognize their neighbors' houses in exterior shots of the main characters' homes.

San Fernando Road is a

popular street for "driving" shots for various projects because of the small-town feeling and recognizable look it offers.

Other notable projects that have filmed recently in Newhall include a Wendy's commercial starring a "unicorn" that galloped along Railroad Avenue and Market Street. The hit show, "24," filmed for two weeks at the Canyon Crest apartment complex for the season-four finale.

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*"If We Don't Have It, You Don't Need It."*

# Art Finds New Home.

By **SCOTT BRUCKNER,**  
President,  
Santa Clarita Artists' Association.

The Santa Clarita Artists' Association has just moved from its first gallery space on San Fernando Road that opened in May 2005 to its newly painted, bright "Egg Plantation yellow" house at 22614 8th Street.

The smaller quarters are packed with original art by local artists, including oils, watercolor, acrylics, photography and sculpture. The gallery is open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m.

The seventeen-year-old nonprofit Association of more than 120 independent artists has more than seventy pieces of fine art on display, and changes the exhibit every month. The only truly independent group of artists in the Santa Clarita Valley has as its mission, "to



**ARTISTS AND AFICIONADOS MEET AT THE NOVEMBER 4 GRAND OPENING OF THE ASSOCIATION'S NEW GALLERY.**

make the visual arts visible."

Another "first" for the Association was an award by the city of Santa Clarita of a grant to provide after-school art classes for Newhall School District elementary children. This is a pilot project for the Association to provide art classes where they were never previously available.

The Association also has provided opportunities for artists to hang their paintings at the Canyon Theatre Guild, Barnes & Noble, Freshworks California Grill and the Newhall Farmers Market. Very soon the city will also give Association members a space in City Hall to hang and display the work of its finest artists.

The Association grew dramatically in 2005 when it opened its first gallery. Membership increased from 80 artists to more than 170.

The Association obtained further support from the community with the annual Art Classic, held each November. The 2005 awards were given out by Santa Clarita Mayor Laurene Weste. The 16th annual show was judged by two notable art professors and was recorded on video for further education of the members on what makes a critically acclaimed piece.

The Santa Clarita Artists' Association encourages members of the community to come in and have a true "art experience" in its new home. The gallery is staffed by artists who use the quarters to talk about their art with their fellow members, as well as with the public.

*For further information or to make a donation, contact the Artists' Association gallery at 222-7328 or visit [www.santaclaritaartists.org](http://www.santaclaritaartists.org).*

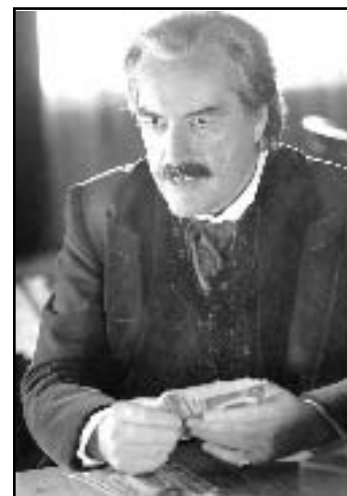
# 'Walk' Honors Western Stars.

By **ANDREE WALPER,**  
Economic Development  
Assistant,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

The Walk of Western Stars was originally produced by the Downtown Newhall Merchants Association. It began in 1981 to honor the legends of Western film, television and radio who have contributed to America's heritage since 1900. The Old West comes alive again each year when Western stars are immortalized in bronze and terrazzo tile on the streets of Old Town Newhall.

Each year in conjunction with the city of Santa Clarita's Cowboy Festival, four new honorees are chosen for induction into the Walk of Western Stars. This year's unveiling, which is free to the public, will take place on Friday, April 28, at noon. Later in the evening is a ticketed award ceremony and dinner in the Hyatt Valencia Grand Ballroom. This year's multi-media event features live entertainment by R.W. Hampton and The Quebe Sisters. Tickets may be purchased through the Cowboy Festival office, 661/286-4021.

The 2005 honorees ran the gamut of Western stars. Powers Boothe, star of HBO's hit television series, "Deadwood" — which is shot at Mel-



**POWERS BOOTHE OF 'DEADWOOD': 2005 INDUCTEE.**

ody Ranch — has an extensive list of feature film credits.

Also inducted was Harry Carey Jr., who was born and raised at the Harry Carey Ranch in Saugus and attended elementary school in Newhall. Carey has appeared in nearly one hundred films, including nine John Ford classics.

Best known for his role in "Dancing with Wolves," Canadian actor Graham Greene was nominated for an Oscar for this performance and most recently appeared in TNT's epic series, "Into the West."

Jack Williams is a founding member of the Stuntmen's Association of Motion Pictures and has been inducted into the Stuntmen's Hall of Fame. A resident of Agua Dulce, Williams has performed in numerous Westerns including "Red River," "The Alamo," "Rio Bravo" and "Cat Ballou."

The Walk of Western Stars currently honors sixty-four Western heroes along the streets of San Fernando Road, Newhall Avenue and Market Street.

The Walk is produced jointly by the city of Santa Clarita and the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce. Two lifetime achievement awards have been awarded — in 2000 to Dale Evans, and in 2001 to former Santa Clarita Mayor Jo Anne Darcy, who has been intimately involved with the Walk of Western Stars since its inception.



**'DALLAS' STAR AND SAND CANYON RESIDENT LINDA GRAY: 2002 INDUCTEE.**

## North, CONT.

FROM PAGE 3.

discussions on the type or location of potential uses.

Once the project is under way, it is expected to take approximately two years to complete the specific plan and environmental impact report.

The main sub-areas of the project area include the

hundred-acre vacant Casden property, the MWD easement, the Southern Pacific Railroad property, the commercial properties along San Fernando Road from 12th Street to Via Princessa, and the industrial and residential properties along 12th Street and Arch Street.

The physical landscape of the project area includes flat, vacant areas, small commercial and industrial developments, waterways such as

Newhall and Placerita creeks, and hillsides. The majority of the project area is currently zoned "business park planned development." Other zoning designations within the project area include industrial-commercial, community commercial, open space and residential-low.

For more information about the North Newhall Specific Plan, call Associate Planner Jason Mikaelian at 661/255-4330.

# New Principal Makes His Mark.

By PATTI RASMUSSEN,  
Gazette Correspondent.

**Tim Lankford Makes A  
Connection With Students  
In The Classroom.**

**Three R's At Newhall  
School: Respect,  
Responsibility, Results.**

It is early morning and the students at Newhall Elementary have gathered on the playground, greeting friends and tossing balls. Soon a voice is heard in the middle of the crowd, addressing the students and asking them to quietly form classroom lines.

This is Tim Lankford's morning routine. As the new principal at Newhall Elementary School, Lankford likes to begin each morning by greeting his students and giving them encouragement and reminders about the school day. He asks them, "Are you ready for another great day of learning?" The students shout back, "Yes!"

For the next hour or so, Lankford visits classrooms. He calls this the best part of the day. He checks on students' homework or helps them with their current assignment. Students who pass by in the hallways yell out a greeting. Some even stop to give him a hug. In his first couple of months on the job, Lankford has clearly made an impression on these youngsters.

Newhall School District Superintendent Marc Winger said the school has been looking for a principal for a couple of years.

"We didn't have direction (at the school) for a while. There were circumstances that caused us to be that way," Winger said. "We are always looking for strong leaders, and I think we found one in (Lankford)."

Newhall Elementary is the oldest school in the Newhall School District, having been originally built in 1878. After several fires, the school building that exists today at the corner of Walnut and 11th streets is in the process of yet



**THE BEST PART OF TIM LANKFORD'S DAY IS WHEN HE GETS TO HELP KIDS WITH THEIR ASSIGNMENTS.**

another modernization project. This time it's a new library, technology and safety upgrades.

There are more than six hundred and fifty students at Newhall Elementary. Forty-five percent list English as their second language. While Lankford is not bilingual, he said he does not have a problem communicating with his students. He has met most of the parents during PTA and Site Council meetings and during parent-teacher conferences.

Parent Suzy Miladin said Lankford is highly visible.

"He's making a lot of changes, which is good," Miladin said. "It's nice having a firm hand on the reins. And the kids really like him. My daughter runs up and hugs him every time she sees him."

Lankford has been in the teaching profession for twelve years. Previously he served as the principal at 118th Street Elementary in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

There are three "Rs" that Lankford lives by and reinforces to the students on a regular basis: Respect, responsibility and results.

"It's important to me that the students respect all adults on the campus (and) that they do their homework every day. The results will be good grades and test scores that keep going up. That's important," Lankford said.

He raves about the teach-

ing staff at Newhall, saying they and the many involved parents truly care about all the children. Teachers are equally impressed.

"He knows everything that's going on and holds the children responsible for their actions," said teacher Cindy Edwards.

Winger said Lankford knows instruction and he knows what he's looking at when he walks into a classroom. Lankford recently initiated a language arts program for students who have scored below grade level. Instead of pulling individual students from the classroom, Lankford is having the whole class meet with Title 1 instructors so all students receive the same information. Everyone, he said, benefits from the extra help.

Lankford also has the teachers ask the students at the end of the day what they learned. Kids are very honest, he said, and they will say whether they learned a new vocabulary word, conquered a math problem or just say, "Nothing new."

"He's assertive and takes the time to make the connection with the kids," Winger said. "They see him as fair and concerned. He is way into the kids."

They young students seem to have a real affection for their new principal, and the affection is mutual — but Lankford said he's firm with the students when it comes

## El Nuevo Rector Pone Sus Huellas.

Por PATTI RASMUSSEN.

**Traducción Por  
AMPARO CEVALLOS,  
Miembro Del Comité Del  
Reedesarrollo De Newhall.**

**Tim Lankford Esta  
Envuelto En El  
Aprendizaje De Los Niños.**

**Las Tres R's De La Escuela  
Primaria Newhall:  
Respeto, Responsabilidad,  
Resultados.**

Es temprano en la mañana y los estudiantes de la escuela Primaria Newhall, están juntos en el patio del recreo, saludando con sus amigos y jugando con los balones.

Se escucha una voz en medio de los estudiantes dirigiéndose a ellos y pidiéndoles que se formen en línea para entrar a sus aulas.

Tim Lankford tiene una rutina diaria, como el nuevo rector de la escuela Primaria Newhall, a él le gusta comenzar cada mañana saludando a sus estudiantes, dándoles ánimo, y recordándoles sobre ese día escolar. Él pregunta "¿Están listos para otro gran día de aprendizaje?" Los estudiantes contestan con un grito "¡SI!"

En la próxima hora, Lankford visita las aulas. Él llama a esto, la mejor parte del día.

El revisa las tareas de los estudiantes o les ayuda con sus tareas actuales. Los estudiantes que pasan por los corredores, le gritan con un saludo y algunos paran para darle un abrazo.

En sus primeros meses de trabajo Lankford ha hecho ya una impresión muy clara en estos estudiantes.

El Superintendente del Distrito Escolar Newhall, Marc Winger dijo, La escuela ha estado buscando un rector en los últimos años.

No había dirección (en la escuela) por algún tiempo, dice Winger, hubieron circunstancias que causo que fuéramos así.

Winger dice "Siempre estamos buscando por líderes fuertes y pienso que hemos encontrado uno en (Lankford)."

La escuela primaria Newhall es la más antigua en el Distrito Escolar Newhall. Originalmente fue construida en el año de 1878, Después de varios incendios, el edificio escolar que existe ahora en la esquina de la calle Walnut y la calle 11th, está en el proceso de otro proyecto de modernización. Esta vez es una biblioteca, tecnología y mejoras en el sistema de seguridad.

Hay más de seiscientos cincuenta estudiantes en esta escuela. El cuarenta y cinco por ciento de ellos registran que Inglés es su segundo idioma. Mientras que Lankford no es bilingüe, él dice que no tiene ningún problema de co-

**CONTINUA EN LA PÁGINA 7.**

to discipline.

"You treat students fairly, but that doesn't mean treating them all the same," he said. "Everyone here is very child-focused, and the children are successful."

There is a lot of learning going on at the school for both the students and the principal.

A fairly new resident to

the Santa Clarita Valley, Lankford and his wife, Josephine, are expecting their first child in May. Although he has only been at Newhall Elementary a short time, he seems to be a good fit.

"I want to make sure every child is safe when they come to school and they have a wonderful time learning," he said. "I believe every day is another great day for learning."

## In Brief.

### NEWHALL FARMERS' MARKET REOPENS APRIL 6.

The Old Town Newhall Farmers' Market on San Fernando Road at 5th Street will reopen Thursday, April 6, coinciding with daylight savings time. Shop weekly to stock your home with fresh flowers, fruits, vegetables and handicrafts. Visit with farmers and friends, eating an informal dinner and tasting a wide variety of your favorite produce. Make it a family tradition in the spring and summer. Hours are Thursdays from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. through September. Convenient parking is available.

### 'COTTAGE' TO CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARY.

Cottage On Walnut will celebrate its first anniversary in business with a fun-filled evening for the community on Saturday, March 11, from 9 p.m. to 9 p.m. Local residents and friends for 20 years, owners Colleen Henriques and Sue Neiberger have invited more than three hundred guests to "put on their party shoes" for a unique encounter with several artists who will share their creativity, including Mary Ann Ripper's "Shoe Stories" sculptures and performance art; Glenn Anderson's Scandinavian wood carvings; Donna Weil's oil and water color paintings; and Joshua Esparza's murals, interior finishes and more. The ladies are planning a host of festivities along with food, spirits, music and "Sole Readings." Specializing in antiques, home décor, gift items and an eclectic mix of old and new, Cottage On Walnut is open seven days a week at 24417 Walnut Street in Old Town Newhall.

### CANYON THEATRE STAGES 'OKLAHOMA!'

Rodgers and Hammerstein's award-winning musical, "Oklahoma!" will come roaring into the Canyon Theatre Guild on March 24 for a six-week run. This timeless classic features such memorable songs as "People Will Say We're In Love," "I Cain't Say No," "All 'Er Nothin'," "The Farmer and the Cowman" and, of course, "Oklahoma!" Be sure to see this high-spirited musical, with choreography that made musical theater history. It's fun for the whole family — so come on, y'all, and join the Canyon players for some foot-stomping fun, with romance and adventure thrown in for good measure. Performances are Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m., with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. and Sunday evening performances at 6:30 p.m. Call the box office at 661/799-2702 for specific dates and times. Tickets are \$10, \$13 or \$17.

# Cowboy Couture Returns.

By JENNY AURIT,  
Economic Development  
Project Technician,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

High-End Fashion Show  
Mixes Traditional Western  
With Cowboy Chic.

Western fashions will dominate the runway at the city's annual Cowboy Couture Fashion Show, a one-of-a-kind tribute to Santa Clarita's Western roots and modern-day charm.

Back by popular demand, the fashion show kicks off the Cowboy Festival on Wednesday, April 26, at 7 p.m. at the Canyon Theater Guild, with the latest in Western fashion from some of the nation's hottest couture designers including Marrika Nak, Double D Ranch and Ann & Eve.

The evening is perfect for both men and women. It begins with an elegant wine reception in the foyer; the show itself features scores of Western-influenced designs for men and women, from extravagant and antique to adaptable cowboy chic. The evening's models include community members from local businesses and charity organizations. The expertly choreographed show will be emceed by a celebrity deejay from Country station KZLA 93.9-FM.

Santa Clarita's rich West-



ern heritage makes the city an ideal setting for a Western fashion show. In fact, HBO's "Deadwood," shot in Santa Clarita, has sparked increased interest in cowboy fashion the world over.

However, while the designs seen at Cowboy Couture will include elements of the past, they will also include an undeniable modern-day flair.

For the first time at Couture, fashions from rodeo tailor Nudie Cohn will be featured. Nudie is well known for his work with some of the entertainment industries elite, including Roy Rogers, John Lennon, John Wayne, Steve McQueen, Johnny Cash, Cher, Elton John, Liberace, Eric Clapton and the rock band America. Nudie is probably best known for the \$10,000 gold suite he designed for Elvis Presley, rocketing him

to stardom and solidifying his place in the fashion industry.

Nudie died in 1984; today Nudie's granddaughter, Jamie Lee, carries on his tradition of crafting one-of-a-kind Western clothing featuring ornate leatherwork, silverwork, embroidery and rhinestones, resulting in the best rodeo tailoring money can buy.

Designer Amy Hoban, whose Western line, Californiawear, has been featured in the fashion pages of Cowboys & Indians magazine, will debut pieces from her new collection including retro cowgirl outfits and cowboy shirts.

Attendees will delight in live entertainment from Katy Moffatt, whose two Columbia albums, "Katy" and "Kissin' in the California Sun," have garnered rave reviews from Rolling Stone and Newsweek magazines. A Santa Clarita resident, Moffatt was dubbed one of America's most honest and affecting singer-songwriters.

As a commemorative, Cowboy Couture T-shirts will be available. All proceeds benefit local charities.

Whether you're looking for a hot new pair of Cowboy boots, a prairie skirt, a patchwork shirt or just a little Western flair for your next night out, don't miss Cowboy Couture. Tickets are \$20 per person and are available online at [www.cowboyleft.org](http://www.cowboyleft.org). For more information call 661/286-4021.

## Rector, CONT.

DE LA PÁGINA 6.

municación con sus estudiantes. El ha conocido a los padres de sus estudiantes durante las reuniones de PTA (asociación de padres y maestros) y durante las conferencias de padre-maestro.

Suzy Miladin, madre de un estudiante dice Lankford es altamente visible.

"El esta haciendo muchos cambios, los cuales son buenos," dice Miladin. "Es bueno tener una mano firme que este guiando. Y los niños realmente lo quieren. Mi Hija corre hacia el y lo abraza cada vez que lo mira.

Lankford, ha estado ejerciendo la carrera de maestro

por los últimos doce años, Previamente el ha servido como rector en la Escuela Primaria "118th Street" en el Distrito Unificado de Los Angeles.

Hay tres R's por las que Lankford vive y refuerza a los estudiantes regularmente y son: Respeto, responsabilidad, resultados.

"Es importante para mi que los estudiantes respeten a los adultos en la escuela y que hagan sus tareas cada día. Los resultados serán buenas notas y en sus exámenes buenas calificaciones las cuales seguirán subiendo. Esto es importante" dice Lankford.

El entusiasmadamente elogia a los maestros de la escuela Newhall, diciendo que ellos y los padres de familia

que están involucrados, verdaderamente se preocupan por todos los niños. Los maestros están igualmente impresionados.

"El sabe todo lo que sucede en la escuela y hace que los niños sean responsables por sus acciones, dice la profesora Cindy Edwards.

Winger dice Lankford conoce sobre la enseñanza y cuando entra en una de las aulas, el sabe lo que quiere encontrar. El recientemente ha establecido un programa "arte del lenguaje" para estudiantes que tienen bajas calificaciones. En vez de retirar a estos estudiantes de su clase, Lankford tiene a todos los estudiantes de esa clase trabajando con instructores del programa título 1, para que todos reciban la misma información. Todos, el

dice, serán beneficiados de esta ayuda adicional.

Lankford, ha pedido a sus maestros que pregunten a los estudiantes al final del día que han aprendido en ese día. Los niños son honestos, el dice, y ellos dirán si han aprendido una nueva palabra del vocabulario, resuelto un problema de matemáticas o solamente dirán "Nada nuevo."

"El es positivo y se toma el tiempo necesario para tener afinidad con los niños."

Winger dice "Lo miran justo e interesado en ellos. El se ha compenetrado con los niños."

Parece que los jóvenes estudiantes tienen un afecto verdadero por su nuevo rector. Y este afecto es mutuo, Lankford dice, que el es firme con los estudiantes cuando se trata de disciplina.

"Trato a los niños justamente, pero eso no quiere decir que los trato a todos por igual" el dice "Todos los niños aquí son exitosos.

Hay mucho que aprender en la escuela para ambos, los estudiantes y el nuevo rector.

Lankford y su esposa Josephine, están esperando su primer hijo en el mes de Mayo, son nuevos residentes del Valle de Santa Clarita. Aunque solamente tiene poco tiempo en la escuela Primaria Newhall, parece que ya ha encajado.

"Quiero asegurarme que todo niño que viene a la escuela este seguro y que ellos tengan un maravilloso tiempo de aprendizaje "dice el "Yo creo que cada día es otro grandioso día para aprender."

## Cowboy Festival Sidelights.

### SAVOR THE ART OF THE CHUCKWAGON.

In partnership with the Thirteenth Annual Cowboy Festival, the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society will present "The Art of the Chuckwagon: A Feast for the Western Senses" on Thursday, April 27, at Heritage Junction Historic Park in Old Town Newhall. The evening starts at 6 p.m. with an art show featuring works by members of the Santa Clarita Artists' Association, as well as other local artists featured in previous festival "Quick Draw" events. Music will be provided by a Western band, and real, live chuckwagon cooks will demonstrate how they fed the crowds on the cattle drives across the prairie.

Admission is \$35 and includes an up-close and personal look at the cooks, the gear and the art. There will be a no-host saloon and an evening's worth of prairie lore. All proceeds benefit the Historical Society and its preservation efforts. There are three ways to get tickets for the event: Log onto the city's Cowboy Festival website at [www.cowboyleftival.org](http://www.cowboyleftival.org); call the city's ticket hotline at 661/286-4021; or visit the Arts and Events Office at City Hall, 23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 120, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### WOMEN TO DISPLAY AND SELL WESTERN ARTWORK.

Women Artists of the West — WAOW, pronounced "wow" — will hold its fifth annual art exhibit and sale inside Hart Hall at William S. Hart Park from April 27 to 30, in conjunction with the Cowboy Festival. The Lost Canyon Rangers, Cowboy Poet Joe Herrington and Buck Corbett and the Boys from the Double J will perform at a reception for festival participants at Hart Hall on Thursday, April 27, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. The art show and receptions are open to the public, and admission is free.

WAOW is a national organization of women artists working in diverse mediums and styles. Visitors will see original works in oil, watercolor, mixed-media, pencil, pastel, mezzotint and other fine art print processes, and sculptures in bronze and clay. Subject matter includes Western work and horses, landscapes, wildlife, still life, figurative and abstract works.

Exhibit hours: Thursday, April 17, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. (reception, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.); Friday, April 28, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday, April 29, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. (WAOW reception, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.); Sunday, April 30, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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## Festival, CONT.

FROM FRONT PAGE.

hit HBO series, "Deadwood," and is the perfect venue for the popular Western festival.

The 2006 Cowboy Festival lineup looks to be one of the best yet. Featured performers include some crowd favorites — the Sons of the San Joaquin, Don Edwards, Waddie Mitchell, Lorraine Rawls and many others. A full performance schedule is available online at the festival website, [www.cowboyleftival.org](http://www.cowboyleftival.org).

This year's kick-off events include the Cowboy Couture Fashion Show, a Women Artists of the West event at Hart Hall and an "Art of the Chuckwagon" demonstration at Heritage Junction Historic Park.

On Friday night, April 28, four simultaneous Cowboy Festival events will be going on, ensuring that everyone has the chance to "cowboy up!"

The popular Spaghetti Western Family Dinner Train, hosted by the Fillmore and Western Railway Company, will offer fun and food for the whole family.

The Walk of Western Stars ceremony will give folks the opportunity to enjoy a star-studded evening out to honor the accomplishments of stars of the silver screen. The event actually begins on the sidewalks of Newhall at 3 p.m. with the unveiling of new plaques for the Newhall Walk of Western Stars, and concludes with a gala dinner at 7 p.m. at the Hyatt Valencia Hotel and Santa Clarita Conference Center.



### WHETHER YOU'RE A FAN OF 'GUNSMOKE' OR 'DEADWOOD,' YOU'LL RECOGNIZE MELODY RANCH.

Meanwhile, Singer Don Edwards and other musicians will explore the history of Western music at the "Legacy of Violence in Western Song" event at the Autry Museum.

Finally, The Canyon Theatre Guild will present a special production of the popular musical "Oklahoma!"

Be sure to save some energy for the weekend, when the Melody Ranch Motion Picture Studio opens its doors to the public for entrance to the annual Cowboy Festival. Guests are transported by shuttle to the ranch, disembarking to the sounds of cowboy music and the smell of authentic cowboy peach cobbler.

Five separate music stages will feature ongoing entertainment throughout the weekend. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for children under eleven years of age each day and include entrance to the Cowboy Gear Show and Gold Rush Food Court.

On Sunday, you can be-



### OLD PALS —

Jack Hannah of the Sons of the San Joaquin, left, with his onetime high school student — City Manager Ken Pulskamp, who brought the Cowboy Festival to Santa Clarita in 1994.

gin your day at 8 a.m. at The Master's College with Cowboy Church. Admission is free. Also on Sunday, Atlasta Ranch will host a Carousel Ranch Benefit Trail Ride from 8 a.m. to noon. Each of these activities is a great way to get in the cowboy spirit before you head out to Melody Ranch.

Some events sell out, so buy your tickets early to avoid being left out of this Santa Clarita tradition.

A special two-day weekend pass is available, and the city offers a limited number of "Friends of the Festival" packages, which include admission to Melody Ranch for both Saturday and Sunday; preferred seating at all Melody Ranch Stage shows; all-weekend access to the Melody Ranch VIP Hacienda with catered food and beverages ... and much more.

For more information about the 2006 Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival, to subscribe to "eNotify" e-mail notifications or to buy tickets, log onto [www.cowboyleftival.org](http://www.cowboyleftival.org).

Tickets are also available by phone from the city's Festival Box Office at 1-800-305-0755.



### WHAT'S THIS, A RIVAL GAZETTE?

Not really. Melody Ranch was the setting for the 1996 Bruce Willis film, "Last Man Standing." The name of the town was Jericho, and its newspaper was the Press-Gazette.



# Tresierras Santa Clarita Coming Spring 2006

## Tresierras Santa Clarita Primavera 2006



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## Autry, CONT.

FROM FRONT PAGE.

rowdy, but in the presence of Ford, whom he revered, he could be as obedient and innocent as an altar boy. The night before the telecast, Duke lost track of the time, did some serious partying, and arrived on the Melody Ranch set two or three hours late with a head quite sensitive to loud noises.

Ford's voice must have sounded like a hammer beating against the lid of a garbage can. He was furious. He berated Wayne for holding up rehearsal and inconveniencing the rest of the cast. Duke just kept ducking his head and scuffing his toe in the sand and repeating, "I'm sorry, boss."

Wayne's part required him to walk down the Western street where "High Noon's" immortal face-down occurred, as he recited his lines from the script. Ford punished him by demanding endless run-throughs over that quarter-mile stretch of red dust, under a blistering desert sun.

"And you'll not get so much as a drop of water," Ford roared. "Do you HEAR me?"

"Yes, boss," Wayne replied.

While the Duke was suffering his penance, Ford sidled up to me and said, "Gene, about twenty minutes before we go on the air, I want you to give Duke a good, healthy slug of bourbon. And halfway through the show, give him another. But don't let him know that I know."

I understood. I walked over to the ranch house, took a Coke out of the refrigerator, emptied half of it into the sink, and filled up the bottle with bourbon. As I recall, we rehearsed until four-thirty and were to hit the air live half an hour later, catching the East at prime time.

Wayne was standing off-



**JOHN WAYNE PULLS A GUN ON BAD GUY YAKIMA CANUTT (OFF CAMERA) WHILE GABBY HAYES GUMS HIS CHAW IN 'BLUE STEEL' (1934), ONE IN A SERIES OF LONE STAR WESTERNS SHOT AT MELODY RANCH AND OTHER NEARBY LOCATIONS.**

camera with his tongue hanging out when I sauntered up to him, holding out the bottle of Coke.

"Here, Duke," I said. "Have a swallow of this. I think it will help you."

His face puckered up, and he waved the offer aside with a short chop of his hand.

"Get that mouthwash away from me," he growled. "You want to get me sick?"

As sternly as I could, I said, "Duke, I'm telling you, this is just what you need. Try it. Take a sip."

He looked at me a little suspiciously, took the bottle, and tilted it to his lips. His eyes got as round as saucers. When he handed me the empty he said, "Autry, you may have saved a man's life."

Halfway through the show I performed the same errand. The second time, Wayne didn't have to be persuaded.

Years later, after his success in the movie, "True Grit," I received a package in the mail from Wayne. It contained a glossy photograph of himself as Rooster Cogburn, with the patch over one eye. The in-

scription said: "To Gene Autry. A lot of water has gone under the bridge. And whiskey, too."

When a fire all but devastated Melody Ranch in August 1962, what I lost could not be replaced or even measured.

The ranch was in the path of the terrible firestorm that raged through the San Gabriel Mountains. Covering one hundred acres, the ranch had once been one of the finest in the business when Monogram owned it. I had purchased it ten years before the fire, leasing it for the filming of such shows as "Gunsmoke" and "Wyatt Earp," as well as those produced by my own company, Flying A Pictures.

I had always planned to erect a Western museum there, but priceless Indian relics and a collection of rare guns, including a set used by Billy the Kid, went up in smoke. Thank God, the ranch hands and all fourteen of our horses were uninjured.

The fire left the terrain so convincingly battle-scarred that it was used two months later for an episode of television's war series, "Combat."

The network special with Wayne and Ford would be the last time I went before the cameras at Melody Ranch. I have been back only a very few times. I kept it until the last living Champion died and then sold it to two enthusiastic young men, Renaud and Andre Veluzat, who decided to rebuild it.

Now, in the Nineties, it is once again the site of much



**THREE AMIGOS: DIRECTOR JOHN FORD (CENTER) WITH JIMMY STEWART AND THE DUKE.**

filming of features and television.

As for my plans for a Western museum, this came to fruition with the opening in 1988 — after much hard work spearheaded by my wife Jackie and Joanne Hale — of the Autry Museum of Western Heritage, located in Griffith Park opposite the Los Angeles Zoo.

My dream finally came true.

*The Autry Museum of Western Heritage (the Autry National Center) is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Take Interstate 5 south to Western Avenue and turn right. Turn left at Victory Boulevard and follow the signs. Admission is \$7.50, with discounts for seniors and students. For more information, call 323/667-2000.*



**THOSE TWO 'ENTHUSIASTIC YOUNG MEN,' RENAUD AND ANDRE VELUZAT (RIGHT), HAD ONLY JUST BEGUN TO REBUILD MELODY RANCH WHEN AUTRY (LEFT) VISITED IN 1991. SECOND FROM LEFT IS PATRIARCH PAUL T. VELUZAT.**

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## The Sons Of The San Joaquin.

With a new CD release, "Way Out Yonder," the Sons prove that no one compares when it comes to the classic Western sound. Festival favorites, the Sons of the San Joaquin always thrill with perfect harmonies and powerful vocals.

[www.thesons.com](http://www.thesons.com)



## Stephanie Davis.

Truly one of the best songwriters around, Stephanie's songs have been recorded by Garth Brooks and she's a regular on "A Prairie Home Companion." You'll find that her music reveals the longing and laughter inside all of us.

[www.stephaniedavis.net](http://www.stephaniedavis.net)



## Waddie Mitchell.

Waddie writes and recites cowboy poetry as only one who has lived the life can. With a wry sense of humor and heartfelt compassion, he brings insight to the trials and tribulations of the working cowboy.

[www.somagency.com/WaddieMitchell](http://www.somagency.com/WaddieMitchell)



## The Quebe Sisters Band.

A fantastic new fiddle trio from Texas, the Quebe Sisters Band amazed crowds at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada, in 2005 with flawless three-part harmonies on fiddles and vocals. Hold on to your seats — they're all under 20 years old but play like veterans.



## Syd Masters And The Swing Riders.

Syd and the boys really had the audiences hopping last year with their infectious energy and high-octane swing. You'll love their renditions of vintage Western swing.

[www.sydmasters.com](http://www.sydmasters.com)



## Brenn Hill.

Billboard Magazine writes, "Brenn Hill is a bridge between Western music's best traditions and the future of the genre." His wonderful voice and well crafted songs are always welcome in Santa Clarita.

[www.brennhill.com](http://www.brennhill.com)



## R.W. Hampton.

R.W. has always been a crowd favorite at our festival. He's grown up working on ranches and performing on stages throughout the West. He's a multiple award winning singer-songwriter with nine CD releases to his credit.

[www.rwhampton.com](http://www.rwhampton.com)



## Jon Chandler.

From Colorado come Jon Chandler and the Wichtones. Jon is a great songwriter and vocalist and is paired with two great musicians who bring a new sound and flavor to Western music. He's also an award-winning Western novelist.

[www.jonchandler.com](http://www.jonchandler.com)



## The Lucky Stars.

Our Saturday Night Swing Dance will feature The Lucky Stars, one of the hottest Western swing bands going. These boys come from the wilds of Los Angeles but play like they were born and raised in Texas. They look, sound and feel like a premier '40s Western group.

[www.theluckystars.com](http://www.theluckystars.com)



## Lorraine Rawls.

Lorraine and her group are back with their unique, soulful sound. Listening to her songs makes you want to stretch out in front of a warm fire on a cool prairie night, gaze at the stars and snuggle up to the one you love.

[www.lorrainerawls.com](http://www.lorrainerawls.com)



## Sourdough Slim.

Totally retro, hilariously entertaining and triumphant from Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Center, county fairs and cowboy events across the nation, Sourdough is a delight to watch and hear.

[www.sourdoughslim.com](http://www.sourdoughslim.com)



## Sky Shivers.

Inverate storyteller and truth stretcher, Sky is back to emcee the Melody Ranch stage, proving once again that you can fool some of the people most of the time.



## Chris Isaacs.

Two-time winner of the Academy of Western Artists "Will Rogers" Award, Chris Isaacs has lived what he writes. His poems and stories reflect the heart and humor of his life as a cowboy.

[www.chrisisaacs.com](http://www.chrisisaacs.com)



## Back At The Ranch.

This superb trio delivers a swinging blend of original and roots-based music featuring the husband and wife team, Clover and Rachel Carroll, with Ricky Turpin on fiddle. The effortless ease with which the combo performs their classic selections will, as Red Steagall says, "knock your hat in the creek!"

[www.backattheranch.biz](http://www.backattheranch.biz)

# Life Lessons From The 'Good Old Days!'

By **SHELBY JACOBS,**  
1953 Class President,  
Hart High School.

**Parents Toiled To Provide  
Opportunities For Family.**

**Star Athlete And Scholar  
Didn't Let Them Down.**

My family moved to Val Verde from Santa Monica in 1944-45, primarily because my father was appointed pastor of the Macedonia Church of God In Christ, which remains in operation to this day. My father also thought that raising children in a smaller, less densely populated area would enhance the chances of growing up to be productive citizens by avoiding what he perceived to be the too-numerous pitfalls of urban life.

My parents were devout Christians. My father, Shelby Sr., worked full time, holding various jobs over the years in addition to his pastoral duties. My mom, Rosie Lee, worked part-time as domestic in Newhall.

We were a family of four — Mom and Dad, me and a brother, Horace, who was one year younger. We were brought up with strong moral values because of the conservative Christian philosophy of my dad's church.

One of my lessons of a lifetime came when I inadvertently took a pencil home from church. My mom had me return it and say I had stolen it. She believed in the absolute definition that stealing is depriving one of his property without specific permission, regardless of intention. I was crushed. I had no intention to steal; I had simply forgotten to put down the pencil down before I left church.

I never forgot the embarrassment of the incident, and how harsh it felt at the time. But I learned beyond a reasonable doubt what stealing was about, and why it's included in the Ten Commandments.

Looking back, I did not realize how poor we were. My parents never held more than minimum-wage jobs, and some folks on welfare seemed better



off than us.

We lived in two houses over those years. The first was a small, rented, two-bedroom, one-bath house on the corner of the only road between Val Verde and Hasley Canyon. The second house my father built. It was somewhat larger — although small, by today's standards — and included a dining room and other minimal amenities.

During the year or two it took to build our new house, we lived in a one-room, all-purpose tent with a two-hole outhouse toilet and no running water. At the time, I did not realize the health hazard of having an outhouse and water source in the same yard, but we had learned a very important safety lesson from past experience: The old hole was too full; thus the dirt covering was too shallow.

The lesson came from an incident at a new home we had owned in Texas in the early 1940s. We had an outhouse that was relocated in the backyard. The old hole had not been dug deep enough, because my brother sank almost to his waist while playing. It took a couple of days to get him cleaned up, and the lesson served us well in Val Verde because it took several years to afford the construction of a new septic tank.

We never owned a television or telephone because of conservative church values, combined with limited resources. Evenings were spent doing chores, homework and occasionally gathering around the radio for entertainment.

I recall learning how to drive at a very young age — twelve or thirteen — not for fun or recreational use, but to help my father transport Mom to and from work and shopping during the summers, which tended to free up weekends for church events. Naturally, we could afford only one car. My father often worked second- or third-shift jobs and slept during the day, so I was the chosen one.

My mom did house cleaning for at least one of my schoolmates' parents that



## COLLEGE PREP CLASS OUTING —

Hart High's senior college preparatory class of 1953 takes a field trip to Hollywood to see the first 3-D film, "Bwana Devil" (Arch Oboler, 1952). There were sixty-five students in the entire Class of 1953; two of the three black students — the author and Mary Howard — were in college prep. Front row, from

left: Charles Merrill, Shelby Jacobs, Mary Howard, Nadra Bruton, Claudine Helm, Connie Thomson, Diane Corwin, Veda Dull, Jo Ellen Edwards, Doris Daily, Mrs. Norma Lewis (English teacher). Back row, from left: Allen Hayne, John Lockey, Tom Cox, Michael Kelley, Bill Caruthers.

I knew of; perhaps there were others. The fact that I was able to excel academically and athletically tended to mask the class difference between me and many of my more privileged schoolmates.

I'm sure there were others who lived middle or lower-middle class, but we were so isolated in Val Verde that it appeared the whole world was better off.

We were generally pretty confined in Val Verde. My only outings during the summer were my chauffeuring chores, driving Mom to Newhall. Of course, during school, we got out to Newhall five days a week. Wow!

I became quite a proficient swimmer, taking every opportunity when not working or chauffeuring to spend time at the Olympic-size pool provided at Val Verde Park.

I was a three-sport, four-year letterman (football, basketball and track) at Hart High School and managed to find time to be a member of the Key Club and Varsity Club, and serve as senior class president. I occasional-



**SHELBY (FRONT LEFT) AND HORACE (HART CLASS OF 1954) WITH THEIR PARENTS, SHELBY SR. AND ROSIE LEE (BEHIND THEM) AND ANOTHER COUPLE AFTER A CHURCH MEETING IN VENTURA, 1946-47.**

ly made the academic honor society. My days were always long, beginning at 6:30 or 7 a.m., with a twelve-mile school bus ride to Hart, classes until 3 p.m. or so, followed by two to three hours of sports practice, returning

home by bus at 6 or 6:30 p.m. I sometimes hitch-hiked home when I missed the late bus or it didn't run. One Friday after an away game at Fillmore High School, I had the bus driver drop me off at Tip's

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 13.**

# New Man Responsible For Downtown Plan.

By **PAUL BROTZMAN,**  
Community Development  
Director,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

**Experienced Engineer Has  
Been With City Since 1991.**

**PARKING STRUCTURE AT  
SIXTH AND SAN FERNANDO ROAD  
IS FIRST 'CATALYST' PROJECT.**

I am excited to announce the appointment of Assistant City Engineer Christopher Price as implementation manager of the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan.

Chris will be coordinating with all of the many dedicated city representatives who have been working on various aspects of the plan in order to help focus the efforts of all city divisions toward our shared goals. He will organize, assist and participate directly in the efforts of the city's Planning, Economic Development, Finance, Capital Improvement, Development Services and Traffic divisions to bring the best possible results to Newhall.

Chris has lived in the city for nearly twenty years. His first job after completing engineering school in the late 1980s was with a small private engineering company, Hale & Associates, formerly located near the northwest corner of San Fernando Road and Market Street in Newhall.

His career with the city started in 1991 as an assistant engineer, reviewing grading and infrastructure improve-



**PRICE.**

ment plans submitted by developers. Chris went on to manage several capital projects that brought early street and drainage improvements to the older residential neighborhoods of Newhall. He eventually supervised the engineering staff members involved in all capital projects across the city.

Among his many projects throughout town, under Chris' leadership, the Newhall Metrolink Station was constructed and the recently opened Community Center next door was planned and designed, also creating much-needed parking for both facilities.

In his last assignment before moving to the Community Development Department, Chris managed the Development Services Division of the Public Works Department. In that capacity, Chris was back to working with the city's planners, land developers, and their consultant engineers to carefully plan and implement their private projects to best complement the city's high community standards.

Chris brings to the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan the ability to manage a diverse variety of infrastructure projects; negotiate with and guide land developers through complex procedures; and coordinate and communicate effectively with all

city departments, divisions, commissions and outside agencies that have impacts on the plan.

His extensive experience within the city and with outside, private development positions him ideally to advance the plan while protecting the interests of the community.

Asked about how he felt about this new challenge, Chris said he was very excited and looks forward "to helping further the positive change that the large group of staff members, citizens, the Redevelopment Committee and council members have already brought so far into the process."

One of the first orders of business for the implementation plan is the creation of a development proposal for the "South Parking Structure."

Prior to Chris' assignment to the project, staff members had drafted and released a "request for qualifications" that was sent out to quality developers in order to generate interest in this first "catalyst" project.

The current owners of the property identified for this exciting new facility have the first opportunity to propose a development that fits into the specific plan on the site in question. If those property owners are unable to assemble the components necessary to create such a project, city staff will take further steps with identified developers to help bring the project to fruition.

Meanwhile, ongoing efforts to help bring private interests together with motivated property owners will continue. The always proactive members of the city's Economic Development and Planning divisions have been speaking and meeting with many curious commercial interests to bring exciting new shopping, dining and entertainment possibilities to the plan area.

Chris can be reached at City Hall by e-mail at [cprice@oldtownnewhall.com](mailto:cprice@oldtownnewhall.com) or by phone at 661/255-4961.

## Jacobs, CONT.

FROM PAGE 12.

restaurant at Castaic Junction, where I worked all night (the third shift).

That was a 24-hour day of activity without sleep. I didn't even give it a second thought at the time. Looking back, it seems a little harsh, but I endured.

I had decided to take a college preparatory course because of my early demonstrated capabilities in elementary and junior high, even though I didn't have a clue as to how my family could afford college. I knew little, if anything, about the potential for academic or athletic scholarships.

I took an aptitude test sometime near the end of my junior year or the beginning of my senior year (1952-53). My scores were high in math and science, indicating career potential in technical fields such as engineering, physics or other sciences.

I was reminded of the "Jackie Robinson phenomenon" — the removal of legal and social barriers that prevented blacks from participating in professional sports, beginning with baseball in 1946-47 and spreading to football, basketball and others by the early 1950s.



**JACOBS OVERCOMES  
HURDLES IN TRACK  
AND FIELD AT HART.**

The Jackie Robinson phenomenon had not included the technical professions by the time I was ready to graduate from Hart in 1953.

The "good old days" served a useful purpose in my life. I learned to strive for success in spite of the odds.

It is said that life's experiences determine one's character — which I can't deny. However, it may be more about how one reacts to circumstances — the choices one makes — that has more to do with whether one overcomes or succumbs to the issues of the day.

I would not prescribe the social climate of my era; we've come too far to turn back the clock.

*Shelby Jacobs retired from Rockwell in 1996 after a 40-year aerospace career. He now lives in Oceanside, California.*



**JOB ONE: PARKING STRUCTURE AT SIXTH STREET.**



### BEFORE —

The home of John and Sarah Gifford, built in 1883, once sat on a portion of the new Community Center property on Market Street, opposite the old Newhall train depot (erected 1878). John (inset) was the Southern Pacific's first stationmaster in Newhall; Sarah was involved in social circles and was an organizer of Newhall's first Chamber of Commerce. The house was gone by the time Anawalt Lumber — much less the city of Santa Clarita — occupied the property.

# Serving Elders For Thirty Years.

By **BRAD BERENS,**  
Executive Director,  
Santa Clarita Valley  
Committee On Aging.

LANDMARKS TELL THE STORY  
OF MEETING ELDERS' NEEDS.

## Senior Center In Newhall Is Expanding Services For Eight Hundred Daily Users.

The Santa Clarita Valley Committee on Aging is thirty years old this year, and we recently got together to honor members of the community who make a difference in the lives of our elders.

In many non-western societies, conceptions of time are cyclic and repetitive. As Americans, our concept of time tends to be linear, highlighted by landmarks along the way. Our landmarks include birthdays, accomplishments, historical events, relationships and, unfortunately, tragedies

and the loss of loved ones.

As a human services organization, we are like the people we serve. We view time as temporal and we depend on these frames of reference that mark our organizational journey, driven by a mission to serve the elders of our community.

Some of those landmarks were the development of our Adult Day Care in 1992 and our Home Modification Coalition in 1993, through which staff gained expertise in home modification and universal design for frail and disabled patrons.

In coordination with the city of Santa Clarita and other nonprofits, our organization's response in the wake of the 1994 earthquake earned recognition as far away as Japan and led to our participation in the 1996 International Disaster Symposium in Tokyo.

In 1999, the Committee on Aging hosted and gave testimony in congressional hearings for the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. In that same year, the Committee opened Bouquet Canyon Seni-

ors, a 264-unit affordable housing community for our elders.

In 2000, the Committee participated in the AdvantAge Initiative, a nationwide study to determine how well prepared we are locally and nationally to address the concerns of our elders. Santa Clarita was deemed the most elder-friendly community in the survey.

In 2002, the Committee was a major contributor to the Los Angeles County Strategic Plan for Long Term Care with an emphasis on home and community-based services. In 2003, the organization opened its second affordable housing community in Canyon Country. Close behind was the opening of the Castaic Lake Senior Housing in 2004.

In 2005, we began the process of facility expansion that is due to be completed this summer. With the help of the city of Santa Clarita, the Senior Center will be adding three activity rooms that will enhance recreational and supportive services programming for the more than eight hundred elders who access services every day. When we begin, our seniors will enjoy the new amenities as they are built literally in front of their eyes, as programs and services continue during the construction process.

The city of Santa Clarita, its leaders and staff are vital parts of our collective journey that builds landmarks each and every year for the quality of life for us all.

These landmarks have led to wide recognition of the Santa Clarita Valley Committee on Aging as an exemplary organization that serves the needs of senior citizens and the disabled. Yet they are not what define us.

What defines us as an organization are the seniors we serve and the day-to-day commitment of a dedicated board of directors, staff and volunteers numbering in the hundreds. Success is achieved primarily by relationships that are fostered and nurtured over time. With more than eight thousand elders in our community accessing services or programs through the Committee on Aging, these relationships are the most important dynamic of our mission of inde-



**SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH AND HIS DEPUTY, JO ANNE DARCY, CONGRATULATE THEN-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARY BLANKENSHIP AT THE DEDICATION OF THE SANTA CLARITA VALLEY SENIOR CENTER ON MAY 4, 1983.**

pendence, dignity and quality of life for our elders.

These relationships begin with our patrons themselves. Our seniors provide informal networks of care and support through friendships. The dynamic of seniors helping seniors ensures an enhanced quality of life for the entire senior community. As our elders "age in place," however, more formal relationships are required in order to provide appropriate services when they are needed.

The Committee on Aging offers more than one hundred distinct services and programs that address the needs of our older population. We are witnessing the same dynamic locally that is happening on the national level — a surge of need related to our frail elderly. It is our responsibility to anticipate additional needs as the aging process presents more and more limitations on our frail clientele.

Our board of directors, past and present, should be held in the highest esteem in our community. Through close relationships and collaboration with members of the community, they have launched fundraisers that benefit our most frail elderly and those most at risk of premature institutional-

ization. They have also provided governance and leadership to augment the day-to-day efforts of a dedicated professional staff.

Our board and the newly created board of trustees for the SCV Senior Center Foundation will be challenged as we look forward to our third decade of advocacy, service delivery and community resource management on behalf of our elders.

The journey of the Santa Clarita Valley Committee on Aging is like a never-ending, long-distance relay where the batons of leadership, service delivery, advocacy and passionate belief in our mission are passed periodically. Like the proverbial adage, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," our rendition includes "hand to hand and heart to heart."

With this thought in mind, we are indebted to the Gage Briens, the Juanita Heinleys, the Jo Anne Darcys, the Russ Cockrans, the Clarice Secests, the Stan Sierads, the Paul Boogs, the Barbara Stearns-Cockrans, the Mary Blankenships and the hundreds of others who were and are landmarks in and of themselves in this community journey of independence, dignity, and quality of life.

## Especially For Seniors.

### STEP INTO YOUR DANCING SHOES.

Try out the best wooden dance floor in the Santa Clarita Valley when Jimmy Raschel and Longshot perform at the Santa Clarita Valley Senior Center, 22900 Market Street, on March 24. Doors open at 7 p.m. Couples and singles over 18 are welcome. Call 259-9444.

### AARP DRIVER SAFETY TRAINING OFFERED.

Instructors Roger Oleson and Glenn Grade will teach the AARP Driver Safety Program at the Senior Center once per month through the end of the year. The eight-hour class, taught over two days (Fridays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) covers the "rules of the road" and safety tips. Successful completion earns each participant a three-year certificate; drivers over 50 earn an auto insurance credit. Classes will be held at the Senior Center on March 10 and 11 (Oleson), April 7 and 8 (Grade), May 12 and 13 (Oleson) and monthly thereafter. Call 259-9444.

### LECTURE SERIES COVERS SENIOR ISSUES.

The Santa Clarita Valley Senior Center has scheduled the following lectures on Wednesdays in March: "Reverse mortgage: Will it work for you?" on March 8 with JoAnne Leone of Wells Fargo Bank; on March 15, a pharmacist will discuss your medications (bring them with you); "How gum disease threatens your health" on March 22 with Dr. Bencharit of Valencia Periodontics; "Diabetes: Treatment and Diagnosis" on March 29 with Dr. Chen. Lectures are held from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. in Activity Rooms 1 and 2 at the Senior Center, 22900 Market Street.

# New Community Center Opens.



Boxing and ballet folklorico demonstrations, mariachi music and tasty *conchas* greeted visitors at the January 21 grand opening of the Community Center on Market Street.

In both size and style, the 17,000-square-foot Community Center dwarfs the old facility — a warehouse on San Fernando Road that saw its membership explode since 1994 to 2,000 youngsters per year.

Hundreds of kids signed up for programs at the new center on the first day, and by the end of the first week, there was a waiting list for most classes — which range from the award-winning boxing and ballet programs to karate, violin, drawing, photography and more.

Highlighting its importance as a true “center” for the Newhall community, the city-run facility also offers homework assistance for latchkey kids, age-appropriate leadership classes for elementary through high school-aged students, and courses in citizenship and English as a Second Language for parents.



## Cowboy Couture

*The Ultimate High-End Fashion Show*

Wednesday, April 26 @ 7:00 p.m.

at The Canyon Theatre Guild Playhouse

in Old Town Newhall

\$20/person

*Includes Wine Reception*

To purchase tickets: 661-286-4021 or [www.cowboyleftival.org](http://www.cowboyleftival.org)



# An Arts And Theater District?

By **PHIL LANTIS**,  
Arts And Events  
Administrator,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

**City Is Determined To  
Weave The Arts Into The  
Redevelopment Of Newhall.**

**STEP ONE: IDENTIFY AND  
MARKET A MEMORABLE IMAGE  
FOR THE AREA.**

What is an arts and theater district? It is an area of a city set apart to enhance artistic endeavors of local artists, in addition to becoming the focus for arts from all genres in a city.

An arts and theater district reflects a diversity of cultural programming. It should be a place that communicates local history together with a look toward the future.

To create a district, several factors need to be considered, including activities and special events; the role of the arts in urban design, planning, and economic development; coalitions and coordination; leadership; a reliable source of funding; and image building.

Some of these factors are already in place for Old Town Newhall — which has not been officially designated as an arts



**WITH TWO LIVE THEATERS ALREADY, NEWHALL HAS THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF AN ARTS DISTRICT. SHOWN (FROM LEFT): SONDRA MAYER, PAUL MULBRECHT AND BARRETT DAVIDSON ON STAGE AT THE REPERTORY EAST PLAYHOUSE.**

and theater district but has utilized some of these approaches in the area's development.

Additionally, the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan suggests the development of a "creative industries district," which will also enhance the role of the arts in Newhall.

Old Town Newhall is currently home to the valley's two local live theaters — the Canyon Theatre Guild and the Repertory East Playhouse — as well as the Santa Clarita Artists' Association Art Gallery.

The area is also home to

a variety of cultural and artistic events throughout the year — everything from the Cowboy Festival, now in its 13th year, to the Santa Clarita Valley Film Festival, held for the first time in November.

The arts can also play a significant role in the visual landscape of the area, with art in public places being a mechanism that has been an important component of other arts districts. Public art can include murals, sculptures, unique decorative elements and many other art forms. Artists can also be included in design discussions to add a creative flair to the general appearance of the community and result in an environment that is conducive to future artistic activities.

A key factor to building a successful arts district is a commitment to the coordination, leadership and funding for the designated area.

The city of Santa Clarita has made a commitment to redevelop Old Town Newhall, with financial and staff resources dedicated to that end. The creation and adoption of the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan, and identifying the redevelopment of Newhall as a top goal of the City Council, are further indications of the city's commitment to the area.

The final essential factor for creating an arts district is to build an image for the area — what someone thinks of, or the

## Mural Project To Enhance Old Town.

By **MICHAEL MARKS**,  
Arts And Events Supervisor,  
City Of Santa Clarita.

The city of Santa Clarita's Arts and Events Office will be embarking on a new project aimed at bringing more art to Old Town Newhall. Called the Newhall Mural Project, the main idea is to add new murals to the downtown area for the purpose of artistic enhancement and to initiate the growth of the Newhall arts and theater district. The goal of the new project is to add one or two murals per year.

The murals can be as creative and artistic as the artist and property owner would like. A variety of artistic

styles, colors and themes are now being sought for inclusion in this ongoing project.

At this time, the city is seeking appropriate locations for murals, and is contacting property owners to discuss the project for future partnerships. The Arts and Events Office will be developing the materials for artists to submit their ideas and concepts for final selection by the Santa Clarita Arts Advisory Committee and the owner of the property involved.

If you own property in Old Town Newhall and would like to have it considered for a future mural location, or if you are an artist interested in participating, call me at 286-4078 or send e-mail to [mmarks@santa-clarita.com](mailto:mmarks@santa-clarita.com).

first thing that comes to mind when an area is mentioned. There are numerous examples, from North Hollywood's "No-Ho" campaign to West Hollywood's "Avenue of Art." It is crucial that this identity is unique and true to what the area is currently, and what it will become in the future.

This marketing effort is one of the biggest challenges in creating an arts district, and the identity can take years to be embraced by the entire community and the region.

The next steps need to be driven by the goals identified in the Newhall Specific Plan. The arts need to continue to advance the economic growth of the area, while also being a tool to celebrate the historical and cultural uniqueness of the area.

If the arts are able to achieve this, they will be an integral part of the redevelopment efforts, and the arts and theater district concept could be implemented in the near future.

All of the information presented here is drawn from the Newhall Arts and Theatre District Plan written by Bryan Keene, a Santa Clarita resident and student at Pepperdine

University, who developed the plan for the city of Santa Clarita through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission Intern program. The program is a valuable resource for both municipalities and nonprofit arts organizations to augment their resources and work with the next generation of arts administrators and advocates.

The city's Arts and Events Office thanks the County Arts Commission for its wonderful program, and Bryan Keene for his hard work and dedication.

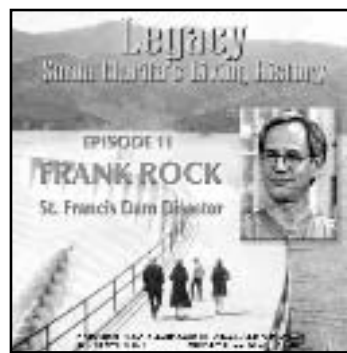
Bryan's research included information from a variety of plans from other communities and organizations that were helpful to him in formulating the Arts and Theatre District Plan. These include the California State University Fullerton Grand Central Art Center Plan, the Urban Land Institute and the City of Santa Ana Plaza of the Artists Plan, the Arts Action Plan for the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association, the City of Ventura Cultural District Plan, the City of Reno Cultural Master Plan, the Glendale Theatre District Plan and the Los Angeles County Downtown Art in Public Places Plan.

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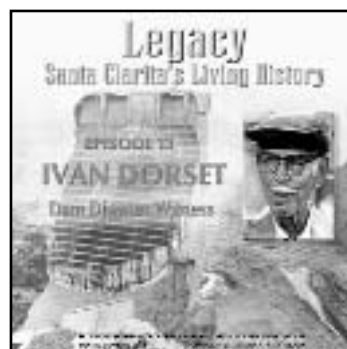


# Now On DVD.



## FRANK ROCK, DAM MAN.

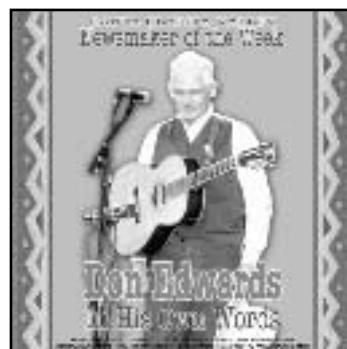
Perched high above Saugus, the St. Francis Dam held 12.5 billion gallons of water to serve a thirsty and growing Los Angeles. But William Mulholland's final engineering feat would last just two years. At three minutes before midnight on March 12, 1928, the great St. Francis collapsed and sent at least 450 people to their deaths. In words and pictures, local dam expert Frank Rock tells the story of America's worst civil engineering failure of the 20th Century.



## IVAN DORSET, DAM DISASTER WITNESS.

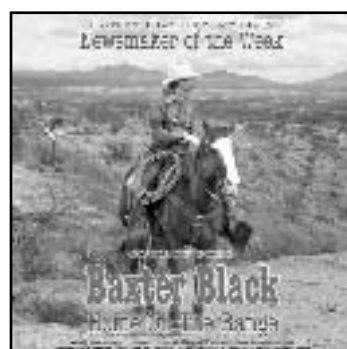
Henry Ivan Dorset was 18 in March 1928 when the mighty St. Francis Dam crumbled. Included in the death rolls were Lyman Curtis, husband of Ivan's sister, and their two little girls. Now deceased, Ivan tells his gripping tale and shares important historic photographs from his personal collection.

**Dam Anniversary Special:** Take \$5 off your total if you order both Frank Rock and Ivan Dorset.



## DON EDWARDS, COWBOY SINGER.

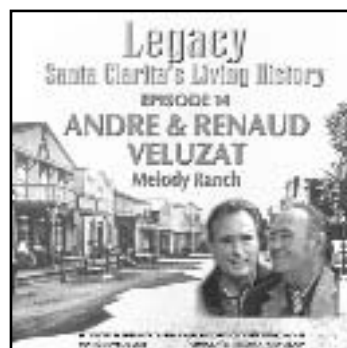
A perennial favorite at Santa Clarita's Cowboy Festival, headliner Don Edwards shows he's more than "just" the West's best cowboy crooner. Join Don for a trip back in time to the beginnings of this unique form of American "roots music," learn how it has changed through the years, and find out what Don and others are doing to preserve it.



## BAXTER BLACK, COWBOY POET.

Considering he's been a regular on National Public Radio, you might assume he's from New York City. Of course, he isn't. Enjoy an up-close-and-personal visit with cowboy humorist Baxter Black on his ranch in Arizona and find out how he comes up with all those crazy cowboy poems you've grown to love.

**Cowboy Festival Special:** Take \$5 off your total if you order both Don Edwards and Baxter Black.



## ANDRE AND RENAUD VELUZAT: OWNERS, MELODY RANCH.

Just when you thought you were limited to visiting Gene Autry's old stomping grounds just once a year, now you can take it home with you. Join current owners Renaud and Andre Veluzat as they walk you through the Melody Ranch Museum and find out how they rebuilt the famous Western movie town after it burned down — with absolutely no blueprints.

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All DVDs 1/2 hour ~ \$15 each ~ 100% of proceeds benefit SCV Historical Society Available at the Saugus Train Station Museum, Saturdays & Sundays 1-4 p.m. Or online at scvhistory.com ~ click on "Books-DVDs-VHS" ~ add \$3.20 postage Or write to SCV Historical Publications, P.O. Box 802993, Santa Clarita CA 91380 Make checks payable to "SCV Historical Society"

# Take The Dam Tour

## News From The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society.

### TWO SPECIAL EVENTS MARK THE SEVENTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGEDY.

Thanks to the hard work of the U.S. Forest Service and Los Angeles County, the road to the St. Francis Dam site is now open — albeit rerouted — and the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society's annual tour is on.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn about the second-worst natural disaster to hit California: the failure of the St. Francis Dam on March 12, 1928, that killed more than 450 people, leveled farms and homesteads, destroyed property and livestock and changed the way dam safety was addressed forevermore.

To fulfill the society's goal of educating as many people as possible about important historic events, "Dam Man" Frank Rock has divided his presentation into two parts:

◆ A free, two-hour lecture and question-and-answer session on Saturday, March 11, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Saugus Train Station Museum at Heritage Junction Historic Park, inside William S. Hart Park in Old Town Newhall. No reservations are required, but early arrival is recommended.

◆ A ticketed, \$35-per-person dam tour a week later, on



**ABOVE: RUBBLE FROM THE FACE OF THE DAM DWARFS A WOMAN AT LOWER RIGHT IN THIS 1928 PHOTOGRAPH. RIGHT: WEAR BOOTS OR STURDY SHOES IF YOU PLAN TO TAKE THE DAM TOUR.**

Sunday, March 19, with a lecture at Heritage Junction at 1 p.m. and departure at 2 p.m., returning to Heritage Junction at approximately 5 p.m. after visiting the dam site. The tour includes snacks and motorcoach transportation. Only ticket holders will be admitted to the March 19 lecture.

Along with the historical, illustrated narrative, Rock will also talk about some of the changes in the canyons, brought about by recent fires and floods.

The society gives special



ALEX COLLINS

thanks to the city of Santa Clarita and Santa Clarita Transit for providing the buses for the tour.

Tickets may be reserved by calling 661/254-1275 with credit card and contact information. Because the tour is an extremely popular fundraiser, it can't be guaranteed that seats will be available for purchase on the day of the tour — so call today.

## THE GAZETTE WANTS YOUR NEWHALL NEWS.

Ready to cut the ribbon on your Newhall business? Is your nonprofit organization planning an event in Newhall? Tell the Old Town Newhall Gazette. Send your press release by e-mail to [info@oldtownnewhall.com](mailto:info@oldtownnewhall.com), or the old-fashioned way to: Old Town Newhall USA, Post Office Box 802993, Santa Clarita, Calif. 91380.

## KEEP UP WITH NEWHALL HAPPENINGS.

The city of Santa Clarita's Newhall Redevelopment Committee meets on the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Century Room at City Hall, 23920 West Valencia Boulevard. (When a holiday falls on the first Monday, meetings are held on the second Monday.) The public is encouraged to attend.

## ADVERTISE IN THE GAZETTE.

CALL 661/259-1234 ext. 237

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# Evolution Of The Local Rancho.

By **DARRYL MANZER**,  
Gazette Correspondent.

**Cattle Ranching Has Been  
Big Business Since  
The Spanish Days.**

**But It Wasn't Always  
About The Beef.**

Not that long ago, thousands of cattle roamed the Santa Clarita Valley. Along with oil, agriculture was a major commercial enterprise.

Dairy farms and beef cattle ranches were just part of the everyday landscape. For many years there were ten to twenty — or more — cows for each man, woman and child in the whole of the Santa Clarita Valley.

In 1769, when Gaspar de Portolá and his expedition came through the area, he noted the abundant water and pasture lands in the valley. Later, when the Mission San Fernando was established in 1787, the Santa Clarita Valley was seen as a possible extension of mission lands. In 1804, an *estancia*, or outpost, of the Mission San Fernando was founded at what is now Castaic Junction. This marked the beginning of cattle ranching in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Cattle were raised not for meat, but for their hides.



**THE ESTÁNCIA DE SAN FRANCISCO XAVIER  
WAS BUILT IN 1804 AT CASTAIC JUNCTION.  
ILLUSTRATION BY ADOLPH HENKEL, 1957.**

Leather goods were the “plastics” of that era. Leather was used for clothing, saddles, carriage springs and even buckets. Leather was a vital part of the transportation systems of the day; it was used to connect the horses, oxen and mules to carts, wagons and carriages. As such, it became a major export from Alta California.

The export of hides is what first brought those pesky Yankee traders and their ships to California. Many of them liked what they saw and decided to stay. Most were welcomed with open arms — something Mexico would one day regret.

By 1813, so many cattle inhabited the Santa Clarita Valley that a fence (a bar) was placed across the Newhall Pass in Elsmere Canyon to

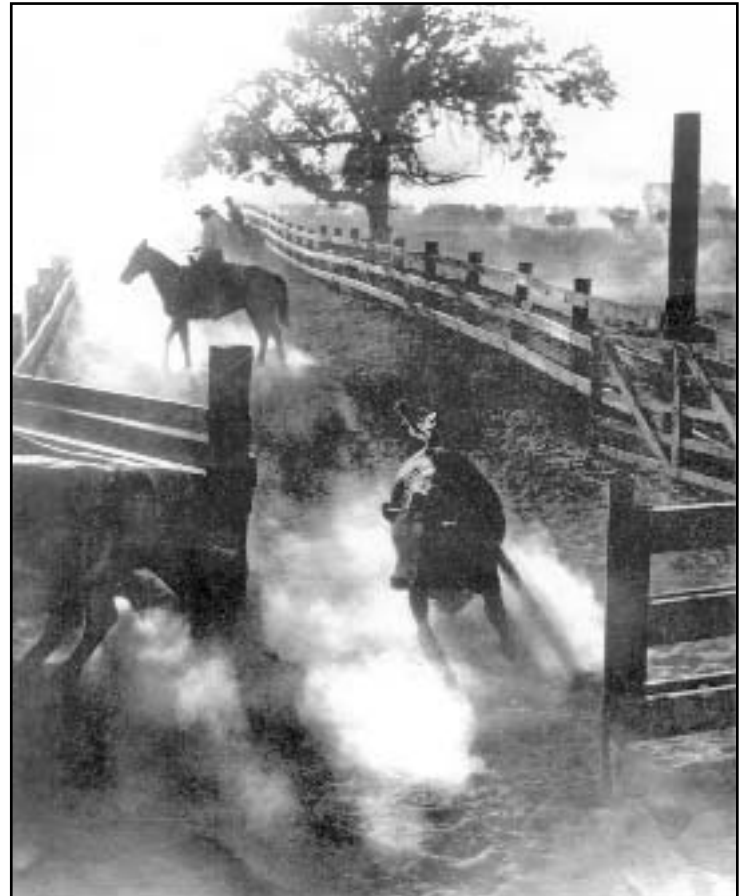
keep them from wandering into the San Fernando Valley. For those of you who complain about the commute from that valley to Santa Clarita every day, remember that it used to be a very long day's journey from the Mission San Fernando to the *estancia* at Castaic Junction. Most of the time, the “commuters” made the trip on horseback or by wagon. Many had to do it on foot.

The Mexican revolution that started in 1821 eventually gained Mexico its independence from Spain. California became a territory of Mexico. The missions continued to operate the various ranches they owned until 1833, when the Mexican Congress took over all of the former mission lands.

Thirteen months later, Lieutenant Antonio del Valle arrived at Mission San Fernando to dismantle the church holdings. Of course, he took a large part of the land in the Santa Clarita Valley for himself.

This was the era of the Mexican land grant. Many ranchos were parceled out of mission lands in the Santa Clarita Valley. Cattle were still being raised — by the thousands. There were also large herds of sheep in the valley.

Following the war of 1846-48 between Mexico and the United States, most of the land grants remained in effect. The former Mexican landowners now became United States citizens and essentially continued to use the land of the Santa Clarita Valley as they had in the past — although the new regime required landowners to prove their claims to real estate that had been poorly plotted during the periods of



**NEWHALL LAND'S STOCKYARDS WERE LOCATED  
ROUGHLY WHERE MAGIC MOUNTAIN SITS TODAY.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF RUTH NEWHALL.**

Mexican and Spanish rule. In this manner, the United States government seized disputed lands and opened them to homesteading by American settlers from the East — such as the Pico Canyon area, between the Rancho San Fernando on the south and the Del Valles' Rancho San Francisco (the Santa Clarita Valley) on the north.

Cattle and sheep ranching remained the major commercial enterprise on the Del Valles' *rancho* until 1862 when, after three years of drought, most of the ranchers went broke. By the 1870s, the land was being sold off for back taxes. The remaining ranches still had cattle — but oil was starting to take over as the major industry, along with mining and the railroad.

In 1883, the heirs of Newhall's founder and namesake, Henry Mayo Newhall, incorporated The Newhall Land and Farming Company. Ranching and farming were the company's primary businesses; orange trees, walnut orchards and fields of alfalfa,

onions, carrots and other crops joined cattle operations. A large feed lot was eventually built near the site of what today is the Magic Mountain amusement park.

Cattle remained a large part of ranching operations throughout the valley until about 1960. The ranches were divided and developed into the housing tracts we know today. People, homes and cars replaced the cattle, sheep and orchards. Some call it “progress,” while others call it “sprawl.”

One thing is for sure: Today, the cars outnumber the cattle. That simple, little bar across the Newhall Pass couldn't keep them out — and some days, the commute from the San Fernando Valley seems to take as long as it did in 1821.

Funny. You're often sitting on leather seats, holding a leather-wrapped steering wheel, wearing your leather shoes. Wonder where the cattle are being raised today?

*Darryl Manzer grew up in the Pico Canyon oil town of Mentryville in the 1960s. Today he lives in Virginia.*

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