



# The Gazette.

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MAY-JUNE 2006

YEAR 12, NUMBER 3

## Streets To Be Reconfigured.

By CHRIS PRICE,  
Redevelopment Implementation  
Manager, City Of Santa Clarita.

New Streetscape To Include  
'Back-In' Angled Parking; Fewer  
Lanes On San Fernando Road.

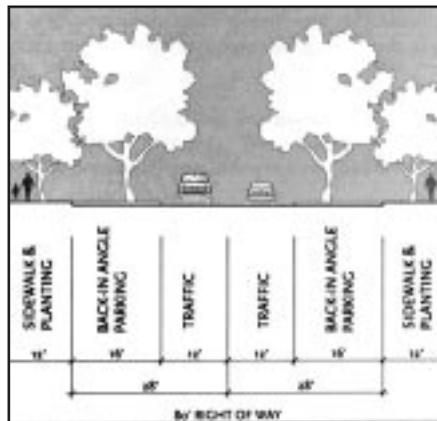
Railroad And Newhall Avenues To  
Be Altered To Handle More Traffic.

SAN FERNANDO ROAD TO BE  
RENAMED 'MAIN STREET.'

PUBLIC PARKING STRUCTURES TO COME.

You might not have seen many changes yet, but several things are in the works to get excited about in Old Town Newhall.

More than fifteen city employees are already working on portions of projects that will ultimately transform the downtown area. The firm of Moule & Polyzoides, Architects and Urbanists,



CHANGES COMING TO MAIN  
STREET (SAN FERNANDO  
ROAD) FROM 5th TO LYONS.

is working with staff and consultant engineers to design the public improvements that will be constructed to create the "streetscape" scene on San Fernando Road — which will eventually be renamed "Main Street" — between Lyons and Newhall avenues.

The new streetscape scene will provide "back-in" angled parking to increase the safety of loading vehicle.  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 9.



PATTI RASMUSSEN

McGRATH PRINCIPAL LARRY HEATH (BACKGROUND) KEEPS AN 'EXTENDED' CALENDAR TO PREPARE KIDS FOR JUNIOR HIGH.

## School Goes Extra Mile.

By PATTI RASMUSSEN,  
Gazette Correspondent.

No Child Is Left Behind At  
Newhall's Newest Elementary.

Up a long driveway with a sweeping view of the Santa Clarita Valley, almost half of the seven hundred students at McGrath Elementary School start their day a little bit earlier than other students in the Newhall School

District. This is part of the extended day for the McGrath students who need extra help.

With more than seventy percent of the student body classified as English Language Learners, teachers are well aware that the extra time can bring these students up to grade level and better prepare them when they enter the high school district.

McGrath Elementary opened in 2003 to help alleviate overcrowding on the east side of Newhall. It was named  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 13.

## Feel The Heat Of L.A. Carpool.



L.A. CARPOOL

L.A. CARPOOL'S GLORIA T.

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On July 4, the Carpool will pull into town for a free, live concert at Newhall Park at noon — right after the Santa Clarita Fourth of July Parade.

(As in years past, the parade kicks off at 9:45 a.m. at the intersection of Newhall Avenue and San Fernando Road and ends on Orchard Village at 16th Street, near Newhall Park.)

From noon until 2 p.m., a full Latin rhythm section of the best Los Angeles salsa musicians will blow you away with a layered "wall of sound" that blends mambo, son, cha's and all other popular musical idioms into a truly unique experience.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4.

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# Old Town Newhall Gazette.

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LEON WORDEN, Editor and Publisher.

## EDITORIAL.

# Build The Future With Eye On Past.

"This project will change forever the face of Santa Clarita," City Manager Ken Puls-kamp told the City Council during a March 7 study session.

He wasn't exaggerating. Under the plans that are now being implemented, San Fernando Road will no longer be a major thoroughfare. It will be a quaint, tree-lined, two-lane street that's only five blocks long, ending in a "T" intersection at Lyons Avenue.

And it won't be called San Fernando Road. The section from 5th Street/Newhall Avenue on the south to Lyons on the north will be renamed "Main Street." There will no longer be anything called "San Fernando Road" within Santa Clarita city limits. After all, many people moved to Santa Clarita to escape the San Fernando Valley, and they don't need reminders!

What of San Fernando Road south of the Old Town, between 5th Street and Highway 14? Are they ripping it out?

No. South of Old Town, the road that's called "San Fernando" today will be renamed "Newhall Avenue." It will continue north along its current alignment — on the west side of Old Town — to accommodate commuters traveling to and from Lyons and beyond to Valencia.

What of San Fernando Road north of Old Town? Are they ripping it out?

No. It's going to be called "Railroad Avenue." On the south, Railroad will start where it starts today (by the train tracks), and it will continue north to Bouquet Canyon as the road called "San Fernando" does today, to accommodate traffic to and from Saugus.

The city is purchasing the old gas station property at the corner of Lyons and San Fernando for \$860,000 to facili-

tate the realignment. (It also purchased the old Moore's submarine sandwich shop at 5th and San Fernando for \$764,000 with the intent of building a children's museum or some other public amenity.)

Confused? See the map on page 9.

That's just the beginning. Or more like the middle.

Right now, the city is in the process of identifying and hiring developers to build what they're calling "catalyst projects" — the city's first true "redevelopment" projects, as defined by law.

(Much has happened since Newhall "revitalization" started in 1996 or so. But unlike "revitalization," which is just a word, "redevelopment" is the process of buying, assembling, reconstructing and often selling property. A redevelopment agency — such as the one that's redoing Newhall — is the only type of government entity in California that can resell property to a private party for public benefit — the benefit being the stimulation of the local economy.)

For starters, the Santa Clarita Redevelopment Agency — governed by the members of the Santa Clarita City Council and run by city staff — will be working with developers and property owners to acquire parcels for a pair of new parking structures.

Parking has long been a complaint among Old Town merchants. Many believe they'd do better business if it were easier for shoppers to park.

Some of those merchants will have to move elsewhere. Either the Redevelopment Agency itself or an approved developer will build a "south" parking structure on San Fernando (Main Street) between

5th and 6th Streets. Much of the designated land is a privately owned parking lot now, but the new structure will actually consume fourteen separate parcels with five owners, including Roger Dunn Golf.

Additionally, a "north" parking structure will take eight parcels from six owners — among them the Rendezvous bar, Take Two Thrift Shop, German Autohaus, Taco Llama and Newhall Muffler.

Of note, the Rendezvous is the oldest building in Newhall that's still in its original location — and original use. It has been rebuilt through the decades, but it first went up in 1878. It is this editor's hope that the Rendezvous can be saved or at least incorporated somehow into the plan.

Another "catalyst" project is the "north civic site," on the north side of the future "T" intersection of Main Street and Lyons. Ten parcels and seven owners will give way to a library or other public building. Included is the Antique Flower Shop (see feature, page 6). City officials recognize its historic importance — it was Newhall's first jail — and plan to preserve it.

The final "catalyst" project is transit-oriented housing in today's Community Center and Metrolink parking lot. Flooding issues must be resolved first, and one of the two parking structures must be in place before Metrolink will sign off.

The demolition of the Tex Williams house on Maple Street in Newhall got past the folks at City Hall. The owner pulled a remodeling permit — not a demolition permit — and remodeled it all the way to the ground.

Tex Williams was one of America's most popular Western recording artists of the 1940s-50s-60s. The demolition has moved the drafting of a historic preservation ordinance to the front burner. Ironically, it began as a goal of then-Mayor Laurene Weste in 2001; she's mayor again this year, and the ordinance is back.

With the demolition of the Tex Williams house, there seems to be heightened recognition at City Hall of the need for an ordinance to preserve Newhall's — and Santa Clarita's — most important historic treasures before they're all gone.

Stay tuned.



### TOTAL REMODEL —

Until recently, this empty lot on Maple Street was the site of the Tex Williams house. If you have a photograph of the home before it was leveled, please send it by U.S. Mail or by e-mail to the Gazette (addresses below).



## From The Mailbag.

### One Name Needed Above All On Walk.

Dear Editor:

*I enjoyed the reprinting of Gene Autry's article in your paper. It was a very interesting anecdote. I am a fan of Westerns and am well informed regarding John Ford. I believe that Mr. Ford was, and will forever be, the greatest director of Western movies. He should be on the Walk of Western Stars, period!*

**RAY ESSLER**  
Canyon Country.

### Helping To Spread Word About Artists.

Dear Editor:

*The article in the Gazette by Scott Bruckner was great to see. Thank you so much for letting the readers of this newspaper know the Santa Clarita Artists' Gallery is now located on 8th street in Old Town Newhall.*

*Our members and guests are very pleased with the new gallery and enjoy the space we have outside around the Yellow House to use for hospitality tables and exhibits under canopies.*

*The Santa Clarita Artists' Association board of di-*

*rectors looks forward to working with you in the future regarding various events and programs that are scheduled in the coming months.*

**JAYLENE ARMSTRONG,**  
Fundraising Chair,  
Santa Clarita Artists'  
Association.

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. The publisher reserves the right to edit or withhold material submitted. Send letters to the e-mail address or post office box below.

## The Gazette.

DISTRIBUTION: FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND.

Send Correspondence To:  
OLD TOWN NEWHALL USA  
Post Office Box 802993  
Santa Clarita, Ca. 91380

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PUBLISHED IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE SIGNAL NEWSPAPER.

# Values And Vision For Our Old Town.

By **PHILIP ELLIS,**  
Chairman, Newhall  
Redevelopment Committee.

**New Plan Would Guide  
Development Of Old Town's  
Northerly Gateway.**

**You Can Get Involved In  
Planning Newhall's Future.**

This is an exciting time for Newhall. The Newhall Redevelopment Committee, in partnership with the city of Santa Clarita, continues to develop and refine the plan for the future of this great community.

The level of work, cooperation and achievement in recent months is unprecedented. Together, we're crafting a vision that both reflects our current values and, at the same time, looks to the future with anticipation.

In March and April, the Newhall Redevelopment Committee participated in a Specific Plan training meeting as well as a strategic planning session. The meetings were held in conjunction with city staff and proved to be both informative and beneficial.

Here are some highlights of the meetings:

- ◆ The purpose of the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan training was to review and familiarize the committee and city staff in general with the many complex elements of the plan aimed at design and development standards.

The training itself was three hours in length and was presented by Tony Perez of Moule & Polyzoides, the firm that prepared the Specific Plan document.

- ◆ On April 3, the Newhall Redevelopment Committee collaborated with city staff and conducted a strategic planning session. The goal of the session was to identify and define crucial issues to the committee.

After considerable discussion, the following issues were identified as being the most important: the North Newhall Specific Plan; devel-



opment of a housing strategy; the future of Lyons Avenue; ongoing community preservation (code enforcement) issues; public safety; and finally, outreach and public education about Newhall.

Most notably, the committee was interested in the North Newhall Specific Plan. This new and innovative effort by the city and the community would create a plan similar to the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan. However, in this case, the area just north of Old Town Newhall would go through the specific plan process.

The area includes more than one hundred acres of vacant land that would be developed and would act as the gateway to Newhall. As always, public participation would be a key component in the plan's creation and development.

However, the work does not stop there. Through the efforts of the city's planning staff and The Master's College, it is likely that Creekview Park will be expanded and enhanced. The potential enhancement would increase the park's current acreage to include both sides of Newhall Creek.

A larger, better park, in conjunction with the new Community Center, is a testimony to how deeply the youth of Newhall are valued in the city of Santa Clarita.

As you can see, the Newhall Redevelopment Committee and its partners are working hard to ensure that the values we have today will be reflected in the future we have tomorrow and beyond.

If you would like to be a part of this exciting process, you can start by coming to a Newhall Redevelopment Committee meeting. The committee meets the first Monday of every month at 7 p.m. at City Hall, 23920 Valencia Boulevard, in the Century Conference Room. All members of the public are welcome to attend.



## MORE ROOM TO PLAY —

Creekview Park broke ground in East Newhall in August 1996 (seen here) on land owned by The Master's College. Ten years later, the park might be extended across Newhall Creek and deeded to the city of Santa Clarita as a community benefit under the college's master plan for expansion.



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## Shop In Newhall For The Freshest Produce.

Welcome springtime to Santa Clarita at the Old Town Newhall Farmers' Market on San Fernando Road between 5th and 6th Streets. It's open Thursdays from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Enjoy a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, flowers, plants, homemade tamales and children's activities. It's reminiscent of a European marketplace, and you're sure to enjoy the fresh air and fresh faire.

The fruits and vegetables you buy at the Farmers' Market are the tastiest available because they ripen in the field and are brought directly to you. No long-distance shipping, no gassing to simulate ripening, no sitting for weeks in storage.

When you shop at the Farmers' Market, you're supporting small family farmers — who are becoming increasingly rare as large agribusiness farms and ranches steadily take over food production in the United States.

You're helping the environment,

too. Food travels an average of 1,500 miles to your plate — requiring lots of gas and extra packaging. Farmers' Market produce is transported shorter distances and is grown using methods that minimize the impact on the earth.

Besides. Wouldn't you rather stroll the outdoor stalls of fresh produce on a sunny Newhall afternoon than roll a shopping cart around a grocery store with artificial lights and elevator music?

Coming to the Farmers Market makes shopping a pleasure rather than a chore. Bring the kids.



## L.A. Carpool, CONT.

FROM FRONT PAGE.

Former Geffen Records artist Frank Garcia plays guitar and writes the melody lines for the band, in conjunction with producer-creator Jack Gold.

Out front is the half-Colombian, half-Irish singer Gloria T, who belts out sweet, hot, sexy lyrics in both English and Spanish against a backdrop of Spanish harmonies and a tropical/Cubano rhythm laid down by world-famous percussionist Richie Gajate-Garcia.

L.A. Carpool was the 2004 winner of the Best Latin Album award (for "Just Plain Folks") and Best Latin Song (for "Nuyorican Blues"), as judged by a

membership of more than 25,000 from around the world (CD Baby).

Heard in the major motion picture "Narc" starring Ray Liotta and Jason Patric, the original song, "Mi Guajira," was specially redone at the music supervisor's request to have a male voice sing the song in Spanish.

L.A. Carpool has been featured in the salsa night club scene; on the CBS show "First Monday," where "Salsa Inferno" was played; and on Latv Live for KJLA, which broadcasts to 10 million bilingual households.

You can sample the sounds of L.A. Carpool online at [scvparade.com](http://scvparade.com), where you'll also find a complete listing of Santa Clarita Fourth of July activities and events.

Be sure to come to Newhall Park after the parade and give the Carpool a ride. It's like nothing you've ever heard.

# California: Where Life Imitated Art.

By PAT SALETORÉ,  
Executive Director,  
Santa Clarita Valley  
Historical Society.

**New Non-Fiction Work  
Examines How The  
Fictional 'Ramona'  
Changed California.**

California has always had a stereotypical aura. On the whole, America tends to look at California and say we are this or that — but we aren't like our neighbors in Oregon or Nevada or New Mexico. California is regularly set apart as a "different" place.

California has had a different kind of cachet at each different period of its existence. People came here because it was the "land of opportunity." It was where they found gold. It was where you went to break into the movies. It was the land of milk and honey.

California has a style unlike any other place. Why? When the Americans invaded California, why wasn't California transformed into an American place? The transformation did start ... but then it stopped.

Amazingly, the main reason it returned in style to its Spanish and native roots was a work of fiction — the 1884 novel "Ramona" by Helen Hunt Jackson.

Every once in a while a story changes history. It isn't common, but it happens. "The DaVinci Code" by Dan Brown might be hot right now, but it doesn't even approach the fervor caused by "Ramona."

I've just finished reading "Ramona Memories" by Dydia DeLyser. There are so many books written about "Ramona" that it isn't surprising that there is one more — but the focus of this book is a little different.

Yes, there is the discussion about who might have inspired the characters in the book and the places that claim to have inspired the settings. But those are incidental to the point of the book.

The point is: Jackson's "Ramona" was a defining factor in how California became the way it is today.

Jackson's purpose in



**A 1902 POSTCARD PROMOTES CAMULOS AS 'THE OLD HOME OF RAMONA.'**

writing her story was to bring to light the dishonorable way in which the United States government was treating the *Californios*, and especially the native American residents of California following its acquisition by force.

After failing to change minds in congress with her dry documentation of the abuses in "A Century of Dishonor," Jackson decided to take her case to the public with a work of fiction that she hoped would raise awareness.

As soon as it was published, "Ramona" was a phenomenon. It touched a nerve on the American scene.

But instead of popular support for improving the lot of the *Californios* and native Americans, the public was riveted by the romantic, albeit tragic, love story of the two principal characters, Ramona and Alessandro.

"Ramona Memories" details the many ways Americans went Ramona-crazy.

Tourists flocked to California to try to touch the romance described in the book. They came by train at first, going to places that were promoted as the "real" places in the book.

Camulos, ten miles west of Santa Clarita city limits along Highway 126, just past the Ventura County line (and open for visitors on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons),

was probably the hottest of those that could be reached easily by rail. The Southern Pacific Railroad created a stop there to accommodate the demand from "Ramona" readers. People overran the place, even going so far as to enter the home and see what was cooking in the kitchen!

Then, with the advent of automobiles, a new kind of tourism was born — one that wasn't tied to the railroads or their schedules. Locations competed for attention to their claims of a connection to the famous story.

People were giddy for anything with an air of "authentic" Ramona. It became the fashion for architecture to look like it had survived from before the Americans came (most buildings were actually brand new). "Spanish colonial" and "Mission" styles were the rage; they still hold a certain California-ness about them.

Towns vied for the privilege of renaming themselves "Ramona" or some other name from the book. The very fiber of the state seemed to soak up all things Ramona.

Even during the throes of the Great Depression, Robert Callahan tried to start of what may have been the first theme park: Ramona Village in Culver City. He changed the name to Mission Village after the boosters of Hemet's Ramona Pageant took exception with his attempt to produce the same

play in his venue.

Some pieces of his aborted Ramona Village survived and can be seen today at the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society's Heritage Junction in Old Town Newhall. These include the "Ramona Chapel" and "Ramona Cradle."

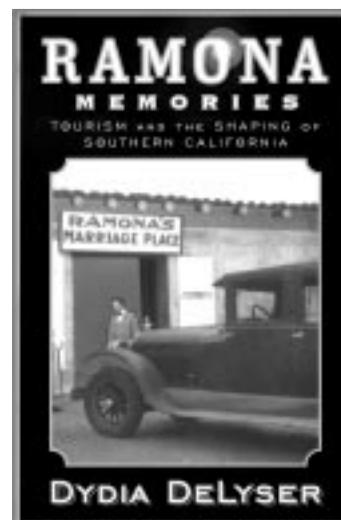
These and other mementoes were donated to the Historical Society by Callahan's widow, Marion, following his death and the closure of Callahan's Old West. The Sierra Highway location had housed his extensive collection of small buildings and memorabilia after his original Mission Village gave way to the Santa Monica Freeway in the early 1960s.

Can a work of fiction really make such profound changes to a place? Obviously it did.

The more important question is, *should* a work of fiction make such profound changes to a place?

Jackson went to her death thinking her effort to change minds about the mistreated *Californios* and native Americans had failed. She saw how people ran mad after the romance, oblivious to her point.

They didn't entirely miss the point, however. Once the mania had made the *Californios* and the native Americans seem so "romantic," it began to seem wrong that they should be badly treated. Awareness of their plight was indeed raised



**NEW BOOK EXPLORES  
THE REALITIES OF THE  
RAMONA MYTH.**

— and it can be traced directly back to "Ramona."

The movement to protect the deteriorating California missions can be attributed to the historical interest sparked by "Ramona." It can even be said that our California "style" can be found in "Ramona."

The important thing is to remember the distinction between history and fiction. There was no "real Ramona." The places we associate with the book, such as Camulos, did contribute color and depth to the story — but those characters and places were fictional contrivances.

As long as this distinction is acknowledged, fiction can be a powerful tool for awakening a love of history — which is important. As they say, "How can you know where you are going if you don't know where you've been?"

If the idea of a work of fiction that changed the way we perceive and do things interests you, read "Ramona Memories" by DeLyser (University of Minnesota Press, \$18.95 in most bookstores). But if you haven't read Jackson's "Ramona," read it first. (The entire 1884 text can be perused online at [scvhistory.com](http://scvhistory.com).)

And if you want to know more about the *real* romantic history of our valley, come and visit the SCV Historical Society at Heritage Junction, located in William S. Hart County Park. We're open Saturdays and Sundays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and can be reached at 661/254-1275 or online at [scvhs.org](http://scvhs.org).

# Now On DVD.



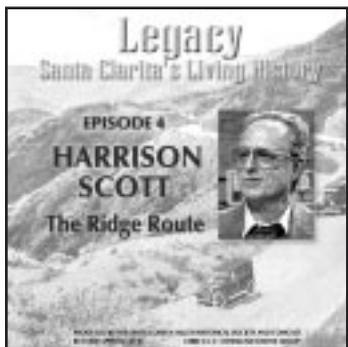
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## HISTORICAL ACTON TOUR.

Even older than the original railroad town of Newhall, Acton boasts plenty of 19th-century buildings that still stand — if you know where to look. Follow the Acton Womens Club for an informative tour that will show you where to find them. Along the way you'll visit with the owners of those old buildings, learn about the community church and trek through the historic Acton Cemetery.



## HARRISON SCOTT, RIDGE ROUTE EXPERT.

Before Interstate 5, there was Highway 99. Before Highway 99, there was the Ridge Route, an engineering marvel that wound its way along the mountaintops from Newhall to the San Joaquin Valley. Learn all about it and see photos from the collection of Harrison Scott, the historian who convinced the U.S. government to add the road to the National Register of Historic Places.

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# Bouquets Behind Bars At Antique Flower Garden.

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

**Today It's A Flower Shop.**  
**A Century Ago, It Was**  
**The Local Lockup.**

**New Owners Provide Same**  
**Great Variety And Service.**

Old Town Newhall is a hub for small business. National fast-food chain restaurants and big-box retailers are nowhere to be found. In an effort to highlight unique or new businesses, we'll spotlight one of these special and unique Newhall businesses in the Old Town Newhall Gazette each month.

This month, the spotlight is on the Antique Flower Garden at 24522 Spruce Street.

This Old Town business opened its doors in 1992. Then-owners Barbara and Thomas Tidwell chose to locate in an extremely historic location — the old Newhall Jail. The 1906 concrete building once had thick steel door coverings, windows with heavy screens, and whitewashed interior walls.

Local lore says the constable frequently played cards with town father William S. Hart and was known to sit by the pot-bellied stove and guard desperadoes. Records estimate that two hundred fifty prisoners were housed between January and October 1939.

These days, the business makes use of the original bars, cathedral windows and fourteen-foot ceilings for displays. The twelve-inch-thick cement



**READY TO MEET YOUR FLORAL NEEDS —**  
**From Left: Laurie Pridmore, Carly Doran, John French,**  
**Kiernan Donahoe, Steve Spinner, Maria Erazo, Barb**  
**DePetro, and owners Vicki and Sean Dowd.**

walls have served well to hang plants, while decorative accents and murals have been painted on over the years.

The Tidwells owned and operated the Antique Flower Garden until February. They were introduced by a mutual friend to the current owners, Vicki and Sean Dowd, last September.

Sean says he was drawn to Antique Flower Garden "because of the florists' reputation and integrity." The Dowds took over the business a week before Valentine's Day and recorded more sales than any previous year.

Along with purchasing the business, the new owners acquired the business Web site, antiqueflowergarden.net. They plan to add photos and images to showcase their newer arrangements and hopefully garner more corporate accounts.

Both Vicki and Sean have previously ventured into other small businesses. Vicki established a gift basket business for all occasions and uses that creative flair in her new floral business. While working in corporate finance, Sean also explored his entrepreneurial calling when he operated a mobile oil change business.

All employees were retained through the change in ownership. In fact, two employees, Laurie and Carly, have been with Antique Flower Garden for more than seven years.

Antique Flower Garden provides a full range of floral services and specializes in weddings. It offers on-site consultation with an expert designer and weekly flower services for many offices and homes.

Flowers are sold for all occasions, special events and holiday decorations. Also of note, the Antique Flower Garden prepares unique and special table arrangements for the city of Santa Clarita's annual Cowboy Festival, including the annual Walk of Western Stars gala at the Hyatt Valencia.

Antique Flower Garden is a member of the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce. Hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. They can be reached at 661/255-0255.

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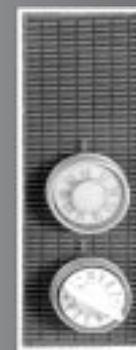
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# Four Added To Western Walk.

Four Western luminaries joined the Walk of Western Stars on April 28 when bronze "saddle plaques" were embedded into the sidewalks of Old Town Newhall in their honor.

Inducted into the Western Walk this year were a quartet of stars from the big and small screen: James Arness, Rhonda Fleming, Robert Horton and Andrew Prine. Their names can be seen on the east side of San Fernando Road in front of the parking lot (future parking structure) between 5th and 6th Streets.

Sponsored by the city of Santa Clarita and the SCV Chamber of Commerce and timed to coincide with the city's annual Cowboy Festival, the walk has honored sixty-eight Western film, stage, television and radio personalities since 1981. Bronze plaques framed by terrazzo tile line both sides of San Fernando Road and Newhall Avenue and extend along Market Street between San Fernando and Railroad.

Each year's installation is followed by a gala dinner. The 2006 gala was held at the Hyatt Valencia and included a special tribute to a 1984 inductee who died earlier this year — Dennis Weaver, who played Arness' sidekick, Chester Goode, during the first six years of "Gunsmoke." Later, in 1971, Weaver starred in Steven Spielberg's first feature film, "Duel," the story of a traveling businessman who is terrorized by a psychotic trucker on Sierra Highway.

## JAMES ARNESS.

Generations have grown up with James Arness as Marshal Matt Dillon on television's longest running series, "Gunsmoke," which used Gene Autry's Melody Ranch in Placerita Canyon for exterior locations in its initial years.

Arness was born in 1923 in Minneapolis and served in the U.S. Army. Wounded at Anzio during the invasion of Italy, he earned the Purple Heart.

Arness began his career in entertainment as a radio announcer in Minnesota in 1945. He soon moved to Los Angeles and took acting lessons. His big break came in 1947 when he landed a prime



ARNESS.

role opposite Loretta Young in "The Farmer's Daughter."

After landing the title role in the 1951 science fiction classic, "The Thing," Arness signed a contract with John Wayne's production company, Bat Jack. The Duke was instrumental in landing him his biggest break ever in 1955 as the lead in "Gunsmoke."

Arness stayed with the show for twenty years, gathering three Emmy nominations along the way. "Gunsmoke" was the longest running dramatic series ever produced and gave Arness the distinction of the longest time playing a single role. At 6-foot-7, Arness was also the tallest actor ever to play a lead role at the time.

After "Gunsmoke" wrapped in 1975, Arness starred in the television series, "How the West Was Won" (aka "The Macahans") and the short-lived "McClain's Law," and he made four "Gunsmoke" movies for television.

Throughout his career, Arness was widely recognized for his work and dedication to law enforcement. He was made an Honorary United States Marshal in recognition of his many contributions to their charitable activities over the years. He was inducted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City and received numerous Western Heritage awards.

## RHONDA FLEMING.

A native Californian, Rhonda Fleming has appeared in more than forty motion pictures, starting with top featured roles in David O. Selznick's "Spellbound," directed by Alfred Hitchcock and RKO's "Out of the Past" and "The Spiral Staircase." Fleming landed starring roles in classics such as "Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," "Gun-



FLEMING.

fight at the OK Corral," "Home Before Dark," "Pony Express," "Slightly Scarlet," "Home While the City Sleeps" and "The Big Circus."

Included in Fleming's stellar list of co-stars are Gregory Peck, Robert Mitchum, Kirk Douglas, Charlton Heston, Glenn Ford, Burt Lancaster, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Rock Hudson and Ronald Reagan — with whom she made four films.

In addition to motion pictures, Fleming made in her Broadway debut as the star of Clair Booth Luce's "The Women." She appeared as Lalume in "Kismet" and toured as Madame Dubonnet with "The Boyfriend." She made her stage musical debut in Las Vegas at the opening of the Tropicana Hotel's Showroom. Later, Fleming appeared at the Hollywood Bowl in a one-woman concert of Cole Porter and Irving Berlin compositions.

She has guest-starred on many popular television shows including "Wagon Train," "Police Woman," "Love Boat," "The Last Hours Before Morning" and "McMillan and Wife." The 1990 television production, "Waiting for the Wind," reunited her with her former co-star, Mitchum.

Fleming was a founding member of Stop Cancer with Dr. Armand Hammer in 1988. She is an ambassador of Child-help USA, a life associate of Pepperdine University, a founding member of The French Foundation for Alzheimer Research and a member of the Los Angeles Music Center's Blue Ribbon Board of Directors. In addition, Fleming created the Rhonda Fleming Mann Research Fellowship at the City of Hope to advance research and treatment associated with women's cancer.



HORTON.

## ROBERT HORTON.

Robert Horton is best remembered for his years as the hero of the top-rated television series, "Wagon Train" with Ward Bond, and he is easily recalled as the lead in "The Man Called Shenandoah" — his second successful television creation. Horton starred on Broadway in the original production of the musical, "110 in the Shade."

Graduating magna cum laude from the University of California at Los Angeles, he became an increasingly familiar face on television when he appeared on "Climax," "Studio One," "Alfred Hitchcock Presents" and "Playhouse 90." It was a performance for Hitchcock that led to Horton's regular role on "Wagon Train." Early Western film appearances include "Pony Soldier," "Apache War Smoke" and "Return of the Texan."

In developing the character of the scout Flint McCullough on "Wagon Train," he created one of the first "thinking man's cowboys." McCullough was educated, well spoken and thoughtful — without ever sacrificing the toughness expected of a wagon train scout.

Horton's female co-stars included Barbara Stanwyck, Linda Darnell, Rhonda Fleming, Felicia Farr, Susan Oliver and Nina Foch.

The musical theater has occupied much of Horton's time, including performances in "Oklahoma," "Guys and Dolls," "Carousel," "Pajama Game," "Brigadoon," "Show Boat," "Kismet," "The Music Man," "Zorba," "Man of La Mancha" and "1776." He starred in one of Great Britain's most popular television programs, "Sunday Night at the Long Palladium," which was followed by his own televis-



PRINE.

ion special, "The Robert Horton Show." In addition, he was asked to sing at a command performance for Queen Elizabeth II.

## ANDREW PRINE.

A native of a Florida farm town, Andrew Prine soared to Broadway stardom in the leading role of the Pulitzer Prize winning play, "Look Homeward Angel." His first film was the Academy Award winner, "The Miracle Worker." Prine starred in several television series, beginning with "Wide Country" and including "Have Gun, Will Travel," "Gunsmoke," "Wagon Train," "Bonanza," "Walker: Texas Ranger" and "Dr. Quinn: Medicine Woman."

Appearing in more than thirty films including "Gettysburg," "The Avenging Angel," "Chisum," "Bandolero," "Texas Across the River" and "This Savage Land," Prine has starred with Hollywood legends John Wayne, Jimmy Stewart, Dean Martin, Raquel Welch, William Holden, Anne Bancroft, Glenn Ford and Ben Johnson.

Having spent two years starring in television's "Dallas," Prine has guest-starred on numerous shows throughout the years including HBO's "Six Feet Under," "JAG," "Cybil," "L.A. Law," "In the Heat of the Night," "Murder She Wrote" and "Melrose Place." He can be seen on the Western Channel's "Conversations with Andrew Prine."

A member of the prestigious Actor's Studio, Prine continues to work in theater, appearing at the Ahmanson in "Long Day's Journey into Night" and "The Caine Mutiny." Taking the leading role in Sam Shepard's "Buried Child" at the Strasberg Institute, Prine won his second Dramalogue Critics Award for Best Actor.



### NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION —

A decorative wall is going in at Railroad Avenue and Market Street behind the Canyon Theatre Guild to shield “the stuff out back.” The Redevelopment Agency is contributing \$25,000 of the total \$192,000 cost, as it has done for storefront improvements and beautification projects throughout the Old Town in recent years.

## Especially For Seniors.

### FITNESS OVER FORTY.

Summer is coming, and “Fitness over Forty” is here to help folks get ready for the swimsuit season. Linda Bennett, a Certified Fitness Specialist, teaches EZ Dance/Low-Impact Aerobics and Pilates/Yoga Stretch to show people how to get and stay fit through exercise and proper nutrition. Classes are offered on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at the SCV Senior Center, 22900 Market Street, and on Thursday mornings at the Bouquet Canyon Senior Apartment Complex, 26705 Bouquet Canyon Road. Her associate, Bill Ramsey, a Certified Group Fitness Instructor, teaches the same classes on Tuesday mornings at the Bouquet site. Aqua aerobics are coming in June. Call the Senior Center at 661/259-9444 for times and details.

### TRIPS AND TOURS.

The SCV Senior Center Trips and Tours Department has a well-rounded schedule of trips for the second half of 2006. On calendar for May 23-25 is Yosemite National Park (\$249 single, \$169 per person double occupancy) with three days and two nights at Chukchansi Gold Hotel and Casino. On June 8 it's the Morongo Casino in Cabazon (\$20), followed June 28-29 with a two-day, one-night trip to the Edgewater Hotel and Casino in Laughlin (\$80 single, \$65 per person double occupancy). Plan now for a Ventura Harbor Fireworks Cruise on July 4 (\$50 per person), complete with harbor tour and buffet supper followed by fireworks at Channel Islands. Trips are subject to change and advance reservations are required. Call the Trips and Tours desk from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. M-F at 661/259-9444, ext. 111.

### CAREGIVER RESOURCE DAY.

The SCV Senior Center's Supportive Services Department is sponsoring a free morning symposium on Saturday, June 17, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., designed to provide assistance to the growing number of caregivers. Attendees will learn new skills to help manage the stresses and frustrations of care giving, how to reestablish control over their own lives, plan for the future, and manage difficult behaviors by loved ones. Keynote speaker is noted neurologist Dr. David Brandes. Free on-site or in-home respite care will be provided on a limited basis. Call 661/259-1588 to make arrangements.

# Downtown Newhall Specific Plan: Just The FAQs.

## From The CITY OF SANTA CLARITA.

### Answers To Your Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About The City's Plans For Old Town.

*What is the height restriction for buildings in the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan?*

It varies depending on the zone. Generally it is thirty or thirty-five feet, depending on the architectural style and development guidelines for the project. However, in some zones, the height limit may be exceeded.

*Will there be diagonal parking on Main Street (San Fernando Road)?*

Main Street will be narrowed to two lanes and have diagonal parking on both sides of the street.

*How will traffic be impacted on Railroad and Newhall Avenues?*

The Specific Plan will shift through traffic from Main Street to Railroad and Newhall Avenues. Both streets will be improved to handle additional traffic volume and provide more convenient connections to Newhall neighborhoods and to other communities in Santa Clarita.

*Will parking be removed from Railroad Avenue?*

Railroad Avenue will be designed to accommodate additional traffic flow. Some on-street parking on Railroad Avenue may be relocated to parking structures on Main Street.

*Will there be a fee to park in the proposed parking structures?*

A parking financing plan is under development. The plan will consider several options to finance the construction and maintenance of public parking structures in the Old Town Newhall area.

*What is the mercado and where will it be located?*

The Specific Plan includes a public gathering place that can host public events, small shops, restaurants, festivals, etc. A formal location for the mercado (indoor/outdoor marketplace) has not been chosen.

To maximize the mercado's effect on Main Street, the location of the mercado is flexible among three sites identified for civic buildings in the plan area.

*Why is the street network being redesigned in Old Town Newhall?*

The Specific Plan seeks to create a walkable downtown community along Main Street. San Fernando Road (Main Street) will end at Lyons Avenue and surrounding streets will be improved to better accommodate traffic flow.

The Specific Plan will add street furniture, landscaping and other enhancements that will create a community character for the Old Town Newhall area.

*What does “Park Once” garage mean?*

There are two planned garages providing the downtown with approximately eight hundred parking spaces. This would allow patrons of Old Town Newhall to visit stores, restaurants and other services without having to move their car.

*What is “transit oriented development” (TOD)?*

The Specific Plan encourages residential and other development near the Metrolink station to appeal to those wanting to live and work near mass transit.

*What is the “Creative District”?*

The Creative District (CD) zone provides the region with an environment for a mixture of creative businesses and business incubation, in addition to current light industry. The district is compatible with people seeking large-scale industrial live-work space that can serve flexibly as workshops, design or exhibition space and as a primary residence.

*Are there any historic preservation policies within the Specific Plan?*

Yes.

*What does “EIR” stand for?*

Environmental impact report. A final EIR for the project area was conducted and certified. Any project consistent with the guidelines set forth in the Specific Plan will not need further environmental analysis.

*Will there be public art in the Old Town Newhall area?*

The Specific Plan details a beautification plan for the area that includes public art that will focus on the historic, cultural, and natural character of the community.

*Will there be affordable housing in Old Town Newhall?*

Various types of development including affordable and market rate housing units will be available in the downtown area.

*What street improvements are proposed by the Specific Plan?*

Street improvements range from road realignment and intersection improvements to enhanced landscape and street furniture. The Specific Plan also includes a bike and pedestrian path along Creekview Park and Railroad Avenue.

*What is the estimated total cost for completion of the Specific Plan?*

Plans to implement the Specific Plan estimate a timeline of ten to fifteen years and approximately \$220 million to be jointly funded by private and public entities.

*Will overhead utilities be relocated underground?*

Some overhead utilities in the Old Town Newhall area will be placed in below-grade facilities to eliminate hazards and to improve aesthetics. Overhead utilities along Main Street, Lyons Avenue, Market Street, Pine Street and Newhall Avenue are planned to be relocated underground.

# Streets, CONT.

FROM FRONT PAGE.

les with people and purchases; fewer lanes of traffic; and “traffic calming” measures to slow speeds and further increase the feeling of pedestrian friendliness.

Additional landscaping, benches, attractive lighting and other public fixtures will welcome pedestrians and encourage them to spend time on Main Street.

City staff members are working with additional consultants who specialize in traffic engineering for other complementary projects.

In order to narrow San Fernando Road to create angled parking and traffic calming, the adjoining streets must be analyzed and upgraded to accommodate the heightened traffic demand for commuters. We are working with specialized professionals to determine exactly what must be done to prepare Railroad and Newhall avenues to accept the increased levels of traffic that are expected during the morning and evening “peak” periods.

While the circulation on those streets was considered during the specific planning of the area, now is the time to create interim and permanent construction plans to make these things happen.

It takes a concerted effort of many dedicated employees and talented consultants to create plans that achieve the desired end results while minimizing inconvenience to existing businesses and our commuting public.

While all of these plans and calculations are under way to provide for the safe passage of cars and pedestrians in an inviting environment, other staff members are working with developers and financial consultants to determine what changes, additions and refinements will become the most feasible options for the area while keeping within the guidelines of the specific plan.

The “creation of place” that is such an important goal of the Redevelopment Agency is expected to attract many additional shopping, dining and entertainment

choices into the downtown area. If these plans are as successful as the agency thinks they will be, you, your neighbors, your friends and your family will want to spend a lot of time in Newhall.

The more successful these projects are, the greater the need for convenient parking to accommodate the increased visitor traffic. Parking structures will be constructed to provide “Park Once” opportunities for all of us.

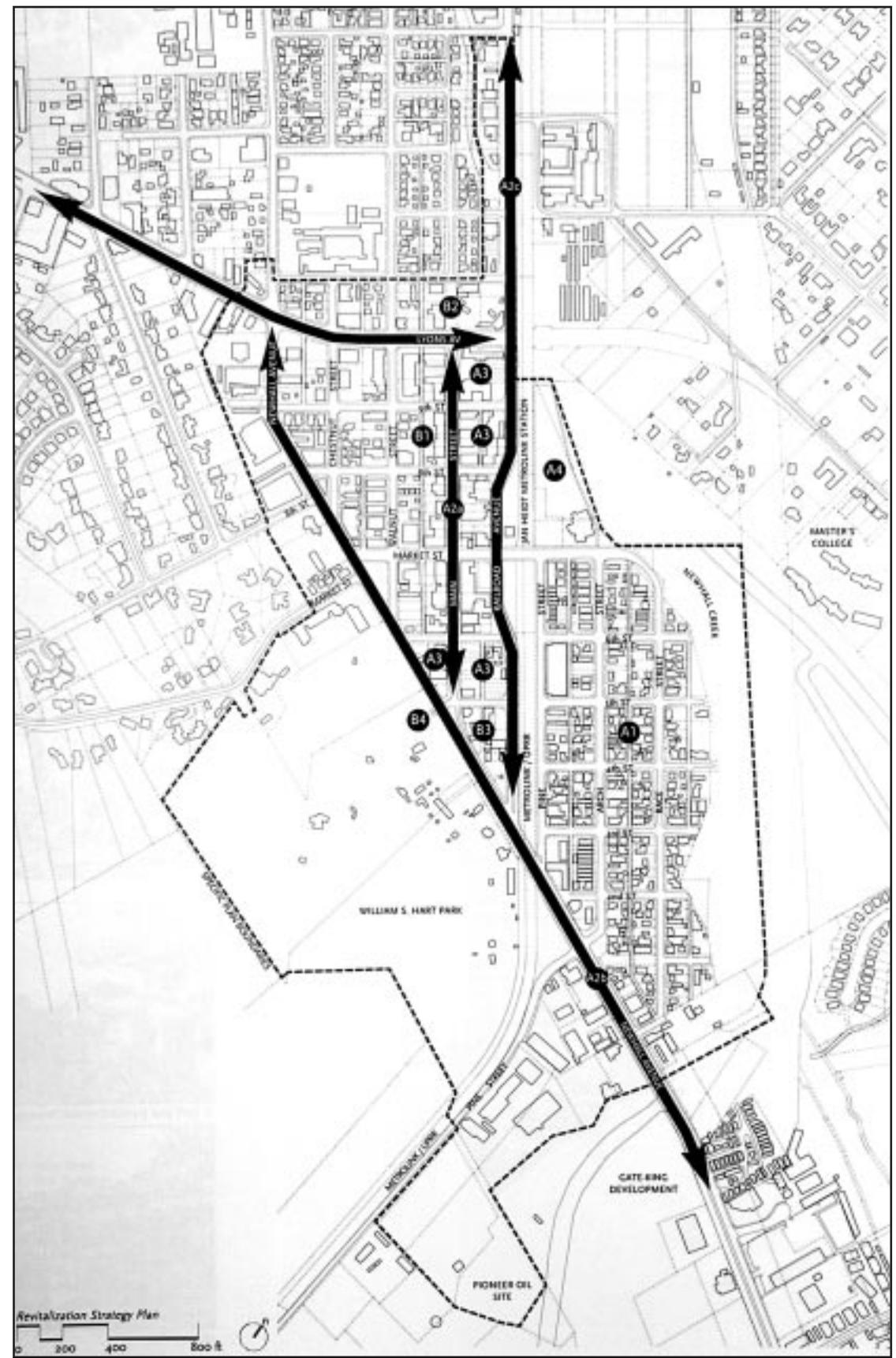
Parking structures are not new to Santa Clarita, but they are certainly a rare sight in Newhall. Staff members from the city’s Finance, Engineering, Planning, and Economic Development divisions are working with developers, builders, consultants and other professionals to create opportunities to provide for the parking needs of Old Town Newhall.

The current plan calls for the addition of more than 750 spaces, spread out over two parking structures, and the addition of angled parking on Main Street. Ultimately, some of the existing blocks along the new Main Street will have parking structures hidden by retail stores that will house some existing and some new shopping and dining opportunities.

Depending on circumstances, the proposed new parking structures may even have some residential units built into their upper floors.

Combining compact developments that contain general-use parking, retail and residential units together creates what is known as a “mixed-use” project. These mixed-use types of facilities are becoming more and more familiar and successful all over California. Municipalities are learning new ways — and re-learning old ways — of providing for the needs of increasing numbers of residents while trying to minimize the impact on our existing, overtaxed infrastructure.

The first truly mixed-use project in the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan area will be celebrated by city staff and welcomed by the neighborhood for the built-in residents who will eat, shop, live and provide a daily presence in the area that will



**RAILROAD AND NEWHALL AVENUES WILL CARRY THE COMMUTER TRAFFIC THAT CURRENTLY USES SAN FERNANDO ROAD.**

add new life to Old Town Newhall.

So stay tuned — because even though you may drive down San Fernando Road today and see the same buildings and businesses that have been there for years, much is going

on that will eventually change the way you see, think and experience Old Town Newhall.

Keep your eyes open, and in the coming months and years, you will see something you may have never seen before in the Santa

Clarita Valley — as well as some great things that have been here for a long time, but you just never noticed.

**TELL EVERYBODY WHAT YOU THINK.**  
E-mail A Letter To The Gazette: [Letters@oldtownnewhall.com](mailto:Letters@oldtownnewhall.com)

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# 2006 Concerts in the Park



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# A Summer of Tribute Bands

## Saturday Nights

July 8 - August 26 • 7 p.m. at Central Park

27150 Bouquet Canyon Road

### Queen Nation

(Queen)

We will, we will "Rock You" with the phenomenal authentic most legendary pop rock band of all time. The entire band is made up of pure Queen aficionados. This show is truly amazing.



July  
8

### Travelin Band

(Creedence Clearwater Revival)

This American rock band, blessed with its characteristic swamp sound, was considered for some time as one of the best and most successful bands during the late sixties and early seventies. Travelin Band have gone to great lengths to reproduce the excitement and sound of a long list of C.C.R. chart toppers.



July  
15

### Hotel CA

(Eagles)

Join us on a trip down a dark desert highway, feel the cool wind in your hair, and experience the Grammy award-winning sounds performed by Hotel CA one of the most sought-after tribute groups in the world.



July  
22

### Hollywood U2

(U2)

Come out with the family to see an authentic U2 concert experience. Hollywood U2 delivers the true sentiment and energy of U2's material through extremely accurate interpretation of U2's countless hits and b-sides.



July  
29

### Rob Hanna

(Rod Stewart)

Rob Hanna has been an accomplished performer and entertainer for the past 25 years, having played the musical role of Scottish rocker Rod Stewart in his "Salute To Rod Stewart." Hanna's striking resemblance to the superstar, combined with his voice, moves, and mannerisms make the illusion complete.

August  
5



### Pretzel Logic

(Steely Dan)

Pretzel Logic brings the spirit of Steely Dan alive with an array of classic hit songs that ease you into your seat, and upbeat tunes that get you dancing. Come see this amazing 11-piece band perform the incredible music of Steely Dan.

August  
12



### Natural Wonders

(Stevie Wonder)

Touched by Stevie Wonder's extraordinary talent, Steve Baldwin was diagnosed at age 12 with RP, a degenerative eye disorder led to his complete loss of vision at age 25. Steve puts his heart and soul into the music with a voice that is nothing short of sensational.

August  
19



### Spazmatics

(The Eighties)

Spazmatics is a hilariously cool, science-nerd, 80's pop, new wave dance show! Their performance includes songs by such innovative bands as Oingo Boingo, Duran Duran, Thomas Dolby, Billy Idol and more.

August  
26



Bring a blanket, chairs, and a picnic dinner to enjoy  
the concert with your Santa Clarita neighbors.

Video taping is prohibited at all concerts.

# Getting Artsy In Newhall.

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

## Old Town Is Showcase For Visual And Performing Arts.

Spring is here and art is blossoming all over Newhall. Some of the highlights: A visual arts show at the Canyon Theatre Guild, spotlighting our wonderful natural surroundings; a festival celebrating our cultural heritage; and several public art projects to beautify Old Town Newhall.

Three members of the Santa Clarita Artists' Association — Laura Wambsgans, Rod Edwards and Lorelle Miller — created thirty original oil paintings documenting the natural spaces in and around the Santa Clarita Valley. Their work was on display at the Canyon Theatre Guild from March 25 through April 30.

The project was inspired by a small book titled, "The Art of Travel," by Alain de Botton. De Botton explains that until visitors to the French countryside had viewed Vincent van Gogh's paintings of Provence, they were unable to appreciate the cypress trees, olive trees and exquisite colors of the countryside. The paintings opened their eyes, enabling them to see as the artist did.

By creating these wonderful landscape paintings, Wambsgans, Edwards and Miller compelled viewers to look again at our beautiful surroundings and to appreciate the oak trees, canyons, streams and the stunning vistas of the Santa Clarita Valley.

The 13th annual Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival celebrated our valley's Western heritage, with several components taking place in Old Town Newhall.

Newhall has a vital history in both Western film and in the cultural development of Southern California. This year's festival kicked off with Cowboy Couture, a fashion show featuring the best Western designer fashions, vintage cowboy apparel, celebrity models and a wine reception.



**LAURA WAMBSGANS SHOWS HER 'PICO CANYON.'**

Two exciting events took place at William S. Park and Heritage Junction in conjunction with the festival. The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society produced the Art of the Chuckwagon, with chuckwagon cooking demonstrations, prairie lore, music and an art show, while next door at Hart Hall, the Women Artists of the West held a reception and open mic night for cowboy poets and musicians.

Old Town Newhall also hosted the Canyon Theatre Guild production of "Oklahoma" and the unveiling of four new plaques on the Walk of Western Stars (see page 7).

William S. Hart Museum welcomed visitors to take in "An Evening with the Earps," a discussion of Wyatt Earp, his brothers and the O.K. Corral shoot-out; and an "Evening of Music with the Sons of the San Joaquin," a festival favorite. The events were held in the intimate surroundings of the mansion, home to a large collection of artwork by Charles Russell, Frederic Remington and James Montgomery Flagg.

Public art is a great way to beautify an area, and we're planning a series of fun art projects for Old Town Newhall.

Ten garbage cans along San Fernando Road will be designed by artists along two themes: the history of Santa Clarita, and the street as an art gallery. The cans will serve two purposes — one functional, and the other to enhance the visual presentation of the Old Town with lovely paintings.

The second art project will be a mural to be painted on the side of a Newhall business. Murals are a great way to showcase art. This will be the city's first mural project in Old Town, and we hope to continue the project in the future.

Finally, we'll be adding a California Bear sculpture at the Canyon Theatre Guild. The theater has purchased a bear and is currently determining the design and the artist. This will be the second California Bear sculpture in Santa Clarita; the first was installed at the new Valencia Heritage Park.

The California Bear Project is a program developed by the Arts Alliance — a forum facilitated by the city for local artists and organization representatives. The Alliance suggested the idea of doing a project of life-sized forms similar to Chicago's "Cows on Parade," New Mexico's "Trail of the Painted Ponies" and the "Community of Angels" recently presented by the city of Los Angeles.

The bear form was selected after a Cowboy Festival presentation by Signal columnist John Boston about a grizzly bear that was the largest in California history — and shot locally by Canyon Country pioneer John Lang.

Because the bear image is based on the one on the California state flag, the project has been discussed as something that could spread to other communities across the state. The project is currently being marketed throughout California.

## New Releases.

### LOCAL TEACHER PENS SECOND NOVEL.

Following her retirement from the William S. Hart Union High School District where she taught math, Judith Borden Stevens (known locally as Judy Stevens) began a second career as an author of historical fiction. Her second book, "Destiny's Daughter," captures the hearts of would-be adventurers by combining the American Dream with the construction of the transcontinental railroad.

Set in 1876, the story chronicles the travails of Tom O'Leary's children, who are left behind to tend their Kansas farm when the family patriarch goes off to join a Union Pacific construction crew.

Born in Taft, Judy (Borden) came to the Santa Clarita Valley as a child in 1945 when her father



was transferred to the Barnsdall Oil Lease on the Newhall Ranch, west of today's Interstate 5. Her father was transferred away in 1952, but Judy returned to the valley in 1957 with her husband, Jay, and their first son.

The Stevens family was instrumental in chartering St. Stephens Episcopal Church (thus the name). Judy taught mathematics in the Hart district for thirty-one years. Today, Judy and Jay live in Lucerne Valley.

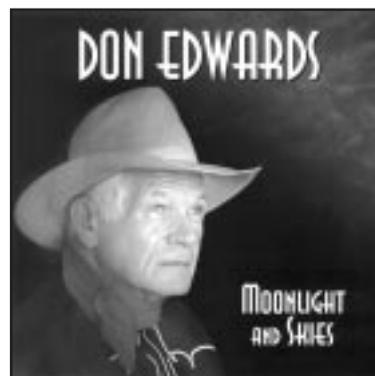
"Destiny's Daughter" is available in hardcover for \$29.95 through the Barnes & Noble Web site or directly from PublishAmerica.com (Post Office Box 151, Frederick, Maryland 21705). Add \$3.50 s/h.



**STEVENS.**

### DON EDWARDS BY MOONLIGHT.

The rich voice of Don Edwards and some of the best musical accompaniment in the cowboy genre come together on "Moonlight and Skies," a compilation of tunes you'll recognize from Don's performances at the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival.



Widely considered America's top Cowboy recording artist, the multiple award winner's newest release runs the gamut. Don leads off with lively renditions of "My Blue Heaven" and "St. Louis Blues," and he mixes it up along the way with his heartfelt "Coyotes" and a true crowd pleaser, "That's How the Yodel Was Born."

With Norman and Nancy Blake, Rich O'Brien, Cindy Cashdollar, Bob Boatright, Mark Abbot and Joey McKenzie on strings to back up Don's sweet guitar, the thirteen cuts reflect where Don Edwards is today in his musical life. As he says, there is "no message, no agenda, no nothin' — just playing music with some friends who happen to be great players as well as great people whom I love and admire."

"Moonlight and Skies" is available for \$15 (plus \$3 s/h) from the Western Jubilee Recording Company at westernjubilee.com or by mail, Post Office Box 9187, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80932.

**ADVERTISE IN THE GAZETTE.**

CALL 661/259-1234 ext. 237

# Kid From Val Verde Pursued His Dream.

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

**Retired Aerospace Engineer  
From Val Verde Looks Back  
On Barrier-Breaking Career.**

**DEVELOPED ON-BOARD  
CAMERA SYSTEM THAT SHOWED  
APOLLO 6 ROCKET SEPARATION.**

**Participated In Voter  
Registration Drive With  
Dr. Martin Luther King.**

The Rev. Dr. Martin L. King once said, "I have a dream that one day —." Long prior to his now-famous speech, I dared dream that I could become an engineer from the little town of Val Verde in the remote northeast corner of Los Angeles County.

While I recognized the social climate that existed during my high school days in the early 1950s, I had no idea that the "Jackie Robinson phenomenon" would impact the professional and technical arenas. I was told by my high school principal at the time that there were "no black engineers," and he recommended that I pursue some other trade.

But sure enough, by the time I sought employment in the aerospace industry, the doors were opening. Fueled by the cold war with the Soviet Union and our national commitment to excel, the demand for talent necessitated a broad pool of resources.

I was delighted that I had accepted the challenge in spite of the odds. It was truly a leap of faith, because no one could have predicted such a change. In fact, a reasonable betting man would have wagered against it. I was essentially told that it just didn't seem to be a reasonable expectation, and I had absolutely no basis for rejecting the notion at the time.

Divine intervention, an early experience of overcoming odds and a "no risk, no gain" attitude led me to go for it. Later, I had the pleasure of meeting some of the first black engineers who had entered the workforce just



## SEPARATION —

The author designed the on-board system that photographed the rocket stage separation on the Apollo 6 project. Coincidentally, his onetime Val Verde neighbor and fellow Hart alumnus, was the helicopter pilot who recovered the cameras from the ocean.



about the time I was finishing high school. Things had not been a bed of roses.

My former high school principal had been correct in his assessment: Blacks had been systematically excluded.

I had the privilege to discuss these issues with my former principal and, in particular, to inform him that I had not been deterred by the facts of the time.

The principal and superintendent of Hart High, George Harris — recently deceased — had a profound impact on many students, among whom I am proud to have been one.

I had the pleasure of being chosen as one of four student speakers to participate in the dedication of the Hart cafeteria in Harris' honor on his 90th birthday in 2000. In my little speech, I outlined how I learned the theme of my life — "Strive for success in spite of the odds" — from Mr. Harris.

I recognized, in more ways than one, what it meant to be the underdog, having come from the small hamlet of Val Verde and attending what was the smallest school in the region at the time. We were taught to have pride, confidence and a willingness to

compete, no matter the odds.

I knew nothing about engineering at seventeen. I remembered as a child in Texas, hearing a train conductor referred to as an "engineer," but beyond that, I had no clue.

I had no concept of the engineering involved in the many things around us — the toys we grew up with, bicycles, skates, balls and bats; the houses we lived in; or the various modes of transportation — cars, buses, trains and airplanes.

Little did I know that my career would encompass the evolution of technology, aerospace, computers, cell phones and more, which we now take for granted.

I remember seeing computers the size of a small room with air-conditioned sub floors for cooling during operation.

Since spacecraft are, by definition, payload limited, the necessity to increase performance while reducing size was an ongoing objective of the space programs. Things I read about in comic books as a kid were coming true before my eyes — and I was a part of it.

It was exciting to be a part of the Apollo program, where President Kennedy committed



## INSPIRATION —

Jacobs credits the late Hart Principal George Harris (right) with teaching him to "strive for success in spite of the odds." He thanked Harris with a plaque (above) in 2000.



the country to go to the moon and land a man safely. Buck Rogers stuff in real life.

Now that I'm ten years retired, I look back with pride at being somewhat of a pioneer after a successful forty-year aerospace career, because I experienced things that were not possible for blacks in 1963 when Dr. King first uttered, "I have a dream."

I had the privilege of participating in the voter registration drive with Dr. King in Atlanta in 1965 while I was completing the requirements definition for the camera system that would become one of my favorite projects on the Apollo program.

I spent two weeks of my summer vacation in Macon, Georgia, along with a contingent of UCLA students assisting in getting blacks registered to vote, leading up to President Johnson's signing of the voter registration legislation.

It was difficult for me to reconcile the differences between the social climate in California and Georgia, even though I had friends and relatives and had read about conditions in the South. It had been a little more than twenty years since my parents migrated (with me) from Texas in 1943 and my dad's pay increased from thirty to seventy-five cents per hour, immediately.

It seemed like the South was a hundred years behind. People were working for forty cents per hour in 1965, doing domestic work that was worth \$1.50 per hour or more in Los Angeles. I was astonished at the things I saw. It looked like another world in many ways.

In retrospect, I had not

connected the relative limitations I faced as a child. We lived in Val Verde because there were few choices of places for blacks to live between Los Angeles and Bakersfield. But the schools were integrated — which did not occur in the South until after I was out of high school.

Looking back, there is no mystery as to why I didn't know what an engineer was at age seventeen. I could barely see past the confusion and contradictions of life around me.

I had no assurance that being the best person I could be would help. But I knew it couldn't hurt.

I began my aerospace career in the summer of 1956 at Rocketdyne/North American Aviation, the foremost rocket engine manufacturing company in America, if not the world.

I went on the work at the space division in Downey on the Apollo and finished my career on the space shuttle program, which is still operational.

NAA was bought out by Rockwell International during my tenure and is now a part of Boeing, which remains one of the primary NASA contractors in aerospace.

Collaboration with a few former Hart High schoolmates prior to and after the September 2005 reunion revealed some fascinating coincidences.

I recall being surprised to find that several former schoolmates worked in aerospace during my early years at Rocketdyne in Canoga Park, and I discovered that several others had parallel careers with other aerospace firms. I learned that one worked in the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 13.**

## Ridge Route United California.



### EXPERTS TALK HISTORY —

Oldsters brought their age-appropriate roadsters to Heritage Junction Historic Park in Old Town Newhall on May 6 for a talk by Ridge Route expert Harrison Scott (inset). Built in 1915 across the San Gabriel and Tehachapi Mountains, the road facilitated vehicular travel between Los Angeles and the San Joaquin Valley.

Up next in the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society's lecture series is film historian Marc Wanamaker, who will discuss the region's rich movie-making history on August 26. For more information, visit [scvhs.org](http://scvhs.org) on the Internet or call the Historical Society at 661/254-1275.

## Jacobs, CONT.

FROM PAGE 12.

same building with me in the 1970s, yet we never ran into each other. He worked for a supervisor whose brother was then my boss. I did not know that until a few months ago.

All of this surprised me, since our school was so small and remote at the time. Now things seem much closer with the population growth, housing development and freeways.

The most surprising of all coincidences I learned September 2005 is that a former neighbor from Val Verde — John Reid, Hart Class of 1959 — whom I had not seen for fifty years — was among the first black naval aviators.

Reid was on the team that, off the coast of Florida, recovered the cameras from which the famous pictures of the Apollo 6 separation were developed.

I designed the on-board



REID AND JACOBS, 2005.

system that took those pictures. The project was requested by NASA and completed in 1965, coincidental to the civil rights trip I mentioned earlier.

NASA was unconvinced that the analytical reports confirmed adequate separation of the vehicle stages. Requirements for visual verification — proof — that the second stage interstage would jettison properly and

clear the rocket engine nozzles were satisfied with such certainty that the system was never flown again.

The pictures are the most often seen and remain the only mid-air coverage of this particular separation sequence. The video can be viewed online at [www.spacecraftfilms.com/saturnv.html](http://www.spacecraftfilms.com/saturnv.html). All other photos from the entire Apollo program were of takeoff, landing, in orbit or on the moon.

The odds were astronomical that two kids from Val Verde in the 1950s would have such a story to tell, considering the socioeconomic climate in those days, and the fact that the civil rights struggle had not been conceived — nor was there any predictable prognosis.

John Reid and I have been actively engaged in utilizing our life experiences to motivate and encourage others in our respective communities to strive for excellence, develop marketable skills, make contributions to society and become the best persons possible.

## McGrath, CONT.

FROM FRONT PAGE.

after Dr. J. Michael McGrath, the former superintendent of the Newhall District. The area surrounding the hilltop school consists of several apartment buildings and condominium sites. Nearly eighty percent of the students qualify for a free or reduced lunch.

Principal Larry Heath has been with the school since opening day. He immediately recognized the special requirements of his students and went to work designing a program to fit those needs.

Besides the extended-day program, McGrath students also follow a different school calendar. Summer school funds are used for an additional week of instructional time after winter and spring break. These intersessions are required for students who are lagging behind in grade level comprehension.

Three hours of educational time are spent each morning with all students on language arts — a big emphasis in the entire Newhall District. Heath said there are directed lessons



HEATH HAS LED McGRATH SCHOOL SINCE DAY ONE.

in writing, and the teachers check all papers for content and grammatical errors and return them to the students.

Heath is no stranger to the education field, having been in the profession for more than thirty years. He began his career in the Saugus Union School District and moved to Monterey County to accept a job as principal at the young age of twenty-nine. He returned to the

Santa Clarita Valley in 1981 as principal at Newhall Elementary School. He also spent time as a principal at Meadows and Wiley Canyon elementary schools.

His challenge at McGrath came almost immediately in the first three months, when behavioral problems led to more suspensions at the school than in the rest of the entire school district. Heath

knew he needed to get a grasp on the situation and brought in an expert from Oregon who spent two days with the entire staff at McGrath.

Administrators, teachers, yard duty, cafeteria workers and secretarial staff identified areas of problems and drew up a set of rules. Each year, everyone at the school reviews these rules, and students are taught how to follow them. Heath said that once the rules were in place, there was a fifty-percent drop in behavioral problems.

Colored lines are drawn around the exterior of the school building to identify students who walk, ride the bus or are picked up by parents.

This writer observed students leaving at the end of the day in an orderly fashion. During the lunch hour, the cafeteria was neat and orderly, and the campus was spotless.

Students eagerly surrounded Heath as he walked around the school. The principal has a friendly demeanor with his students, and although Heath does not speak Spanish, his support staff is bilingual. Heath said he doesn't have a problem communicating with the parents, and his hard-working PTA is very involved in school activities.

The students and staff also have a close relationship with members of the Child and Family Center to help with problems that arise outside of educational bounds.

An active student council meets monthly to organize fun activities and help make improvements at the school. Council President Jose Feliciano and Vice President Kiersten Schneck are working on a survey to improve cafeteria food — “a problem that is never-ending,” Heath said with a smile.

District Superintendent Marc Winger said McGrath Elementary has many challenges — a reality of the demographics at the site. He said Heath is a good leader and involves many people at the school in roles of responsibility.

“(Heath) gives everyone a piece of the pie,” Winger said. “There are a lot of really good leaders at McGrath.”

With an on-site preschool and after-school care provided by the YMCA, McGrath Elementary is meeting the needs of the families whose children attend the school.

“This is a great school, and I like all the people who work here,” Heath said.

# Let's Go To The Play In Old Town.

By **ALLISON STARR,**  
City Of Santa Clarita.

## Newhall Offers The Alternative To Greasy Popcorn And Sticky Floors.

We've all seen the preview. The dancing hot dog. The singing soda. "Let's all go to the lobby..."

There is something special about going to a movie. Whether you're on a date with that special someone or looking for an easy way to entertain the family, a night at the movies can be a great experience for young and old. But the city of Santa Clarita wants to offer an alternative to the tubs of popcorn and sticky movie theater floors.

How about trying a different kind of theater?

Old Town Newhall is home to two fantastic theaters. Each presents some of the best live shows the world of entertainment has to offer — and both for astonishingly low prices. This spring and summer, you can check out any number of live performances.

Go ahead! Try something different! Many of the plays and musicals offered are fun for the whole family.

Old Town Newhall's own

Canyon Theatre Guild Playhouse, located at 24242 San Fernando Road, will be performing two separate works beginning in June. After wrapping up an extremely successful run of "Oklahoma!" in April, the Guild presents "Arsenic and Old Lace," beginning Friday, June 2. The following day, come out to the opening showing of "The World of Beauty and the Beast," which begins Saturday, June 3. Both shows run through the end of June.

Ticket prices range from \$8 to \$17. Season tickets are also available at low prices, allowing you to enjoy performances all year long. Information can be found at [canyontheatre.org](http://canyontheatre.org).

Forget dinner and a movie. Live theater is where the action will be this season.

Just down the road from the Canyon Theatre Guild, you'll find another first-class venue offering even more entertainment in a decidedly intimate setting.

The Repertory East Playhouse will brim with excitement May 12 through June 17. Performances of the popular play, "Don't Dress For Dinner," will run each Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., or you can catch a matinee on Sundays at 2 p.m.. Tickets are only \$16 for

adults and \$14 for seniors.

This play is not recommended for children, although upcoming works will offer fun for the whole family. The Repertory East Playhouse is located at 24266 San Fernando Road.

Tickets are available online at [repeastplayhouse.org](http://repeastplayhouse.org) or from the playhouse box office. Season tickets are also available for the more avid theater-goers. Only \$90 for adults or \$75 for children and seniors will get you in the door all year 'round.

Wouldn't it be nice to remember your evening with a souvenir playbill rather than a half-eaten box of Junior Mints?

There was a time when attending the theater had the reputation as an activity solely for members of high society. Thankfully, the advent of community theater has made the arts accessible for all walks of life. Intimate local venues provide the same magic as the floorboards of Broadway and the stages of London — and all right in your own backyard.

And don't forget: These performances aren't put on by your average, run-of-the-mill dramatists. Many of the actors are your friends and neighbors. At the heart of community theater is its deep

connection with our neighborhoods.

Community theater is an exceptionally refreshing way to spend the evening, and it offers much more than sheer entertainment. Organizations such as the Canyon Theatre Guild and the Repertory East Playhouse promote awareness and appreciation of the cultural arts in Santa Clarita. They enrich the community and provide an alternative to the latest in computer-generated animation or action flicks. They also offer a forum for local performers to showcase their immense talents.

The theaters in Old Town Newhall consistently offer an exciting array of shows, put on by some of the best performers in the business. New plays and musicals are in production all year. Your patronage this season can help ensure that these fine establishments can continue to put on some of the best shows Santa Clarita has to offer.

Comedies, dramas, musicals new and old — Old Town Newhall has it all.

So the next time you're trying to figure out what to do to get out of the house, the city of Santa Clarita invites you to change your tune a little. Leave the dancing snacks in the lobby, and let's all go to the theater.



### CASTING CALL.

The Canyon Theatre Guild is preparing to recapitulate its amazing 1995 staging of "Fiddler on the Roof" and has issued a casting call.

Co-directors TimBen Boydston and Patti Finley are looking for the right men, women and children of all ages. "Fiddler" will be presented at the College of the Canyons Performing Arts Center from July 29 to August 20.

Auditions for children under eighteen will be held Saturday, May 20, from 10 a.m. to noon only. Auditions for adults eighteen and older will be held May 20 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, May 21, from noon to 4 p.m. Callbacks will be Sunday to Tuesday, May 21-23.

Auditions are also being held for "Meshuggah-Nuns," part of the zany "Nunsense" comedy series, which will run July 21 through August 27. Director Craig Duswalt is holding auditions Wednesday and Thursday, May 24-25, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

All roles in both plays require singing. For information call 661/799-2702.

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# Each Brick Tells A Story Of Heroism.

By **DARRYL MANZER,**  
Gazette Correspondent.

**Veteran Submariner Spent  
Summers In Pico Canyon  
During 1920s And 1930s.**

**OIL MAN NEVER FORGOT  
HIS SHIPMATES.**

When I first saw it, I thought it was a pretty city park. However, it has some embellishments that make it more than a typical park, such as what looks like an ordinary brick walkway around a plaza. On the inner rows of bricks are names — many names with dates of service in our country's military.

The names intrigue me: names of men and women who have served in war and in peace, some wounded and some who paid the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that our freedom is maintained.

Many folks have passed through the Santa Clarita Valley. Many were heroes, and many portrayed heroes on the silver screen. If you want to see those from the movies — at least Western movies — walk the sidewalks of San Fernando Road. Even John Wayne is recognized there.

If you want to see the names of real heroes, go to the Veterans Historical Plaza. That is the city park at the corner of Market and Walnut Streets in Old Town Newhall. It is a place of honor for us to remember the service and sacrifice that so many have given.

I had a chance to interview a hero who has passed through Newhall and the Santa Clarita Valley. It is people like him who have their names on those bricks that make the little park so special.

Veterans of World War II always seem reluctant to tell their stories. "It was just a job we had to do, and we went out and did it" is a typical comment from most of them — and that just about sums up what I heard from Churchill Campbell during my interview with him last month at his home in Camarillo.

Mr. Campbell had sent

me an e-mail telling me how much he enjoyed reading my columns about Mentryville. He had visited the old town many times between 1928 and 1932 and spent some time with the occupants of "The Big House" at the time, the Sitzman family.

We traded a number of e-mails, and because of my recent trip out west from Virginia, I was at last able to meet with him in hopes of learning more about life in Mentryville when he saw it back then.

I knew it was going to be a very special interview when I pulled into his driveway and parked behind his pickup truck. The bumper sticker states, "There are only two kinds of ships: submarines and targets."

Being an old submariner myself, I anticipated trading a few "sea stories" about our underwater life.

There were a few other bits of information I didn't expect to hear. For instance: He never heard anyone call "Mentryville" by that name when he visited there as a young man. They called it "Pico Canyon" or simply, "Pico."

What we now call "The Big House" was known as "Mr. Mentry's house." He thinks it started to be called "The Big House" because of a 1930 film of that name starring Wallace Beery. He remembers Beery and Marie Dressler making a movie there.

He also watched them film the movie, "The Dawn Patrol" (1930 version) in the fields where Wal-Mart is located today at the mouth of Pico Canyon. Wow! Right in the middle of what is now a shopping center.

Graduating from California State University Berkeley in 1938, Mr. Campbell worked in the various oil fields of California — including the Santa Clarita Valley — and then Alaska. He said he comes from an "oil field" family. His father was a machinist who made and sold "fishing tools" for the oil drillers.

"If something got stuck down a well, my father would make a tool that would help them retrieve it and be able to continue drilling," he said.

It was his father's trips



to Newhall that got him to Mentryville, spending some wonderful summers there.

It was also a time of sadness for the Campbell family. Churchill's Aunt Vera was killed in the St. Francis Dam Disaster of March 1928.

Churchill Campbell joined the Navy at the beginning of World War II and volunteered for submarine duty.

Did you know the Submarine Service had the highest casualty rate of all during that war? More than fifty-five percent of all Japanese ships sunk during the war were sunk by submarines.

Making up 1.6 percent of the Navy during the war, fifty-two submarines are still on "eternal patrol," having never returned from sea. Most were lost with all hands. (More than 3,600 men still serve on "eternal patrol.") Newhall's little park would scarcely have room if a brick were inscribed with each of those names.

Mr. Campbell almost didn't make it into the Submarine Service. During a routine physical, a corpsman punctured one of Campbell's eardrums and he was unable to complete training until it healed.

While waiting, he was assigned to the USS S-48, a training submarine at the Naval Submarine Base at New London, Connecticut. Being on that training boat for so long let him see the mistakes of others and hone his skills as an officer aboard a submarine. It was training that would serve him well for

the rest of the war.

Finally healed, "Church" was assigned to the brand-new USS Parche (SS-384) as it was commissioned in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1943. He was the communications officer of the new boat under one of the greatest captains ever to serve in the Navy, Commander Lawson P. "Red" Ramage.

It was Commander "Red" Ramage who was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions on the second — of seven — war patrols of USS Parche.

At the same time, Church was awarded his first Silver Star. He earned another while still on the same boat.

Church almost didn't stay with the Parche. He was due to transfer after its third war patrol to USS Snook (SS-270). The commanding officer of Parche didn't approve the transfer and Church stayed on board.

It was a good move for him. Snook was lost on its next patrol.

After the war, Church returned to civilian life and went back to the oil fields as an engineer. Of course he passed through the Santa Clarita Valley many times following the war. He did find time to earn graduate degrees at Northwestern and Purdue Universities and followed that with certification as a professional engineer in both mechanical and electrical engineering.

You can thank him for the gasoline you put in your car today. He was the production and services superin-

endent in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, when that oil field was opened.

In retirement, he has not forgotten his shipmates. But it was his wife, Mary, who conceived of placing a plaque to the USS Parche at Pearl Harbor. It is in commemoration of all the men who served on Parche during the war. You can see it on your next visit to Hawaii at the Bowfin Submarine Memorial, which is located where you get on the boats to go to the Arizona Memorial.

The interview continued into a sharing of "sea stories" into which all sailors are prone to digress. I told him of my seven Polaris submarine patrols where the food was good and plentiful. He said the food was good on Parche until the first depth-charge attack.

Besides a lot of broken light bulbs, the next damage was usually to the refrigeration plant that kept the freezer and chill box on line. They would eat well until the food started to rot, and then it was Spam and powdered eggs for the rest of the patrol.

The bricks with names in the Veterans Historical Plaza don't begin to tell the stories behind them. As I stood looking at those bricks, I could only think of the sacrifice that so many have given to our county.

Each one tells a story. Each one represents an individual who was willing to do whatever was necessary to preserve our way of life. I stood in awe of all those names.

So the next time you're in Old Town Newhall and looking down at the Walk of Western Stars plaques in the sidewalk, take a moment to walk over and see the bricks at the Veterans Historical Plaza. Pray for those there, and for those still serving for our country all over the world.

Thank God for the service and sacrifice they endured so that you can "just walk there."

*To purchase a brick or to make a donation, call the Veterans Memorial Committee at 661/251-7870.*

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