



Fighting Fires, Tackling Homelessness, Saving Lives

Do firefighters fight fires? Obviously, but most of the time fire is not what calls them to action. - SEE PAGE 6



Rattlesnake Season is here!

To many of us, rattlesnakes are evil assailants lying in wait for their prey. - SEE PAGE 7

FREE!

THE PAPER

THE VOICE OF THE FOOTHILLS

FRIDAY JULY 16, 2021

TELLING THE TRUTH FOR OVER 16 YEARS

VOLUME 17 • NUMBER 13



Photo by David "Doc" DeMulle'.

It's Wildfire Season: Are YOU Ready?

By Dr. David DeMullé

Wildfire season is something that happens every year, and every homeowner who lives in wildlands area that is vulnerable to high winds, needs to thoroughly prepare for the possibility that one of these fierce firestorms will occur in our community and put homes and possessions in danger of destruction or severe damage.

One of the first steps to take in creating a "disaster plan" is to sit down and review what is covered and what is excluded in the homeowner's home insurance benefits. Nothing can be more devastating than finding out after the fact that what was assumed was covered is not. There are several major home insurance risks that can be minimized with a little advance work.

First, most home insurance does not cover flood damage. So if you're in a burnt out area such as La Paloma or Vogel Flats, subject to flooding, purchasing additional flood coverage is vital. There is a waiting period from the purchase of the policy before flood coverage takes effect, another reason why advance planning is important. Additionally, in some areas of the country that are exposed to Santa Ana winds, standard homeowner's insurance does not cover wind damage, which requires a supplemental policy in order to be sufficiently insured.

Filling this coverage gap is a crucial step towards lessening a homeowner's risk of uncovered loss. ■

That Old Sew-And-Sew Down The Street

By Dr. David DeMullé

Kathy Anthony of Kathy's Kreations is a 60-year resident of Sunland and showed an interest in sewing at a very early age. As a child she remembers that one of her favorite pastimes was watching a neighbor sew.

At the age of ten she bought her first sewing machine, an old tread-mill type that for us "old" folk was a fun thing to play with as we were growing up. One of the first things she remembers sewing was a blue shirt for and a friend. At that time she had little knowledge of tailoring, and had no idea that the shirts needed a kick pleat. As a result the shirt ripped when the girls climbed up the stairs, and they were sent home to change. This may have



Kathy can do almost every kind of tailoring or repair!

been a minor set-back, but certainly didn't stop Kathy from continuing her sewing.

After she had children of her own, she used to make all of their clothes, with children and

her love of sewing, her days were filled.

Please see **That Old Sew-And-Sew Down The Street** on Page 5

Can't reach EDD about your unemployment benefits? Call your elected state rep

By Carolyn Said

Underscoring how hard it is to reach the California agency responsible for unemployment benefits, the state Assembly authorized its 80 members to add two full-time staff members dedicated to helping constituents communicate with the Employment Development Department, following a similar move by the state Senate a few months ago.

EDD has struggled to deal with the hundreds of thousands of people who lost their jobs in the pandemic. Many thousands of them report on social media and elsewhere that they cannot reach the beleaguered agency, and their benefits were cut off or never started. The state auditor has issued scathing reports on EDD, and elected officials have held hearings and proposed bills to reform it. The agency has hired thousands of workers to answer phones, but says that training them to handle com-



plex cases takes months.

Please see **Can't reach EDD about your unemployment benefits?** on Page 4

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COMMUNITY NEWS

From our Councilwoman Monica Rodríguez

This year, I secured \$26 million in capital and public service investments for our community. Here are some highlights of the investments we are making in the Seventh District:

- \$2.35 million for North Valley City Hall Renovation Secured the second and final phase of funding to renovate

North Valley City Hall, a hub for constituent services and community events in the Sunland-Tujunga neighborhood. The improvements include facade restorations, enhancements to the community room, security upgrades, and a revamp of the public space.

- \$1 million for Workforce Development Secured funding to restore training at the WorkSource Center in Pacoima, which provides career guidance and job placement assistance for individuals throughout the Seventh District.

- \$450,000 for Homeless Resource Hub Secured funding through the State's Homeless Emergency Aid Program to establish a one stop shop for homeless services with LAUSD and North Valley Caring Services. The hub provides in-house case managers, housing navigation services, shower services, and child care.

- \$4 million for Districtwide Traffic Safety Secured funding for LA Department of Transportation engineering projects throughout the Seventh District, including traffic signals, left-turn phasing traffic



lights, pedestrian/emergency hybrid beacons, speed feedback signs, sidewalks, and bus stop relocations.

- \$500,000 for Districtwide Graffiti Abatement Mural Program Secured funding to work with local muralists to design and install murals in areas that suffer from tagging and blight.

- \$450,000 for the Facade Improvement Program Partnered with the County to implement a facade improvement grant program for local businesses on Van Nuys Blvd.

- \$900,000 for Bridge over the Pacoima Wash at Telfair Avenue

- \$75,000 for a 4th of July Fireworks Festival Allocated funding to plan a celebration at Hansen Dam next year.

Los Angeles, CA - Today,

the Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously to approve an ordinance based on Councilwoman Monica Rodríguez's motion enabling City agencies to recover costs associated with utility disconnection or other enforcement actions taken to shut down unlicensed cannabis businesses.

"This is a very important and no nonsense enforcement tool that will be crucial in tackling the spread of illegal cannabis operators

in our communities," said Councilwoman Monica Rodríguez, Chair of the City's Public Safety Committee. "Property owners responsible for harboring unlicensed cannabis businesses must be held accountable for their role in undermining our legal system. They should be held responsible for the full costs of public safety enforcement efforts."

The City currently assesses property owners and businesses for the costs of other specialized public safety enforcement efforts, such as brush fire hazard abatement. Unlicensed cannabis businesses pose similar threats to public safety. When illegal cannabis businesses are

closed, they often reopen in the same location with different operators, often by affiliates of the same business, and different storefront names. The full costs of enforcement include materials used to secure facilities, staff hours generated by those engaged in enforcement, and other operational costs.

"The Department of Cannabis Regulation (DCR) applauds the leadership of Councilmember Monica Rodríguez and the City Council for passing this ordinance," said Cat Packer, Executive Director of DCR. "The City is working together with all Departments to support legal and licensed cannabis businesses and establishments. We ask the public to continue to visit legal establishments and to lodge complaints about any unlawful cannabis activity using the DCR's complaint portal at canabis.lacity.org. We want to protect the safety of Angelenos and penalize businesses that drain resources and revenue from the City of Los Angeles."

Today's ordinance allows the City to pursue full cost recovery from those who lease their property to unlicensed cannabis businesses. ■

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Xena Stanton of Sunland, CA to Attend Clarkson University

POTSDAM, NY (07/06/2021)-- Xena Stanton of Sunland, CA will attend Clarkson University in Potsdam, N.Y., as a member of the Class of 2025. Stanton, who will be majoring in Mechanical Engineering, will begin studying at Clarkson in the fall.

"We look forward to having Xena join us on campus in August," said Vice President for Enrollment & Student Advancement Brian T. Grant.

High school students can schedule a personalized visit to Clarkson, which includes things like a campus tour tailored to their interests and a visit with an

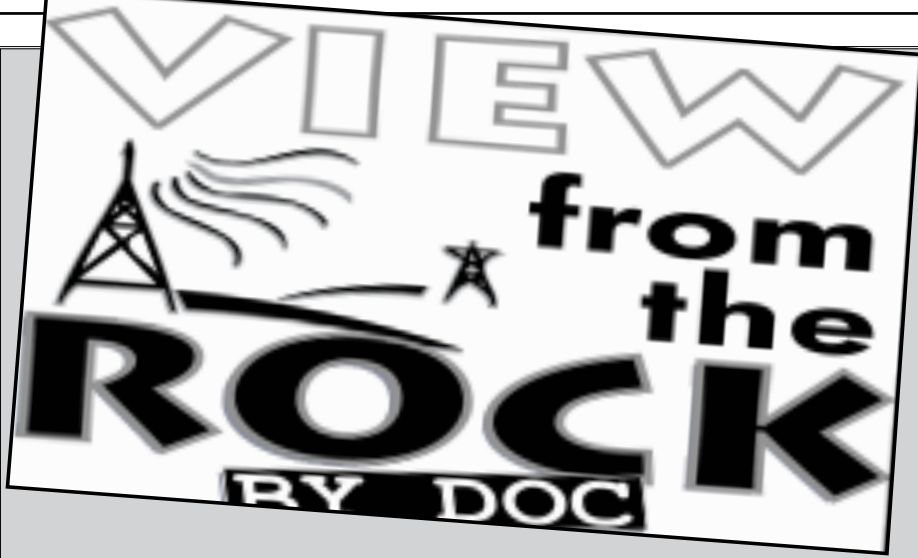
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Discovery Cube Los Angeles (DCLA) - Receives \$2.6 million - to allow them to reopen in a safe and secure manner.

DCLA is a children's museum located in the heavily urbanized San Fernando Valley. It features interactive science exhibits for all ages. Due to the impact of the pandemic and the current State of Emergency, DCLA has been closed since March 2020. There are significant operational costs that DCLA must incur to reopen, including rehiring and training staff, and increasing health and safety measures in the museum. Since DCLA has had no forms of revenue for the past year, the opening expenditures would drain all current reserves, thus leaving no room to operate going forward. ■



This is a great old town that is going through some major changes. People here are different from those who we grew up with - but nothing has really changed, just the way they spell their names. We all are working together to survive. This last 18 months has been particularly hard on us as well as the world. This Pandemic is something that no one ever saw coming, thought of or conceived, and then bang! It was here.

And then there was the DENIAL. Now there's a word that almost all of us now understand. This has been a period of time when people really exercised their rights. People actually began to understand what the first and second amendments to the constitution meant. It was with bitter-sweet feelings that I watched our community get out and demonstrate for what they believed in. Trumpsters and Berners both were out in force making sure people knew what they stood for.

What made it interesting to me was the amount of "Oldsters" that took to the streets with flags and banners and pamphlets. What a sight that was. Actually, I never saw the community so bonded in their beliefs to make change.

It was almost like the US Civil War where families were divided by their beliefs of what their country should be. AND THEN CAME THE PANDEMIC! Once again people had their different beliefs, but they weren't fighting each other, they were in actual dialog about what was right for themselves and the community. Should they wear masks, should they stay home, should they get their vaccinations?

Like an amoeba, they would flow together and split into opposite factions, all based on what they believed. Yet they were still one. I watched as our elected councilwoman waffled in her support of S-T over the rest of her district. And I

watched in disbelief as people ran around yelling "Defund The Police!" as crime rates began to rise. Boy, talk about a bunch of misguided people, but they were our neighbors.

Running a newspaper gives you a different perspective. Most people get their news from watching television, but I look at the world with tunnel vision, the vision of what is going on from people calling in and saying "COME HERE-NOW!" Politics have died down, we lost about 1/3 of our local businesses, we have vacant buildings where thriving businesses used to be, and the houseless have been active in setting fires and making themselves socially visible here.

We have made great technical advances with people being forced to use computers to work from home, see their doctors and participate in community meetings like the Neighborhood Council and Neighborhood Watch using their computers. And we've survived. There are two major social centers set up specifically to give kids something to do and build their confidence, The Sunland Fight Club and the Commerce Jump Club. Our neighbor Hovic (Who ran for council representative) had a dream of creating places that families could go and have fun with their kids - until the Pandemic stopped them. But their coming back.

Our local barbershops moved into spare rooms in houses to keep people looking good and bring in an income. Car washes have opened hoping that people will feel better with clean cars to ride in. Yes boys & girls, we are resilient, and we're coming back. I don't know if the Pandemic has made us stronger, but it has brought us together with a common goal of saving our community. That's what has made us SUNLAND-TUJUNGA TOUGH! And yes, it probably was the water!■



Take a Vacation From Facebook

You know you have a Facebook addiction when your "friends" include the parents of the kids you used to know in preschool. You know who you are.

You may have sent them a so-called "friend request," but in reality, they are a notch on your Facebook belt. Have you ever noticed that when your list of Facebook "friends" started growing, your real-life friends started dwindling? No? That's because you are a Facebook junkie! You wouldn't notice if your house was on fire!

When it is an imposition to talk to your mother on the phone, because you have blocked her from seeing your Facebook page, you have a problem. Believe it or not, the phone is still a viable option for communication. Face-to-face is even better. And, real-ly? You defriended your mom?

Does it make sense to post a provocative comment and then check your Facebook page 146 times a day to find out if any of your "friends" bit? Why don't you take 5 minutes out of your obviously nonexistent life to call them and have that conversation?

I used to have a Facebook page. Yes, I lived that insanity for a short time. However, there came a time when I realized that I didn't have time to let everyone know how I was feeling or what I was doing every few minutes. I didn't have time to commiserate with all of those people who wrote stupid things like "Life sucks!" or "Having a bad day..." To be perfectly honest, I don't relate to people who feel the need to dump on every single person they know with their "bad day." I always feel compelled to ask "Compared to... what?" And apparently, that response is not politically correct.

Speaking of politically correct, when did it become socially acceptable to talk about politics and religion in mixed company at 30-minute intervals? By mixed company, I mean everyone you know and possibly everyone they know. Sane people know that speaking about either of these highly charged subjects in a room full of unrelated people is uncouth, and will invariably lead to broken friendships, anger and general chaos. And yet the Face-book

pages of the world are full of it. By full of it, I mean the stuff that sits at the bottom of your great-granddad's outhouse.

Don't you dare cite First Amendment rights! Nobody wants to see your views on these two subjects on their personal page any more than you want to see theirs. It's like having a political candidate or Jehovah's Witness ring your doorbell every half-hour. It is unwanted. Some may say, "Well, don't answer the door." But that doesn't make it any less annoying. My personal solution to these onslaughts was the equivalent of not having a "house" thereby ensuring no "doorbell ringing."

Perhaps, before Facebook, the major deterrent was in knowing that you were sure to get popped in the nose if you incessantly aired your views in mixed company. Now the only deterrent is being "defriended." Maybe that's why you defriended your mom? Who cares? You still have 311 more friends!

Have you ever thought about the "real" relationships you are hurting by broadcasting your every thought onto a global bulletin board? It's as if everyone has a rare form of Tourette's Syndrome! It's only symptomatic when you post to Facebook! You would never say certain things to some of your friends in person. Facebook gives you some kind of deceptive immunity where you think you can safely say anything you want to everyone you know because you think there are no consequences.

The time you spend on Facebook, posting and reposting every unoriginal thought that comes your way, could be better spent nurturing those few real friendships and relationships that are your true support.

Inspiration doesn't come in 10-second sound bites, or 150 characters. Inspiration comes from a true connection of spirit that you can read in someone's eyes and feel in their touch.

Rather than the tired cliches you insist on reposting "so all your friends can benefit," try taking a walk with someone you love, giving a hug to a neglected child, shaking the hand of someone you admire, or calling a relative who is far away just to say "hello." That is inspiration. That is truth. That is life.■

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Can't reach EDD about your unemployment benefits?
continued from page 1

State senators and assembly members have already become one of the few ways that unemployed people can get through to EDD. Their offices universally say they already devote untold staff time to helping desperate constituents seek their benefits. The lawmakers' offices have regular calls with EDD to bring up cases. Meanwhile, some unemployed people have resorted to hiring go-betweens to try to reach the agency.

Assembly officials confirmed that each Assembly office can hire two temporary workers to work on EDD cases for up to four months with salaries paid out of existing operating funds, a move first reported by the Sacramento Bee.

"EDD continues to be a challenge," said Assembly Member David Chiu, D-San Francisco, in a statement. His office said the extra staff had been a big help. "Work is being done to reform the department and improve performance, but we still have a real backlog of Californians waiting to receive the benefits they are entitled to."

EDD data shows its backlog of claims waiting more than 21 days for action now stands at 215,601.

"While we continue to coordinate with legislative offices to help them resolve issues they are hearing from their constituents, we are already of-

ten working on such claims with the information provided by claimants directly to EDD," the agency said in an email, adding that it plans new automation features to help to resolve issues more quickly.

The agency received 3,025,060 calls for the week ended June 26, according to its data dashboard. Of those, 264,820 were from unique callers, who each called an average of 11.4 times. It answered 242,235 calls, meaning that more than 22,000 people, or 8.5% of unique callers, could not reach a live person.

State Sen. Josh Becker, D-Menlo Park, said the real game-changer in interacting with EDD is that the agency now has dedicated a full-time liaison to work with his office. Chiu's office likewise said they now have a full-time liaison at EDD. The agency did not respond to questions about whether it now has liaisons for each assembly member and senator.

"We've cleared almost 500 cases, but still have several hundred more out there," Becker said. "Most of our district staff is already working on it, but it's certainly helpful to get one more person."

But overall, Becker said, lawmakers should not have had to step up to help Californians interact with a state agency. "Hopefully this won't happen again," he said. "We're working to make sure EDD has the right technology, has enough representatives, and is training its reps more quickly." ■

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**That Old Sew-And-Sew Down
The Street**
continued from page 1

As her children became teenagers, and she found herself needing something to do to occupy the free time, she went looking for a job. In fact she tried several jobs, she tried working as a waitress, a secretary, and various other jobs. Kathy never felt she was any good at these things, and always felt there was something lacking in these professions.

Being an independent person Kathy realized that she needed a job that was something special, and she turned to the gift God had given her, the ability to sew. This ability must have come from the heavens because according to Kathy, she never had a lesson, she just seemed to know what to do – and often wondered just how she did know.

So this is how 47 years ago, “Kathy’s Kreations” was born. She started her business with only a domestic sewing machine. This marked the end of a hobby and the beginning of a career.

Kathy’s Kreations offers all types of sewing, from replacing zippers, sewing Levi patches, suits, formals, custom dresses and costumes. Throughout the year she does alterations, repairs and tailoring. As

more and more customers asked Kathy to create costumes during the summer months when business was slow, a new facet to her business began.

She now creates and sews according to her customers requirements with everything being made in her shop to fit everyone from infants to grandmothers. “Being a mom and pop shop, you learn to be versatile,” says Kathy proudly. Kathy feels that she has made a decent living, made a lot of friends, and that her chosen profession has allowed her to raise her family. Her son Art, who now runs the Crows Nest and her daughter Diana, have given her a total of five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Kathy’s business has allowed her to be active in the community, serving as past Chamber of Commerce President, being active with the Elks Lodge and serving as a past-president of the American Legion Auxiliary has provided a lot of fun and service to the community.

All in all, this local “Sew & Sew” has had a full life and is looking forward to many more years of friendship with her many friends and customers.

Kathy’s Kreations, located at 8241 Foothill Blvd. in Sunland, is open five days a week. The phone number is (818) 353-5416 and it’s recommended that you call for an appointment. ■

*For additional recipes,
see Chef Randy’s website at
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ASK RUSTY

By AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor Russell Gloor, Association of Mature American Citizens.



Social Security Matters

“Ask Rusty – When Should I Claim My Survivor Benefit?”

Dear Rusty: My wife passed away in 2014. I’m 60 years old and have been retired since August 2020. I know I’m entitled to survivor benefits, but my question relates to when to file for them. To say the information online is confusing is an understatement. Some background. My wife was born in 1960 and would have turned 62 next year. I was born in 1960 and turned 60 this past April. I do not plan on taking my SS until age 67 (I could wait until age 70 if it is more beneficial). I have not remarried. When should I file for survivor benefits to maximize the benefit? Signed: Surviving Husband

Dear Surviving Husband: Survivor benefits reach maximum when you reach your full retirement age (67), but you can claim a reduced survivor benefit as early as age 60. The amount of your survivor benefit will be determined by a) the benefit your wife had earned up to the month she passed, and b) your age when you claim the survivor benefit. At age 67 you would get 100% of the amount your wife was entitled to when she passed; if you claim at

age 60 you would only get 71.5% of the benefit amount your wife had earned up to her death. The reduction may, or may not be, acceptable to you depending on your personal circumstances.

First, you should be aware that if you claim your survivor benefit before your full retirement age (FRA) and return to work, you’ll be subject to Social Security’s earnings test which limits how much you can earn before SS takes away some of your benefits. The earnings limit for 2021 is \$18,960 (changes annually) and if that is exceeded SS will take back benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. The earnings limit applies until you reach your full retirement age, although the limit is much higher and the penalty less severe in the year you attain FRA. If your earnings prior to your FRA are high enough, it could disqualify you from receiving a survivor benefit. Of course, if you are not working and do not plan to return to work, the earnings test is not a concern.

Assuming you are fully retired

from working, here are some things to consider:

- Claiming your survivor benefit now at age 60 would permit you to receive 71.5% of the survivor benefit for at least 7 years (until you reach your FRA), or perhaps longer until you are 70. Although the survivor benefit would be reduced, claiming it at age 60 would also permit you to delay taking your own Social Security benefit until age 70 when your personal benefit would be 24% more than it will be at your FRA. The above would be prudent if your age 70 (or 67) benefit amount will be higher than the survivor benefit you would be entitled to at your full retirement age.

- If your survivor benefit at your FRA would be more than your own benefit will be at age 70, then it would be wisest to maximize your survivor benefit. To maximize your survivor benefit you must wait until age 67 (your FRA) to claim it. If your full survivor benefit will be the highest you can get, then maximizing it by waiting until your FRA to claim it is your smartest move.

So, as you can see, you have a

choice of when to claim your survivor benefit. If your personal benefit at age 70 would be higher, it would be wise to claim your survivor benefit first (at age 60) and collect the reduced survivor benefit until you later switch to your own higher benefit. But if your survivor benefit at maximum would be more than your age 70 benefit, then waiting until your full retirement age of 67 to claim your survivor benefit would be your best choice.

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Fighting Fires, Tackling Homelessness, Saving Lives

The role of fire departments in 21st-century urban centers.

Do firefighters fight fires? Obviously, but most of the time fire is not what calls them to action.

It’s been nearly 130 years since the Santa Monica Fire Department (SMFD) was formed, and since then, many changes have occurred within

the department including the way firefighters are trained to the kinds of calls they respond to. In a City Council meeting on January 22, Santa

Monica City Manager Rick Cole, while speaking about the city’s financial future, addressed the shift in the type of emergencies firefighters respond to on a daily basis.

“100 years ago, when a city our size would have 1,000 fires a year, you’d have a department that was exclusively devoted to fighting fires. Now our fire department spends less than one percent of their time fighting fires,” Cole said. “99 percent of their time is on emergency medical and 25 percent of their time is on dealing with homelessness.”

The Santa Monica Mirror

reached out to Cole to expand on this topic. According to Cole, around .06 percent of the calls to service the SMFD gets in a year are for structure fires.

“We average one or two structure fires a week in Santa Monica, yet the Fire Department responds to over 17,000 emergency calls a year. Many of these calls, about 20-25 percent of our 911 call volume, are about people experiencing homelessness.

Please see **Fighting Fires, Tackling Homelessness** on Page 8



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RATTLESNAKE SEASON IS HERE!

By Tom Stienstra

To many of us, rattlesnakes carry a reputation as evil assailants lying in wait for their target, fangs at the ready. But in reality, snakebites occur most frequently when people (and dogs) surprise rattlers while hiking, running or scrambling over rock scree.

Rattlesnakes range across the Sacramento Valley and Sierra foothills but are also present in Bay Area outdoor destinations and parks. They are commonly found at Mount Diablo as well as Claremont Canyon in Oakland and elsewhere in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. In June, East Bay Regional Park District posted a rattlesnake advisory for its 73 parks and 1,250 miles of trails.

The best advice when tooling around Northern California this summer is the simplest: Be aware while on the trail or in the backcountry, and watch where you step. Rattlesnakes are part of nature. When you spot one, keep your distance. Don't approach it. Don't provoke it. Divert around it. A rattlesnake will not chase you.

Encounters in Northern California often peak in late May, according to the EBRPD. But this year's cold, wet spring could push that peak period later into summer.

Those spring rains can lead to more rattlesnake activity this time of year. High soil moisture can help reproductive success for rodents, including mice, gophers and ground squirrels — rattlesnakes' main food sources. In



turn, rattlers' reproduction also peaks in spring, when a female rattlesnake can produce about 10 infants.

Here's what you need to know going into summer to prepare for, and hopefully avoid, a rattlesnake encounter.

When and where rattlesnakes are active: As cold-blooded reptiles, rattlesnakes often emerge after cool nights to the warming service roads and trails at parks to soak in the heat. Timing is key. Rattlesnakes are most active when temperatures are between 75 and 85 degrees, and during dusk and dawn, according to the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Rattlesnakes often stay within a one-mile radius of their birthplaces for their entire lives, which can span 15 to 20 years, according to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. That means parks

or trails where rattlesnakes have been sighted at any time provide likely habitat in the future.

In 2018, rattlesnake bites were reported at Lime Ridge Open Space near Walnut Creek, on a trail on Mount Tamalpais in Marin and at the College of Marin Indian Valley campus in Novato, among other Bay Area outdoor areas. (There is no central repository of snakebite statistics, so keeping track of total rattlesnake bites statewide is difficult.)

In recent years, field scouts have reported rattlesnakes throughout the region: Barbara Gately reported that a friend's dog was bitten (and recovered) on the Yolanda Trail near Phoenix Lake in Marin; Michael Rudy saw three rattlers on four hikes at Mount Diablo; Mike Rudy encountered two rattlesnakes, each with nine rattles, in 90 minutes at Diablo Foothills;

Wild Horse Valley in Foothills Park in Palo Alto has been the site of encounters for years; in the Marin Headlands, Tera Killip sighted a rattler on the paved path between the fork with Wolf Ridge and the entrance to Hill 88 above Bolinas Lagoon.

One of the wildest stories came from Chronicle photographer Paul Chinn and field scout Bart Selby at Edgewood County Park on the Peninsula. Chinn said they almost stepped on two mating rattlesnakes that were intertwined like a bramble on a rose stem.

Though snakes are rare in snow country, one of the most prolific rattlesnake areas in California is the lower reaches of Rattlesnake Creek, a tributary canyon to the Kern River in Sequoia National Park (Tulare County). The canyon feeds down from the Great Western Divide to the Kern and provides a near 100% chance to see a rattlesnake along the trail, as we always have.

How to avoid getting bitten: Avoid wearing sandals or flip-flops in brushy, wild areas. Don't step or put your hands anywhere that you can't see. Step on logs and rocks, not over them.

Be especially careful gathering firewood or sitting on a stump or log. Be wary of grabbing "sticks" or "branches" while swimming in lakes and rivers — rattlesnakes can swim too.

Lastly, don't hike alone if you can avoid it.

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Another brushfire on Mt. Gleason brings in Mutual Assistance Crews.

Fighting Fires, Tackling Homelessness, Saving Lives
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The Fire Department responds to medical and other emergencies, including reports of ‘man down’ or a person in distress.” Cole adds, “More often than not, when our crews arrive the person has already left, is simply asleep or suffers from chronic medical conditions that do not involve immediate treatment or transport to an emergency room. We now have a Fire Captain on special assignment working with our Police Homeless Liaison Program (HLP) Team, our Human Services Division and other County and non-profit providers to work on more effective ways to prevent and handle these calls.”

The LAFD isn’t the only fire department that responds to such a high percentage of medical related emergencies. According to Humphrey, “More than four out of five calls we receive are medical related. Approximately 85 percent of our daily activity relates to emergency medical services.

The remainder are a broad variety of fire-related services which would include structure fires and vehicle fires.” Humphrey

adds that while fires have diminished over the years due to building codes, public education, and safer appliances, there’s still a significant impact of fires on the city.”

Growing public awareness has also had an impact on fires throughout the Westside as well.

“Fires, while more rare today because of advanced building codes, effective inspections and public education, still pose a constant threat in an urban environment. That’s why we still maintain our crews and equipment in constant readiness even as they respond to a wide range of other calls, plus they

obviously pose a critical first line of response for natural and man-made disasters as well as mutual aid for wildland/urban fires,” Humphrey said. “The world has obviously changed in the last 100 years. The role of police, libraries, parks, fire and other services continue to evolve.”

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If you get bitten by a rattlesnake: From the East Bay Regional Park District: If a rattlesnake bites you, stay calm and call 911 immediately. Lie down with the affected limb lower than your heart. Do not waste time on tourniquets, sucking or applying a snakebite kit. Don’t pack the area in ice or cut the wound with a knife or razor.

If you are by yourself, walk calmly to the nearest source of help to dial 911. Running or moving quickly will increase your heart rate, which will allow the neurotoxin in the venom to travel through your system faster.

Medical attention means receiving an injection of antivenom serum. Medical insurance typically covers the cost.

Rattlesnake bites can be fatal if you are bitten near a vital organ and are not treated, and for small children.

Outdoors writers John Higley and Phil Ford have both sustained rattlesnake bites. They described initial shock, then burning pain and instant swelling. They say to expect extensive skin discoloration around the bite. Both men received serum and medical care and recovered fully with no lingering effects. If you are bitten by another kind of snake: If you sustain a bite from a snake you are sure is not

a rattlesnake, wash the wound with soap and water or an antiseptic and seek medical attention.

If you suffer a snakebite and aren’t sure what kind of snake bit you, check the bite for two puncture marks (in rare cases one puncture mark) associated with intense, burning pain. This is typical of a rattlesnake bite. Other snakebites may leave multiple tooth marks without associated burning pain.

If a dog gets bitten: If you hike on a summer morning after a cool night, the chance of an encounter increases as the day warms through late morning. If you have a curious dog allowed off leash that doesn’t respond instantly to voice commands, the odds go way up.

Rattlesnake bites can be devastating for pets, at high risk because of their curiosity, domesticated DNA and relatively small bodies. It’s possible to have a vet vaccinate a dog against rattlesnake bites. Vets say the vaccination builds up antibodies against the venom. That reduces the reaction to the bite and gives you more time to get your dog to the doctor. A booster shot is needed four weeks after the first. Even with the vaccination, a dog still needs the anti-venom shot after a rattlesnake bite.

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Brent Talmo: An Unsung Hero

“The bad stuff is easier to believe. You ever notice that?”

-Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman*

History is littered with those who made great discoveries, performed great deeds or just changed the World, but what about those names that only appear in our everyday lives? Names that don't jump out at you like Einstein or Pasteur?

Think about it. Did they break with convention? Did they offend the establishment? Were they quiet about their accomplishments?

Possibly all of those things. In this series, I'm going to start off with four people that I personally know and consider to have been movers and shakers in our community but who have mysteriously escaped becoming household names. I'm going to try and set the record straight and give them credit where credit is due. I really hope that you the reader, will contribute names and stories of your “unsung heroes.”

Those who make you feel good when you hear their names. Everyday people doing everyday things. Things that make life easier and safer for those around us. I want you to think about the last time you really read a great uplifting story. I know that you have read stories about the dog that saved his master or how the bear wandering the neighborhood was

safely returned to the wild.

But the truth is that happy stories are far and few between. And what about the story that was so terrible you had to re-read it, and when you wanted to be updated on the story, it had just simply disappeared? “Old News” they say.

Today, we are going to talk about Brent Talmo of



Brent proudly wearing his citations.

Los Angeles.

When Brent Talmo retired from the Maywood Police Department in 2008 he never planned on seeing his service records on the Internet. He was just another person, a neighbor, a community member that did his job and went home every night. But like the “masked crusader” who retires to his secret identity and tries to forget the daily mayhem that surrounded him, our police officers have to go back to their homes, wives

and families.

Their stories are never really covered. That is, not until the sensationalist media needs material for a dull edition. Then the truth gets bent. Actually distorted, all in the

name of “creating” a news story. One of these victims was Brent Talmo, and I want

to set the record straight.

Brent started his law enforcement career by joining the Los Angeles County Sheriff department in 1986 and then moved on to the Los Angeles Hous-

ing Authority Police Department in 1990 and the Hawaiian Gardens Police department long known for its gang-infested areas and high crime rates. He stayed with them until Hawaiian Gardens P.D. closed in 1998. The Maywood Police Dept. was his next assignment and he Two Medal of Valor and Police Star Award was assigned as a training officer to the patrol division and later became a Senior Lead Officer in the Los Angeles Housing Authority drug elimination program.

Moving up through the ranks he became a field training officer, acting sergeant and team leader. He became a Sergeant and was assigned to the detectives division in April 2004. Not only was Talmo a dedicated officer but he went the extra mile in his skills and training as an emergency medical technician and drug recognitions expert. He took classes on problem-oriented policing of

SWAT operations and a course in Handling People with Tact and Diplomacy and as a Peacemaker. Talmo was involved in, and given awards for working with the Traffic Collisions Board, the Special Response Teams, and for being a team leader.

Talmo was presented the Police Star Award and given the the MEDAL OF VALOR twice. This is highest award given by the HAPD. This is a man who learned by his mistakes and became an example

for all to follow.

But nobody would know what he did before he retired. Heroes don't toot their own horn. That is why Brent Talmo is our “Unsung Hero!”

If you have an “Unsung Hero,” please send their story to

us at this e-mail address: editor@thefoothillspaper.com.■



Five Summer Dangers for Pets

Spending time outdoors this summer? Keep these safety tips in mind to ensure your furry friends are comfortable. ASPCA

<h4>Sun & Heat</h4> <p>Pets can become dehydrated quickly. Know the signs of overheating (excessive panting, increased heart rate and weakness) and make sure your pet has access to fresh water and a shady or air conditioned place.</p>	<h4>Fireworks & Thunderstorms</h4> <p>One in five pets goes missing after being scared by loud noises, so keep them in a quiet, secure area at home. If your pet does go missing, download the ASPCA app for a free step-by-step toolkit to help find your pet: ASPCAapp.org</p>
<h4>Parties & Barbecues</h4> <p>Make sure your pet can't get into human food (especially grapes, onion, avocado and chocolate) or alcoholic drinks.</p>	<h4>Hot Cars</h4> <p>Don't leave your pet in the car! Even with the windows cracked, a car's temperature can reach 100° in 10 minutes on an 85° day. Sign our hot car pledge at aspc.org/hotcars</p>
<h4>Toxic Chemicals</h4> <p>Insecticides, insect repellents, sunscreen, citronella products and glow sticks are toxic, so keep them away from your pet.</p>	

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