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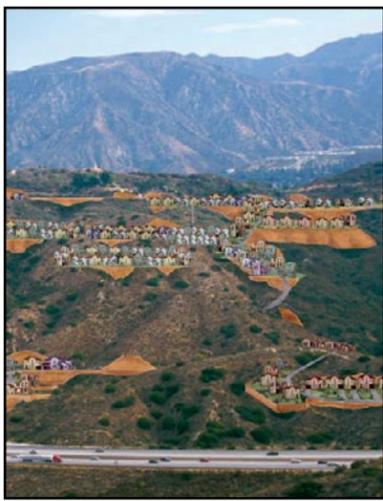
# THE PAPER

THE VOICE OF THE FOOTHILLS

FRIDAY MARCH 24, 2023

**SUNLAND STRONG - TUJUNGA TOUGH!**  
*A tribute to our local businesses that are re-opening.*

VOLUME 18 • NUMBER 30



## Hey, Whitebird; Leave them Hills Alone!

*In 2005, a proposal for a 200+ luxury gated residential development called 'Canyon Hills' was approved by LA City Council. Now, almost 20 years later, developer Whitebird, Inc. is gearing up to gut the Verdugos—but community stakeholders say NO.*

By Emma Kemp

In a rugged stretch of the Verdugo Mountains, developer Whitebird, Inc. is poised to destroy one of the few privately-owned parcels of undeveloped land in what is otherwise open space. The Canyon Hills project is a 221-home luxury gated community, replete with private recreational amenities on 55 additional lots (think: tennis courts, swimming pool, jacuzzi, etc.). It is slated to be built on 306 acres of chaparral, sagebrush, and oak hillside that lies just north of the 210 Freeway. If the project sounds familiar, that's because it's been on the books for 20 years.

*Please see **Hey, Whitebird; Leave them Hills Alone!** on Page 2*

## River Wood Ranch residents and houseless are in danger – again!



Residents of Riverwood Ranch may find themselves challenged with the task of repairing the damage around their neighborhood caused by the Station Fire. Presently they are waiting for the City, the County and the Army Corps of Engineers to dredge out the Big Tujunga Canyon debris that has clogged the channel, causing water to overflow over the only access into Riverwood Ranch.

After our recent storm, county crew members and independent contractors have worked an exhausting schedule of hours to clean out the debris left from the mudslides and fast-flowing waters.

*Please see **River Wood Ranch residents and houseless are in danger – again!** on Page 3*

## The Cross of San Ysidro

Above our town stands the Cross of San Ysidro. Neither fire nor storms or even the pandemic have diminished its message of peace. The annual Easter sunrise service which would have been this April 17th atop Mt. McGroarty is relatively unknown among the dozens of other such SoCal springtime rituals.

Yet the Mt. McGroarty service, is now in its 99th year. Its view of the sun rising over the San Gabriel Mountains ranks the program among the more stunning outdoor celebrations for California Christendom. The Mt. McGroarty service is strictly



*Cross of San Ysidro at Easter Service.*

a local pride event featuring clergy and lay people from Sunland-Tujun-

ga churches that make it happen.

Old newspaper clippings indicate that a cross was first erected on the peak in 1923 and was dedicated in a ceremony led by a Catholic priest. The sunrise service, which evidently began in 1926 is non-denominational. The service may be mute this year, but it is fondly remembered by Sunland-Tujunga residents who used to make the hour-long trek up the mountain.

Volunteers from the local service clubs and churches would arrive at 4:40 am to provide transportation, set up the chairs and tables, and get ready for the “coming of the Lord.” ■

Check out The Foothills Paper interactive website: [thefoothillspaper.com](http://thefoothillspaper.com)



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Hey, Whitebird; Leave them Hills Alone!

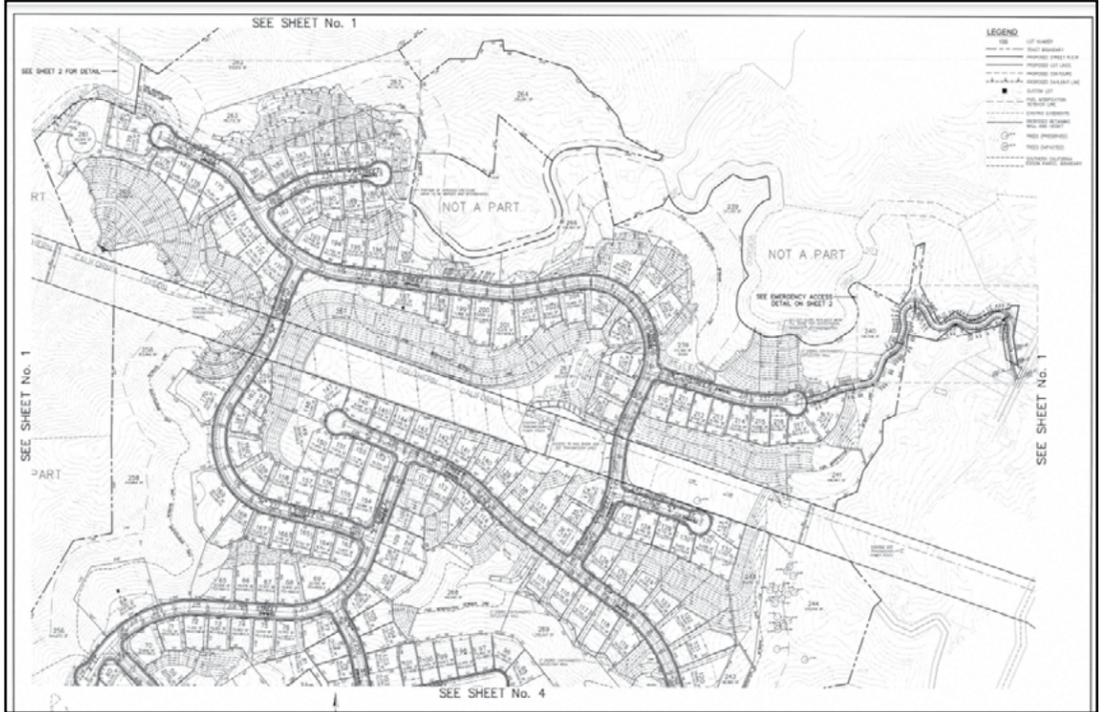
*continued from page 1*

The project's embattled history dates back to 2003, when a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was first submitted to L.A. City Council. Though numerous community groups rallied in opposition and won several significant concessions, the Canyon Hills project was ultimately approved in 2005,

granting Whitebird, Inc. two decades to build. And then...nothing. For years, the project was dormant. Opponents hoped it had been laid to rest for good. But last month, Sunland-Tujunga residents learned that Whitebird had recently pulled a grading permit to begin cutting the mountain. "I know this project, it keeps coming back from the dead," a biologist and environmental consultant said via email last week. Indeed, 'Canyon Hills' is on the haunt again.

The grading process, which could take as long as two years, involves leveling the scenic hillsides (with potential explosive blasting), cutting ridge-lines, infilling valleys, altering ecologically important mountain streams and ripping out heritage trees like Coast Live Oaks to make the landscape suitable for construction. It would require the excavation of an estimated 3,998,100 cubic yards of dirt over 155 acres, a quantity equivalent to about 300,000 large dump trucks.

Grading at this scale is an extraordinary undertaking with significant local and environmental impacts, including the realignment of the existing Verdugo Crestline Road—a portion of which will need to be merged and re-subdivided. According to city officials, however, the permit could be approved any day, putting



the project on a fast track to ruin precious habitat situated entirely within a L.A. County Significant Ecological Area. That's why the grassroots community coalition, NO Canyon Hills (NCH),

has taken up the cause, calling for a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) before any irreversible damage is done. A petition circulated by NCH has already logged

over 150K signatures, with hundreds of comments supporting the request.

*Please see Hey, Whitebird; Leave them Hills Alone! on Page 3*

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**We live in a time where intelligent people are being silenced so that stupid people won't be offended.**

Our readers often send us notes of much appreciated encouragement.

Last week an e-mail arrived on my desk that had a particular resonance with me. It read: "Reading The Paper reminds me of one of my favorite quotes by Augustine:

'Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.'

Thanks for everything you do."

And he is right, while we try to temper our anger at the events that are unfolding around us, it was never easy. We know that for there to be a real and lasting change, we have to keep pushing forward. We have to have the courage to keep forging ahead.

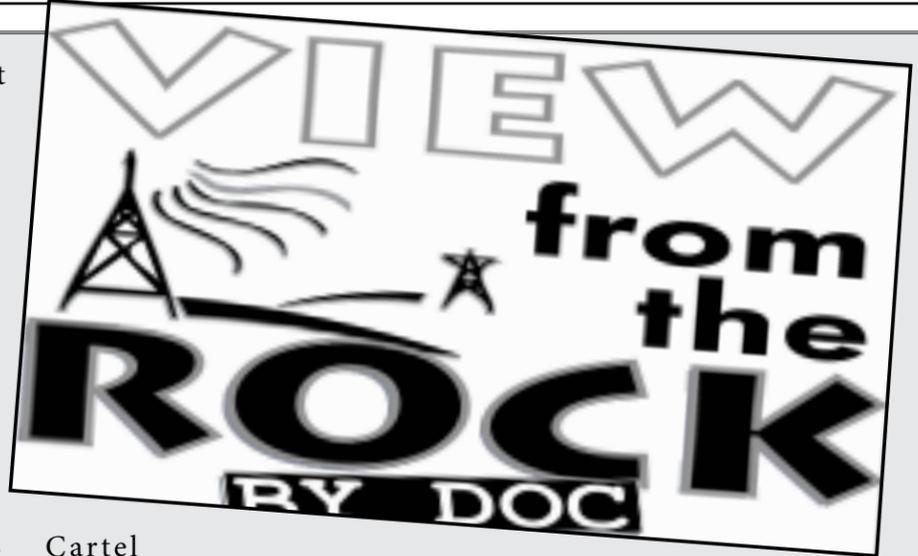
Since our inception 18 years ago, The Foothills Paper has delivered the news that matters, every other week, without interruption. We have brought you the news the larger media ignores and we've shed light

on the views from some of the best writers and thinkers in our area.

But we have never done it alone. It has only been possible because of you—our readers—and your hope for a better future. The Foothills Paper has made many friends and of course enemies. The scofflaws and their friends hate the exposure of their misdeeds, and there have been many.

We have taken the position of helping those whom the community is divided against. We have done the best we can to illuminate those that do good in our community. Unfortunately, it is easy for the haters to post things on the Internet that are at best "mis-truths" and at worse, flat-out lies.

And I have watched them pass into oblivion. We have community leaders that were trying to do the best for Sunland-Tujunga and we have certain people like the Tatulian



Cartel

that are out to fleece every penny they can from the community. Because of them we have lost the Watermelon Festival, The Easter Carnival, The Commerce Street Fair, The 4TH of July fireworks, and the integrity of our service clubs.

But it appears that those days are changing and our community leaders are doing what they can to really help the community get back to becoming a neighborhood where

people know and respect each other. We are now coming to the point where we are fighting the Whitebird developers. Last week, Our Councilwoman announced that she has \$1,000,000 to give to "LOCAL" restaurants like the cartel backed Arnieville citadel. Yup, this is truly going to be an interesting year and yes, it probably is the water!■

**Hey, Whitebird; Leave them Hills Alone!**  
*continued from page 2*

There are many other reasons to reject the Canyon Hills development in its current state. Fire safety is a matter of concern to any rural community, but the proposed project site is located in an area classified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone by the LACFD.

The designation, which identifies the region as prone to wind-driven fires, was affirmed in 2017 when the La Tuna Fire decimated several structures in the surrounding hills. These narrow roads pose significant challenges for first responders, and it remains to be seen whether local fire safety agencies can effectively assist in the mass evacuation of the estimated 800-plus residents of 'Canyon Hills' via a single egress easement to the 210 Freeway and one locked emergency evacuation gate on the other side of the canyon. Moreover, the question of whether potential homeowners will be able to secure fire insurance looms large.

NO Canyon Hills is thus urgently calling for further environmental review, citing the peril of outdated information in the original EIR. For example, that mountain lions were not present in the development area or any portion of the Verdugo Mountains, and that, "Therefore, regional movement by the mountain lion within or through the study area does not occur." However, wildlife photographer J. Turner recently captured footage of a mountain lion, dubbed the La Tuna Puma, in the Verdugos near the development site. "The greatest threat to cougars in Southern California is habitat fragmentation caused by urbanization...The very preventable loss of cougars in Los Angeles would be devastating both culturally and ecologically," writes the Cougar Conservancy in a supporting statement to NCH.

Given new significant environmental evidence, it is imperative that the City reassesses the potential community impact of the Canyon Hills project. Visit [www.nocanyonhills.org](http://www.nocanyonhills.org) to demand a SEIR for this project.■

**River Wood Ranch residents and houseless are in danger – again!**  
*continued from page 1*

There are also a number of volunteer groups that have come to lend a hand with cleaning up the neighborhood. The City crews have installed K-rails to prevent people trying to enter the wash during flooding in the area, but no one has tried to dredge out the north face of the Corps of Engineers Arizona Bridge on the road that gives emergency vehicles access to the River Wood Ranch.

Although the major rains appear to be finished, the threat still stands. If there is as much as one-half inch more of rain, the bridge will become completely impassable. Crew members are currently working on emptying all the 28 debris basins, but the area where the Tujunga Canyon intersects the Riverwood Ranch bridge is not a debris basin. Due to the recent dry weather, workers have had an easier time clearing out the debris flows. These workers have already moved over 1 million cubic yards of debris, which otherwise would have overflowed into residential neighborhoods.

During the month of April, there is expected to be rainfall of one-quarter to one inch. The weather these past few weeks have brought a lower snow level to our local mountains. Although nice looking, this snow quickly melts and flows into the Big Tujunga Canyon channel.



Under a mutual aid contract with the City, when there is a rainstorm, a fire engine is sent from LAFD Station 24 or 74 and stationed near the homes to provide emergency services if the road floods.

Everyone knows the river will overflow the bridge so the question is – Why hasn't anyone done anything about it? I guess we have to ask our absentee councilwoman.■



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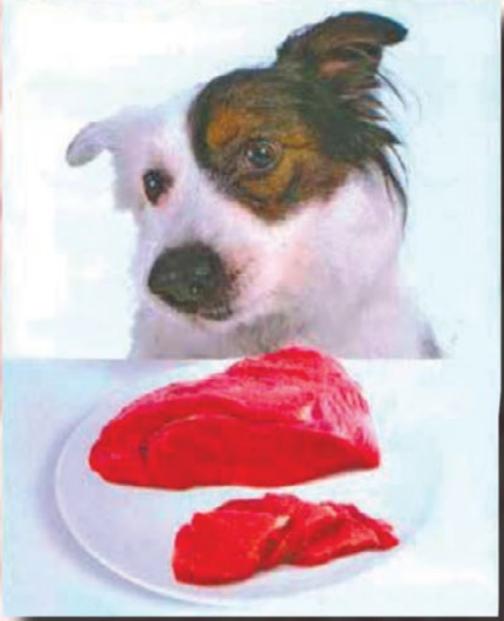
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# ANOTHER DAY IN THE HOOD



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10200 BLOCK FERNGLEN AV

**VEHICLE, STOLEN -231606364**  
10200 BLOCK ORO VISTA AV

**THEFT - PETTY -231606379**  
10100 BLOCK SAMOA AV

**Burglary -231606373**  
10200 BLOCK BETTY LOU LN

**BURGLARY 231605791**  
8000 BLOCK GLENTIES LN

**SPOUSAL (cohab) ABUSE - 231605786**  
8800 BLOCK WYNGATE ST

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - 231605793**  
10200 BLOCK RUSSETT AV

**BURGLARY 231605819**  
7300 BLOCK FOOTHILL BL

**VEHICLE, STOLEN 231605818**  
10100 BLOCK HILLHAVEN AV

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - 231605846**  
7100 BLOCK SAMOA PL

**BURGLARY -231605878**  
7500 BLOCK FOOTHILL BL

**BURGLARY FROM VEHICLE- 231605917**  
10800 BLOCK FLORALITA AV

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - PETTY - 231605979**  
6800 BLOCK PARSONS TRL

**THEFT - PETTY - 231605982**  
10100 BLOCK SAMOA AV

**BRANDISHING WEAPON, EXHIBITING DEADLY WEAPON 231605954 - 10100 BLOCK PINWOOD AV**

**BURGLARY FROM VEHICLE-231606047**  
11900 BLOCK BIG TUJUNGA CANYON RD

**BURGLARY FROM VEHICLE**

**-231606038**  
6300 BLOCK DAY ST

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - 231606072**  
8200 BLOCK WENTWORTH ST

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - 231606071**  
10500 BLOCK SHERMAN GROVE AV

**VEHICLE, STOLEN- 231606124**  
8400 BLOCK FOOTHILL BL

**BURGLARY 231606123**  
8400 BLOCK FOOTHILL BL

**VEHICLE, STOLEN - 231606091**  
6600 BLOCK FOOTHILL BL

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - 231606094**  
10100 BLOCK SAMOA AV

**THEFT - PETTY -231606115**  
10100 BLOCK MOUNTAIR AV

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - 231606209**  
MT GLEASON & WENTWORTH

**BURGLARY - 231606196**  
7900 BLOCK FENWICK ST

**VEHICLE, STOLEN-231606228**  
10600 BLOCK WILSEY AV

**VEHICLE, STOLEN-231606220**  
6800 BLOCK FOOTHILL BL

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE - 231606246**  
10000 BLOCK PINWOOD AV

**ROBBERY -231606345**  
8500 BLOCK FOOTHILL BL

**BURGLARY -231606324**  
11000 BLOCK WHITEGATE AV

**SPOUSAL (cohab) ABUSE - 231606315**  
7700 BLOCK WYNGATE ST

**THEFT FROM VEHICLE -231606325**  
8100 BLOCK HILLROSE ST

## CA is Bringing in the Courts to Address Homelessness



By David DeMulle'

For years, the Gov. Newsom idea of ending homelessness centered around funding those projects that were already in play. Totally ignoring the actual need of having an independent review board of those that are living on the streets, Newsom finally created the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment court project (CARE).

For decades citizens have had to put up with an increase in crime, health issues, and the filth that some of the homeless surround themselves with.

"We're coming up with a completely new paradigm, a new approach, a different pathway, and it's consistent with our values," Newsom said earlier this month when he announced the creation of the CARE Court.

But no one has come forth and said how much this is going to cost over the coming years. It could be coming from the \$14 billion that he wants to use in his homeless program. But, he did pledge swift action to finalize the proposal and move it through the Legislature.

"We want to move, and we want to move quickly," Newsom said during a recent interview on KQED. "It's a new day, new paradigm, and we are looking forward to getting something big done."

It is estimated that the CARE Court would target only 10% of the homeless population, but it is looked upon as a move in the right direction by the LA County's director of mental health.

Some of these homeless have been languishing on the streets and vulnerable to everything that comes along. The tally of homeless in Sunland-Tujunga that have perished from disease or physical attacks, stopped about 4 years ago. No one cared how many dies, just as long as they were gone.

A couple of months ago, Newsom

announced that the CARE Court was going to make a difference and that he was no longer going to tolerate the "status quo" in how to address homelessness, mental illness and drug addiction on the streets of California.

For once, people would be able to request help for their family members. First responders and behavioral health responders could now petition the civil court judges to order evaluations and if found necessary, create a plan to help a person in need. The CARE Court is intended to be a voluntary program, and like a plan that school administrators create to give their students the most efficient learning program, CARE would have a "public defender" and a personal advocate to address the court. (This concept is a viable one, but doesn't have much chance of working because there is a shortage of public defenders and trained advocates.)

If, the state actually allocates funds to address these problems, CARE would be able to immediately help people living on the streets (and not everyone on the street has a mental problem) and provide have a chance of getting the help they need.

It has often been proposed that LACo Fire camp Louis Roth on the Big Tujunga Canyon Road be used as a rehabilitation and care clinic for people with addiction and untreated psychiatric disorders.

Not every person proposed would have to be living on the street. It could also help those who have been in and out of jails and hospitals.

"People have had it. They're just exhausted," Newsom said during the KQED interview. "They can't take what's happening on the streets and sidewalks. They can't take what's happening in encampments and tents."

Please see **CA is Bringing in the Courts to Address Homelessness** on Page 8

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**ASK RUSTY**

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

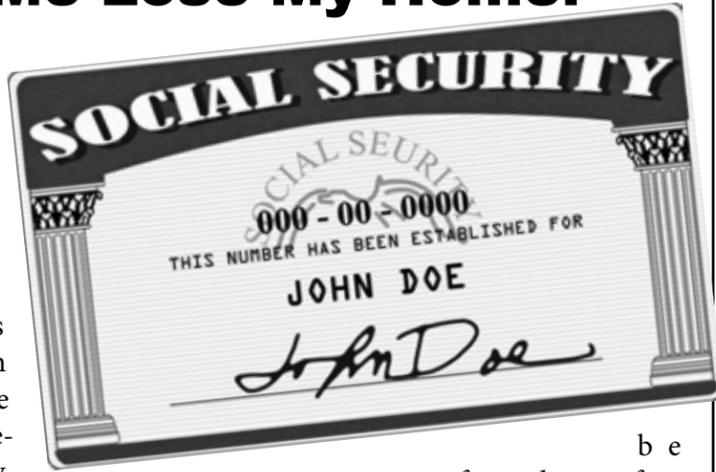
## Cutting Social Security Will Make Me Lose My Home!

ger) than the program is designed to support.

2. The number of workers contributing to the program is growing much slower than the growth in beneficiaries receiving benefits. That means the ratio of contributors to recipients is much less now than it has been in the past, which means program costs are growing faster than incoming revenue.

Reality is that reform is necessary now to avoid cuts to everyone's benefits later. But here's a very important point that should comfort you - any reform enacted will almost certainly affect only those who have not yet claimed their Social Security benefits. That means you should not be affected because you're already receiving benefits, and you will continue to do so at the same amount except for the increases you will get from Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). Every Social Security change ever made has affected only future beneficiaries, not current ones. The only real threat to your Social Security benefit is if no changes are made and, even then, any cuts wouldn't happen until about 2034.

So please rest assured that your personal Social Security benefits will not be cut. Anything you hear now implying otherwise is a scare tactic designed to make headlines for political gain. The program must



be reformed or face insolvency in a bit more than 10 years, and that is what both Republicans and Democrats want to prevent. The difference between the parties is that one side wants to solve the problem mainly by raising Social Security payroll taxes on workers, whereas the other side wants to adjust the program to deal with the above two factors causing the problem. What is needed is bipartisan cooperation to reach a compromise, which Congress will hopefully eventually achieve. They already know how to fix Social Security; they just need to find the bipartisan spirit needed to do so. For its part, the Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC) has, for years, proposed changes which would restore Social Security to full solvency without raising taxes on American workers, and AMAC's proposal has been well received by many in Congress. If you wish to review AMAC's proposal, please go to [www.amac.us/social-security/](http://www.amac.us/social-security/).

In any case, contrary to what you might hear in the media, your current Social Security benefits should not be negatively affected by any future Social Security reform enacted.■

**Dear Rusty:** Politicians are talking about taking money from Social Security, but I need that money to support my daughter and pay for my home. I'm a widow, and my husband passed in 2017. I'll lose my home if my Social Security benefits are cut. Please help.  
**Signed: Widowed Senior**

**Dear Widowed Senior:** Despite what you might read or hear in the media, the main threat for you to lose any of your Social Security money is if Social Security is not reformed. In that case, everyone who receives benefits will see a cut of about 23% to their monthly benefit starting in about 2034. The way to avoid that is by updating the current Social Security law to address two primary issues:

1. People now live much longer than when Social Security was enacted in 1935 and when the last major program change occurred in 1983. Average life expectancy of beneficiaries today is mid-80s, compared to mid-60s when the program started. In other words, people now collect benefits for much longer (often decades lon-

## S-T Residents Denied Due Process - Again!

By David DeMulle'

I was speaking with STNC PRESIDENT Lydia Grant about the lack of advertising for the upcoming election, and it of course went off track as she tried to explain "how hard it was to get everyone coordinated, AND anyone that was interested and could find the information posted on social media sites" (that almost no one ever visits.) This sure sounds like the BS that gets promoted every 2 years. Here is a sample of comments I made in the Foothills Paper years ago. Same crap, same players, same story, same blaming it on the City and it's boondoggle agencies, just a different election.

The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council has a "Community Outreach Committee" that for the past six years, has done nothing more than spend money on Pizza and their own local interests.

Once again, it is time for the Neighborhood Council election and the Community Outreach has done a disservice to the community. Notice of the upcoming election and call for candidates was published in an obscure newsletter (The North Valley Reporter) owned by Outreach Committee Chairman Nina Royal, effectively restricting the amount of coverage that should have been given to the community. When The Foothills Paper filed a grievance with the Department Of Neighborhood Empowerment, we received a letter from STNC President (who is running unopposed) explaining their failure to alert the community to this important community activity. It reads:

Please see **S-T Residents Denied Due Process** on Page 8

**S-T Residents Denied Due Process**  
*continued from page 7*

“Due to the fact that this year’s election is being coordinated by the City Clerk, the STNC has been assigned to be part of a group election effort for a number of NCs called Region B. The motion that we passed in December was to collaborate with all the other NCs in Region B (see minutes attached). An effort to raise awareness of NC elections for Region B all taking place during the same election cycle. The other NCs spearheaded the two ads (Daily News and North Valley Reporter) as a collaborated effort for seeking candidates and to get out the vote because these publications cover an area served by all the NCs in Region B. Ms. Royal was not a part of the collaboration group. The group was led by Mike O’Gara, Sun Valley NC. The night that the STNC voted, Ms.

Royal was not present due to medical procedures she was undergoing. The group of NCs chose the two papers for the ad. The detail on the December STNC motion is to collaborate with the NCs in this and nothing more. The NCs did not want to collaborate any further than these ads. They considered a number of things (postcards, newsletter, etc. but could not agree.) They wanted to do their own individual NC advertising or outreach efforts as determined individually and what has worked in the past for them. Our motion was to approve funds - from a previously approved budget amount - to collaborate on the advertising costs that were approved and predetermined by the Region B group.

As you have seen in multiple emails and online postings, the deadline for candidates to file and have their name printed on the ballots closes today. There will

be an additional month where other candidates can file to be write-in candidates. These applications will also need submission and approval by the City Clerks office.

In addition to our own efforts, the City Clerk held an informational event in Mission Hills on 1/14. Also this past Saturday morning 1/23 the City Clerk had at least 4 staff people at NVCH. There was another event held at NVCH on a Monday night with CD2 staff help right after the filing period opened. There will be additional outreach taking place as the candidate forums and the actual election approach. While not guaranteed, this may include newspaper advertising.”

What this means, is that no one in Sunland-Tujunga was informed that they could run for a Neighborhood Council seat. And once again, it will be a “I voted for myself – and won!” election.”

# Pot Holes and Sink Holes Defy the CD-7 Councilwomans Wrath!



With all the ballyhoo over getting our streets safe for the common man and woman, they still keep popping up putting everyone in danger. This small one on foothill, unlike the truck eating sink hole, is just one of 10 our staff found in Sunland-Tujunga this past week.

The sink hole started as just a 8

X 12’ hole on the number 4 lane of the 210E before the Lowell off-ramp. Within the week, it opened up to a 50’ X 100’ by 20’ deep hole that had to be pumped out to begin repairs. This is the same area where a larger pot hole opened 2 years ago.

Drive safe and KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN for these dangers.■

## Sinkhole on 210 E.



The opening at freeway street level.



The source of the sinkhole water next to freeway.

Last week, a 10 foot sinkhole opened up on the south side of the 210 E freeway. This posed yet another traffic obstacle for drivers that were already fighting the heavy rains. Fortunately, no one fell in. The 13’ X 10’ X 12’ deep hole began to fill up with water as the CalTrans repair crews arrived.■

### CA is Bringing in the Courts to Address Homelessness

*continued from page 6*

A central component of CARE Court is accountability, which Newsom said will drive results. Local governments will face sanctions if they do not comply with program requirements. Unfortunately, politics always seem to get in the way

of helping those who need it in our community. The LAPD has had its hands tied for so long, that they will need specialized training to make this program work.

There is another component that has to be addressed, and that is housing for those in treatment, and the trained social workers to oversee them. Newsom could make it happen, we can only watch and see.■



March 20, 2023

Dr. David DeMulle'  
Executive Editor  
The Foothills Paper

Dear Dr. David:

On behalf of the Los Angeles Business Journal, I'd like to personally congratulate The Foothills Paper for being an official nominee for the 2023 Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards!

We are excited to invite you to join us for this year's live in-person event on **Wednesday, April 19**, where we will honor the amazing contributions of the nonprofit community along with the corporate citizens and businesses that support them. During the luncheon, we will hear from industry leaders as they discuss the importance of our Community of Business supporting our local nonprofits. This program will highlight the tireless work of nonprofit leaders, teams, and programs, alongside the efforts of individuals and companies who donate their time, funds, and efforts to improve the Los Angeles communities they serve.

**Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards**  
April 19, 2023 | 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

**The Biltmore Los Angeles**  
506 S Grand Ave | Los Angeles | CA | 90071  
[REGISTER HERE!](#)

It is our privilege to host you in-person this year and celebrate the inspiring professionals and organizations making an impact on our Community of Business™. Space for this event is limited and on a first-to-commit basis. We hope that you can join us!

All nominees will be showcased in the April 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the Los Angeles Business Journal – with finalists and honorees being featured in the April 24<sup>th</sup> edition.

Please contact [events@labusinessjournal.com](mailto:events@labusinessjournal.com) directly with any questions you have. Congratulations again, and we look forward to celebrating you!

Best Regards,



*JS*  
Josh Schimmels  
Publisher & CEO  
Los Angeles Business Journal

**LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL**