



BRENT TALMO: AN UNSUNG HERO!

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? - SEE PAGE 8



Father's Day and Me

My dad was a man who valued moments of solitude that are rare in a family of six. There was nothing he liked to do better than sit in a forest glade for hours, waiting for a deer to appear. He must have hated to shoot it to supplement our family's grocery bill. - SEE PAGE 3

THE PAPER

THE VOICE OF THE FOOTHILLS

FRIDAY, JUN 6, 2025

COVERING THE FOOTHILLS REGION FOR OVER 20 YEARS! VOLUME 18 • NUMBER 74



Los Angeles Council celebrates opening of Foothills Family Recreation and Dog Bark



Dear Neighbor, I'm proud to invite you and your family to a special community celebration TODAY, this Saturday, June 7th at 10:00 AM as we open the brand new Family Foothills Recreation and Dog BARKS featuring two separate Dog Barks: one for LARGE Dogs and one for SMALL Dogs! Because every dog deserves a fun and safe place to play!

This site, once home to the Lopez Canyon Landfill, has been transformed into a beautiful recreational space — and I'm proud to have worked with LA Sanitation & Environment to make this long-awaited vision a reality.

To celebrate this historic milestone, we're hosting a family-friendly event complete with balloon art, face painting, food trucks, a Discovery Cube Kid Zone, and more for our community to enjoy.

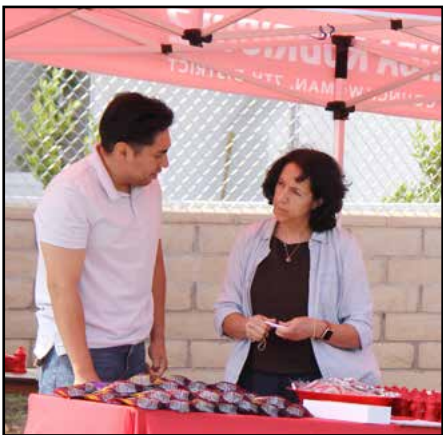
- Saturday, June 7, 2025
- Family Foothills Recreation & Dog Bark | 11954 Lopez Canyon Rd, Sylmar, CA 91342
- 10:00AM - 1:00PM

The new park features a variety of amenities for all ages, including:

- Two new playgrounds
- Outdoor exercise equipment
- Shaded picnic tables
- Three rain gardens that improve local water quality and support native California plants
- And the first-ever Dog Recreational Space in the Northeast San Fernando Valley that provides a separate space for large and small dogs to play and stretch their legs.

This celebration marks one more addition to our growing list of summer events for families in CD7 to enjoy including a Paddle Boat launch and night swim on June 14 at Hansen Dam Aquatic Center. I was proud to secure funding to purchase paddle boats and install pool lighting so that we can make greater use of our special aquatic space. Please check out the flyer below for more details on the unveiling and join us.

Creating welcoming and safe public spaces is essential to building a healthier, more connected community, and I look forward to celebrating with you this Saturday at the opening of the Dog Bark and Recreation space. Our special aquatic space. ■



Check out The Foothills Paper interactive website: thefoothillspaper.com



COMMUNITY NEWS

It's Wildfire Time Again!

The risk of wildfire in Sunland-Tujunga is a reality. Fire Officials are particularly concerned about the rain that came just after the wildfires. As a result, "fire season" has begun early, as indicated by the Powerhouse fire in Castaic, and Monrovia, as well as smaller brush fires in Lake View

Terrace and Eagle Rock. Some firefighters, with many years of experience, have noted with concern that the hills are drier than they have ever seen. We can expect that conditions will worsen with extreme heat, low humidity and dry winds.

It's a given, we all must be prepared for the risk of fire. And we can't depend on Stations 24, 74 and 77 being able to respond quickly with the City-imposed brownout.

"Brush clearance and weed abatement have made a huge difference in firefighters' success in saving lives and property over the past years," says Colette Anderson, owner of Anderson Brush and Tree Service. "It was only four years ago that our mountainsides were ravaged by the Station fire. In talking with US Forestry Station members, it was pointed out that the recent rains that posed flood and mudslide problems, also caused a greening of the hills and mountains."

"Weed abatement and brush clearance must be planned," says Colette. "It is important to both remove, or reduce the dense vegetation that has just sprung up. So in planning brush clearance and vegetation management, consideration must be given to both fire and flood risks. Remember that the same vegetation that must be cutback for fire prevention also stabilizes the hillside, protecting your family and home from mudslides. Proper brush clearance requires moderation, to protect against slope instability."

We are all subject to the special Brush Clearance requirements for "Very High Fire Severity Zones." Brush clearance inspections usually begin in May. But it is critical to remember that clearance is a year-round responsibility. We have a duty to each other to maintain our properties in a firesafe condition. The importance of brushclearance vigilance has been well-illustrated during the Sayre, Marek and Station fires in the last couple years, where fire-



fighters have reported that many neighborhoods have been spared due to strict compliance with brush clearance rules and wise landscape/vegetation management, preventing fires from destroying homes and taking lives. Vegetation management as it relates to wildland fire refers to the total or partial removal of high fire hazard grasses, shrubs, or trees. Wildfire behavior is strongly influenced by vegetation type, terrain and weather. Castor bean and sumac are vegetation that are ready to explode when lit because of the high concentration of oils contained in their leaves.

Basic requirements for brush clearance within 200 feet of structures:

- Remove all dead materials from live plants, such as needles, leaves, and branches.
- Remove all dead trees, plants, and shrubs, but leave the lowest 3 inches and root structure to help prevent erosion.
- All grass, brush and weeds must be cut to 3 inches or less in height, unless it is well-maintained and irrigated landscaping (single trees, landscape shrubbery or cultivated ground cover, however, may be permitted).
- Reduce fuel load by pruning the lower 1/3 of native brush, plants, and shrubs.
- Give special consideration

to problem trees such as Eucalyptus and Palms. Remove all leaves, limbs, litter and loose bark from the ground and from the trunk of the trees to a height of 20 feet.

- For trees taller than 18 feet, remove lower branches within 6 feet of the ground.
- For trees and shrubs less than 18 feet, remove lower branches to 1/3 of their height.

ROADWAYS AND PRIVATE STREETS

- Clear all flammable vegetation within 10 feet of roads and driveways.
- Cut all brush, weeds and grass to 3 inches in height for a distance of 10 feet from all highways, streets, alleys, and driveways.
- Cut back overhanging tree branches above roads to provide at least 14 feet of vertical clearance.
- Make sure your address is clearly painted on the curb for identification purposes.
- Make sure that your address can be seen on your house or mailbox from the street, using numbers of at least 4 inches high and in a color that contrasts with the background.
- Park your vehicles in your driveway or garage, not on the street.
- Maintain 3 feet of brush clearance around fire hydrants on or near your property.

- NEVER, NEVER, NEVER park in front of a fire hydrant.

- It is unsafe and illegal to park within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.

- Make sure that those working for you comply with all fire-safety rules including contractors and construction workers.

- Protect the Community by reporting any vehicle parked in front of a fire hydrant. Call Parking Enforcement 24-Hours (213) 485-4184 or 3-1-1 — "One Call To City Hall" — from any land line in Los Angeles.

The plants, trees, shrubs and ground cover that beautify your property are also fuel for fire. That, of course, is no reason to strip your land of vegetation. Indeed, it is also critical that the hillsides remain stable, and vegetation is essential to maintaining such stability. Plants and trees that have rooted on the hillsides provide this stability, without which the community would be washed away in floods.

But it is nevertheless important to remember that plants are fuel for fire. Some forms of vegetation create high fire hazards, while others are fire resistant. An essential aspect of landscaping in the Canyon is therefore fire protection, with a vigilant eye towards flood control. ■

THE FOOTHILLS PAPER

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One of the fun things about owning your own local newspaper is the freedom it gives you to express your feelings and see how many others have the same ideas. We are lucky in some ways, we have our own little town, and we have the ability to make changes IF WE REALLY WANT TO. For over 20 years, I've been privy to most of the happenings around us.

We went from a fairly prosperous rural community with fun OLD people to talk to and get the latest scandals and how the on-going fight with city hall was going. I still remember my office manager Claudia lamenting "We sold out our town for ONE police car and a fire truck." Well, I guess that you'd call that progress? We got sewer systems instead of septic tanks, electricity that worked and as we got more cosmopolitan, we got cable. Sometimes I wonder

if it was worth it. Joe Carnes and his family were busy buying up property and building apartment buildings. Foothill Blvd. was a dirt road and we had 11 bars and one whore house.

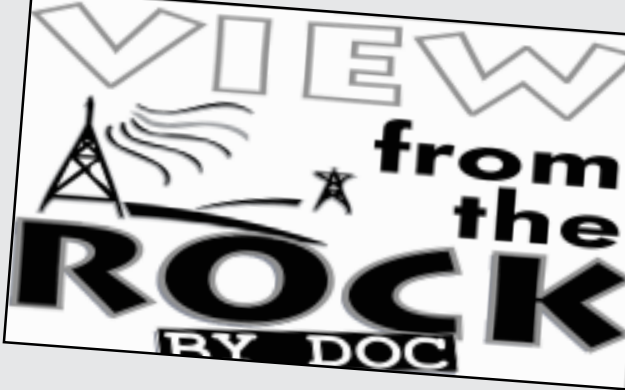
But we also had fun, the "service" clubs had members that were members or officers of many clubs. I still remember Vic Agakahanian lamenting that the Kiwana members were getting old and couldn't out to play. The Rotary Club was a bit crooked with Mike Lucas running his dog for city council. Now that got us world-wide attention then the Scientologists took over. The Lions Club was an honorable group under the direction of Dr. Schellenbach and his wife. That is, until they decided that the Watermelon King could not be a "special ed" student, even though he sold the most tickets of all the candidates. And then the

Watermelon Festival was gone. That was a major loss to Sunland-Tujunga, and the beginning of the end for our community.

We had a real newspaper called THE RECORD-LEDGER run by the Horowitz family. And it was a pretty good company, until Sarah Lombard compiled her treatise called "Rancho Tujunga." The Foothill Printing Company made so many mistakes, that they had to refund her money after they had printed 2,000 copies. But, we still had our Old Timers Days, The Easter Festival, The March Of Dimes Parade, the 4th of July Parade and real Fireworks, and don't forget the annual neighborhood Halloween Parties. Yup Boys and Girls, we sure knew

how to have fun, and we took care of our own. They're all gone now, and they've been replaced by maniac drivers, legal and illegal pot shops and a myriad of so-so eateries. Even the Lady of Lourdes annual family festival made some silly mistakes and within 4 years went from making over \$75,000 a year to going in debt and losing it all.

All you can do is look around you and imagine how much fun we used to have. And of course, you can blame it on the water!■



Father's Day and Me

By Laura Snyder

This Father's Day, like every other Father's Day, my thoughts go careening back to the time I was a mouthy teenager. My father was often upset with me for some smart-aleck comment I would make. Even then, I guess, I was in training to be a humor columnist — but with remarkable hindsight, I can see now that practicing my sassiness on my dad wasn't the smartest thing I could've done.

He was proud of me when I stuck up for myself with other people; with him, however, he probably wished I would shut my trap before he needed to ground me again.

My dad was a man who valued moments of solitude that are rare in a family of six. There was nothing he liked to do better than sit in a forest glade for hours, waiting for a deer to appear. He must have hated to shoot it to supplement our family's grocery bill. Otherwise, sitting out in the woods for hours would've seemed like a waste of time. At least, that's what I liked to think.

He was conflicted like that a lot. The vacations we took were always fishing trips. He would've loved to go fishing out in a boat on a quiet lake all by himself, but being of a practical nature, almost to a fault, he had to concede that more fish could be caught if all six of us were in that boat with lines in the water.

So there we were: four loud, life-jacketed children and two adults trying to keep up with the hook-baiting. We'd sing songs, softly. Dad said if we sang too loud we'd "scare the fish away." I used to wonder how we would scare them away because I never saw a single fish that had ears. Now that I'm a parent, I know that the soft singing was to ensure my parent's sanity.

We'd invent poems to lure the fish to our lines. Poems like: "Fishy, fishy in the brook, won't you come and bite my hook."

Throughout these childish shenanigans, my dad, chain-smoking his way through his second pack of Lucky Strikes and wearing his favorite fishing hat, would calmly steer the boat, bait hooks and bail out the boat when water accumulated. The bailing bucket was also a visible, silent



threat. We knew that if anyone had to go to the bathroom while we were out, they had to use the bucket, because my dad warned, "We're not going back until we're done fishing!" Thanks to Dad, we are all blessed with gigantic bladders now.

We were never sure what the barometer for "done" was, though. Was it measured in hours, in the number of fish caught, or was it measured by the shade of red in my parents' faces before they exploded? Now that I am a parent, I can say that perhaps "done" was the moment just before Dad gave in to the urge to throw us all in the lake and make us swim back to the cabin.

My father tried to teach us many rules to live by: Don't talk back. Get good grades. Don't pass gas at the kitchen table. Eat your vegetables. Don't smoke. Don't drink. Don't pass in a no-passing zone. Don't cheat on your spouse. Don't divorce.

But no matter what he'd taught his kids, my father lived by his own set of rules. He was the king of "Do as I say, not as I do." For those of us who chose to listen to him, life turned out pretty good. For those of us who chose to emulate him, life is still a struggle.

So, I guess you could say that my father always knew what the right thing to do was, but many times he chose not to do it. Dad lived his life on his own terms... and died the same way, on September 9, 1985 – before we were done needing him.■

NICOLE SMITH OF TUJUNGA, CA GRADUATES FROM EMERSON COLLEGE

BOSTON, MA - Emerson College awarded approximately 1,000 undergraduate degrees to the Class of 2025 during its 145th Commencement at Agganis Arena in Boston, MA on Sunday, May 11, 2025.

Nicole Smith of Tujunga, CA (91042) received a BFA in Theatre and Performance.

Emmy and Golden Globe-winning actress and Performing Arts alum Jennifer Coolidge gave the commencement address. Both Coolidge and the College's retiring vice president of government affairs and community relations, Margaret Ings, received honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees.

"Emerson has ignited these seemingly unattainable possibilities for you that now can be your reality," said Jennifer Coolidge. "It is your ability to convince yourself you really can make it, because you have to be your own champion."■

Local Student Named to ACU's Spring 2025 Dean's Honor Roll

Joshua Sison of Sunland has been named to the Spring 2025 Dean's Honor Roll. Sison is a senior majoring in Healthcare Administration.

Sison is among more than 1,500 students named to the Spring 2025 Dean's Honor Roll. To qualify, students must be registered for 12 or more credit hours and earn a GPA of 3.6 or higher.■

NEWS FROM YOUR URGENT CARE CLINIC

Treat a Burn Be It From Fireworks or Brushfire

By Sam Samalin, Pa-c

Patients have asked what they should do if they or their children get burned. Every situation is different but they all have one thing in com-mon: Someone got injured. Below, I have presented the most common questions and their respective answers.

What is the first thing I should do if burned?

The first thing you should do if a burn occurs and the most important thing is make sure it is clean and dry. In all cases you should be able to use a mild soap and lukewarm water to clean and sanitize the wound.

Patients ask “Are topical ointments recommended?”

The use of Neosporin or other topical ointment isn’t necessarily required in all situations. Sometimes, using it excessively can keep the wound moist and can actually delay the healing process to some degree. If you initially cleaned the wound and can keep it clean and dry, you may not need an antibiotic ointment at all.



How can I manage the pain if I’ve been burned?

Most individuals with burns can take an ibuprofen or Tylenol at the recom-mended over-the-counter dosage to manage pain. There are also some topical pain relievers that can be used, such as burn free wipes; which have a light dose of numbing medication in them. Always be sure to follow the guidelines pro-vided

on the packaging of the pain-reliev-ing medications.

When should I seek the help of a

Physician or go to an Urgent Care Clinic for my burn?

As a general guideline, if the size of the wound is bigger than the palm of your hand it may need a second opinion or further evaluation.

If the burn occurs around the eyes, nose, ears, toes, and fingers, regardless of size, it’s recommended that a specialist evaluate you, as the wound may become problematic. Lastly, if you notice symptoms of the wound becoming infected (i.e. increased pain, fevering, streaking redness, etc.), you should see a phy-sician.

How can I reduce the scar-ing from my burn?

Be sure to protect the scab from being torn or peeled off. As the scab comes off maturely, protect-ing the new skin underneath the scab with sunblock can help re-duce scaring.■

**Dr. Sam is a Physicians Assistant
and is certified at the
Urgent Care Clinic, 7204 Foothill Blvd.**

Everybody needs a haircut and the only place to go in Tujunga, is at my favorite barber.

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ANOTHER DAY IN THE HOOD

Sunland-Tujunga+Nearby LAPD Neighborhood Watch Notes

By Jon Von Gunten <stnwe-mail-list@gmail.com>

Sixteen residents attended the 10:30am "Tacos with a Cop" meeting at Joselito's Mexican Restaurant in Tujunga to hear Senior Lead Officers (SLOs) Gloria Caloca (Tujunga) and Will Godoy (Sunland) deliver crime stats and answer questions. CD7 Senior Deputy Ricardo Flores updated us on city matters.

We lament the passing of Susan Denning, a Tujunga senior who took an active interest in Neighborhood Watch, policed her own apartment complex, and attended STNC's traffic committee. We'll miss her voice, her persistence and spunk. Safe travels, Ms. D.!

• TUJUNGA

SLO Caloca noted that overall crimes in Tujunga are down from 115 last May to just 86 this May.

Grand thefts auto (GTA) are down by 15.

Foothill Div. ranks #3 of 7 in LAPD Valley Bureau. West Valley had 70 major crimes, Mission 59.

Foothill Div. traffic accidents are UP from 4 in March to 7 in April.

Traffic fatalities are down from 3 to 1, same period.

DUI-related accidents are down from 1 to 0!

But three Foothill intersections in S-T suffered traffic deaths this year: Scoville, McVine and Hillhaven.

Officer Caloca's experience in traffic court is disheartening. Judges find more violators not guilty based on offenders' imaginative excuses. One who ran a red light—without license or insurance, and driving Mom's car—fought every step of court procedures. However, this proves heavy cash fines are a potent deterrent.

Caloca implored Tesla owners to ensure all cameras are turned on when parked. They can ID your own car's thieves or vandals, and have even helped police solve nearby crimes.

When parking your vehicle to hike our beautiful trails. Leave nothing valuable in your car and certainly nothing in sight. Leave doors UNlocked so thieves won't have to break a window to search for goods.

Removal of gang graffiti near Bolton Hall was reported as too slow. When we submit MANY reports through MyLA311, we hasten the handling of problem situations.

A resident reported seeing an unattended toddler run loose at a car wash. His supposed babysitter was begging change and looked to be on drugs. The man was watching the endangered child for his sister. Resident hopes to find out where he lives. Officer Caloca said to call DCFS anonymously.

LAPD was called to deal with an elderly lady found disoriented at a local gas station. Thanks to Facebook postings with her photo, a resident who knew the family called in, and the family was soon reunited!

Caloca added that dementia patients may need an on-body tracker, say in jewelry or a jacket pocket. ID labels can also be sewn into their clothes.

•SUNLAND:

Officer Godoy said Part One (serious) crimes were 147, now 139.

He said far too many crimes occur because people leave keys in cars when stopping for gas or coffee, or even warming up in front of their home!

MAKE YOUR REPORTS to LAPD!!

Even though Sunland's homeless population is small compared to communities west of us and in Central LA, they remain Officer Godoy's largest source of activity. He reiterates that your and my ongoing reports—through MyLA311 and to him directly—save LAPD time and guide officers more rapidly to active or potential trouble spots.

On 18 May, a transient twisted the hand of a resident who was doing cleanup! LAPD arrived in 17 minutes, but suspect was gone on arrival (GOA). An officer drove victim around the area to find the suspect, but no joy. Because the person assaulted refused to report the crime, in police records, no crime occurred.

A resident was told that a transient had a gun but, did not report the threat. Unless such a crime is seen by an officer or video, there's "no crime" without the victim's report.

- This further occurred with the formerly unhoused Jennifer, who damaged cars. Because "sympathetic" victims wouldn't report her, there was little evidence and getting her necessary mental health help took three times as long!

- Yes, reporting takes up your valuable time, and perhaps be inconvenient, but perps and wackos will

commit 3X more crimes—or be vulnerable to others' crimes—if we fail to report.

- Most nonviolent crimes can be reported online here: <https://www.lapdonline.org/file-a-police-report/> 'Nuff said arreddy?"

In a recent chat with Mental Health, Patrick was lucid and is now making less mess. Officers prefer extra complaints over missing one crucial event!

Ricardo Flores, CD7 Sr. Deputy

Verdugo Hill pool is 95% complete and will be ready for summer swimming.

Councilwoman Rodríguez' introduced a motion to assess LA's recreational facilities—restrooms, water fountains, playground equipment, green space, walkways, etc. Public are invited to a meeting about what parks need on 3 June at LVT Rec Center.

A drone show at Hansen Dam Aquatic Center on 29 June will celebrate July Fourth. **New: Paddle boats!

Our own dog park with green space and ADA-compliant human exercise equipment is coming to Lopez Canyon on 7 June, just 8 miles away.

A citywide cleanup in honor of Asian and Pacific Island populations, occurs on 31 May. All are invited to meet at North Valley City Hall—7747 Foothill—and contribute some way. STNC's traffic committee will join Sierra Club to continue its tree mulching, watering and rescue.

A resident requests Councilwoman Rodríguez distribute stern reminder not to use fireworks, even on one's own property.

It's now clear that fireworks started the Palisades Fire, destroying or damaging 7,700 homes and commercial buildings! Is that entertainment?

As part of the City's budget moves to compensate for decades of knee-jerk spending, proposed cut will occur to LAPD, Fire and homeless budgets.

You may see a BFL (big fat lie) saying LAPD eats up 46%- of LA's City budget. False! It's 16%, and is always under fire.

OFFICER CALOCA advised of a spike in virtual—meaning fake—kidnappings. The unwary receive a call saying a relative has been kidnapped, jailed or suffered an accident. S/he of course needs money

NOW! You may even hear the "relative's voice," convincingly rendered via deepfake AI!

•To prevent this, families should agree upon keyword that all will use to confirm an actual emergency. Maybe a name worked into conversations.

Weeks ago, a teen's baritone voice called me, pleading, "Hi, this is your grandson. I really need your help!" Our grandson is two! •

OFFICER GODOY has asked Sizzler owners to close off its parking area, as it's attracting an unwholesome population. The insides of the restaurant are so thoroughly stripped by thieves that no one will pay to refurbish it. The management isn't responsive; they barely communicate. Same with Coco's.

Residents want enforcement against speeders, insane passing, and school zone violations on La Tuna Cyn Blvd. It's relevant that LAPD now has only 8,600 officers, down from a high of 10,000.

Thank you, cop-haters and defunders!

To keep things in focus, Officer Caloca passed around several types of home surveillance cameras. Cable-connected are best, as wi-fi can be electronically jammed and only transmits a limited distance. OTOH, we use a Ring cam for our back yard that transmits 70+ feet. (Not digging a 70' ditch!)

Some wi-fi cams contain a memory card to retain videos even if jammed. "4K" resolution delivers beautiful vids but uses more memory. Some have pan-tilt-zoom capabilities you control from an app. Many have audio. "Power Over Ethernet" (PoE) uses a cable to send electricity and receive the signal. A knowledgeable resident volunteered that his Amcrest cams are particularly good.

The 4am raids on Amidon Place in Tujunga were part of multi-agency raids on gangs here and in Florida. The event stemmed from the earlier day we enjoyed three LAPD helicopter visits. It began when a suspect pointed his firearm at a detective. Here's DOJ's release:

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-cd-ca/pr/13-members-and-associates-rival-armenian-syndicates-arrested-federal-complaints>

Officer Godoy concluded by noting that frequency of LA's car chases rose sharply when auto theft became a hand-slap misdemeanor instead of a felony.■

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ASK RUSTY

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

SOCIAL SECURITY

ISN'T WELFARE

Dear Rusty: I receive Social Security, but I still go in the hole to the tune of about \$300 per month! I hear some people describing Social Security as “welfare” but I resent that description. Between my employer and me, we pay over 15% of every paycheck to Social Security, so it’s not “welfare”, it’s my hard earned money that I’ve paid these taxes on for 47 years. The Government has spent my money instead of investing it to make sure I could retire and not live under a bridge. I think that they should pay me back plus interest so I can live out my retirement! **Signed: Disgusted**

Dear Disgusted: You’re right that it’s your hard earned money that you’ve contributed to Social Security for many years, and it’s certainly not “welfare” by any definition. I do understand your frustration but I’d like to clarify a couple of things you are concerned about.

You’re correct that you and your employer have contributed over 15% of every paycheck to “FICA”, but not all of that goes to the Social Security Trust Fund. The breakdown is

that 12.4% goes to the SS Trust Fund, and the rest - 2.9% - goes to help fund Medicare. The combined 12.4% Social Security contribution is evenly split - 6.2% each by you and your employer. Of the 6.2% you both contribute, 5.3% goes to the Old Age & Survivors Insurance (OASI) fund from which regular Social Security benefits are paid, and 0.9% goes to the Disability Insurance (DI) fund from which SS disability benefits are paid. Nevertheless it is, as you say, your money - and your employer’s - that goes into these funds.

Social Security really wasn’t set up as an individual retirement investment vehicle; rather it was designed so that current workers contribute to a fund from which “old age and survivor’s” benefits are paid to eligible seniors. Said another way, those working now pay for those now retired. Any excess - contributions over and above that spent to pay benefits - is deemed to be “surplus”. By law, the money in the Trust Fund can’t be used for anything other than Social Security & Disability benefits, and (also by law) any surplus money from contributions must be invested in “interest-bearing securities backed

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duced unless Congress acts before then to improve solvency. AMAC has developed a “Social Security Guarantee” which we have been regularly promoting to Congressional Representatives in Washington, D.C. This is a common-sense plan which ensures that Social Security will be able to pay full benefits into the next century, and we plan to continue lobbying congress to adopt the AMAC plan, or something similar.

by the full faith and credit of the United States”. This is done via special-issue government bonds, which pay interest at “market rate” (currently 1.5%). As of the end of 2015, the Social Security Trust Fund had about 2 ¼ trillion dollars invested in those special-issue bonds, which are redeemable either at maturity or on demand as needed to pay benefits.

The Trust Fund’s revenues still exceed costs every year, although the amount of annual surplus is declining because the ratio of workers to retirees is declining. Current estimates are that Social Security’s “old age & survivor insurance” revenue will stop running a surplus about 2020, after which any income shortfall would be taken from the Trust Fund’s investments. The trust fund wouldn’t run out until about 2034, at which point benefits will be re-

So, to recap, the money you contributed while you were working went to pay benefits for those already retired and, after you retire, contributions from those still working will be used to pay your benefits. And any surplus funds collected were invested in interest-bearing bonds for future use, and those funds cannot be used for any other purpose than Social Security benefits payments.■

Brent Talmo: An Unsung Hero!

“The bad stuff is easier to believe. You ever notice that?”—Julia Roberts in Pretty Woman



Brent proudly wearing his citations.

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 reread 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 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 Housing 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 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 Collision 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@the-foothillspaper.com. ■



Two Medal of Valor and Police Star Award.