



This is snake season!

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The Station Fire's 17th Anniversary

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THE PAPER

THE VOICE OF THE FOOTHILLS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2026 COVERING THE FOOTHILLS REGION FOR OVER 25 YEARS! VOLUME 18 • NUMBER 101

Do you really need to store water?

I t's really subliminal, I look around me at all the people who tell me that they have 5 to 200 gallons of water stored away, but when I ask them how they rotate their containers or check how "fresh" the water is, they go blank.

Every time I get a new container for emergency water storage, here are 3 things I do... By the way, this might be a 55-gallon barrel, or a 7-gallon container or a 5-gallon container that I'm filling up.

First, I fill it up with water and then dump it out.

A lot of these containers have plastic shavings in them, and you want to fill it up once to get all of the shavings out of there.

Second, I fill it up again and this time I put in a little bleach.

I add about a tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water.

I let it sit for about 30 minutes.

Then I dump it out and I thoroughly rinse out the container.

Third, I fill up the container for the final time and I'm good to go.

I'm not adding any chemicals or anything at all when I'm filling up the container this final time. Is it 100% necessary to go through all three of these steps?

Nope.

But it's what I personally like to do since having fresh drinking water is one of the more critical things in life. Look where we live, although we have DWP providing us with clean pure(?) water, when there is a disaster, Fire resources draw from that same water. Pipes break and whole neighborhoods go dry.

Personally, I don't usually swap out my drinking water every 6 months or anything like that.

As long as it's stored in a cool and dry place, I'll go several years without rotating the water. Of course, I do have a water filter so that I could filter the water from my containers if I ever needed to. You can find 55 gallon plastic containers on the Internet or at your local car washes for about \$10.

Anyway, have a great day and now you know my simple plan for filling up containers for my own family.



Definitely make sure you have plenty of water storage for your loved ones.

Stay safe. ■

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COMMUNITY NEWS

THIS IS SNAKE SEASON!

*Rattlesnakes
can cause
serious injury
to humans - on
rare occasions
even death*

The warmer weather calls to outdoors enthusiasts and snakes alike, making encounters of the slithering kind inevitable. Sunland-Tujunga has a variety of snakes, most of which are harmless. The exception is California's only native venomous snake - the rattlesnake.

Rattlesnakes can cause serious injury to humans - on rare occasions even death, as was evidenced in May when a rattlesnake bite killed a Riverside County man. While generally not aggressive, rattlesnakes strike when threatened or deliberately provoked, but given room they will retreat. Most snake bites occur when a rattlesnake is handled or accidentally touched by someone walking or climbing.

Although scary, the California Poison Control Center notes that rattlesnakes account for only about 800 bites each year with about one to two deaths. The Here in Sunland-Tujunga the rattlesnake species we can expect to find include the Western Diamondback, Sidewinder, Speckled rattlesnake, Red Diamond rattlesnake, Southern Pa-



This squirrel eating rattler was on my front porch!

cific, Great Basin rattlesnake and the Mojave rattlesnake.

Just use common sense! The possibility of finding a rattlesnake shouldn't stop anyone from venturing outdoors, but there are several precautions that can be taken to lessen the chance of being bitten when out in snake country - which is just about anywhere in California.

The Do's And Don'ts When Walking or Hiking

When hiking, stick to well-used trails and wear over-the-ankle boots and

loose-fitting long pants. Do not step or put your hands where you cannot see, and avoid wandering around in the dark. Step ON logs and rocks, never over them, and be especially careful when climbing rocks or gathering firewood. Always avoid walking through dense brush or willow thickets.

Be careful when stepping over the doorstep as well. Snakes like to crawl along the edge of buildings where they are protected on one side. Is It A Rattlesnake Or Isn't It?

Many a useful and non-threatening snake has suffered a quick death from a frantic human who has mistakenly identified a gopher snake, racer or other as a rattlesnake. This usually happens when a snake assumes an instinctual defensive position used to bluff adversaries. A gopher snake has the added unfortunate trait of imitating a rattlesnake by flattening its head and body, vibrating its tail, hissing and actually striking if approached too closely. ■

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THE FOOTHILLS PAPER is a non-profit newspaper produced by the OSS-Spectrum group.

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all our volunteers
that make
The Paper happen!

THE FOOTHILLS PAPER

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Do You Still Hear The Trumpets?—Dr. Glenn Mollette

A retired friend of mine fishes three or four times a week. He does it because he enjoys it and it is something to do. A retired school teacher friend played organized basketball until he was 85. He played in college and enjoyed the game his entire life.

High school kids play sports, cheerlead, play in the band or pursue various activities because it is something they want to do. There are some pursuits in life that we feel we must do. Often people work jobs they don't enjoy but they need a paycheck. Sometimes you may not really have the time to mow the grass but if you don't the grass will become unmanageable.

Food is an area where we have difficulties. I prefer ice cream and cake but I know I can't eat that very often. My regular diet of choice has to be salad, broccoli, salmon and other vegetables

and some fruit. I understand why bison, elk and deer are healthier to eat. They have a very lean diet. Elk sausage and bison burgers are very good.

Every year, my doctor asks me if I am still interest in doing stuff. I am. If I had zero interest in doing anything I don't know how I would survive. This may be the catch. We don't survive very long if we give up or have nothing that arouses our interest. We need a reason to get out of bed in the morning. We need something to look forward to. Another friend wrote a book about hearing the trumpets in the morning. He wrote about his zeal to get out of bed and pursue life each day. When we stop hearing the trumpets in the morning is when we need to do a self-check. We need to ask ourselves why and determine to do something about our apathy.

I can't give you a list of activities or

life pursuits. Only you know what flips your switch. Obviously it has to be something we can do because trying to do what we cannot do is not very fulfilling, but maybe it would be? Maybe learning something new might invigorate you? Maybe doing the same old thing all the time is what has become boring to you? We are creatures of habit and often we do the same things the same way forever. Maybe learning a new game or activity might be stimulating?

I do know doing the same thing the same way all the time will generally bring the same results. This may work for you. This may not be working for you.

Stay motivated. Do good every day. Love God and love yourself. Keep trying to be active. Go to bed tired. Hopefully early every morning you will hear the trumpets. ■

You Can't Make A Deal With Iran!

I give our President Trump, Vice President Vance, Marco Rubio and everyone else an A for effort. They have worked hard to try to bring about Peace in the Middle East. The negotiations have gone on now for a long time. The problem is Iran is incapable of keeping an agreement with the US. The Iranians are all about kicking the can down the road. They love the stall tactics. They are big talkers. They love to keep the conversation going and everyone engaged in deliberation. While all the talking is going on than this gives them time to build a few more missiles or plot an attack on a neighboring country.

I want to see peace in the Middle East. You want to see peace in the Middle East. Most of the world wants to see peace in the Middle East. The main players who do not want peace in the Middle East are the evil leaders of Iran. The majority of the population of Iran want's peace. Can you imagine how disruptive to their everyday lives war has to be? Conflicts in the middle-east have been so long that we've forgotten about them. They didn't affect us. We read about them and forgot.

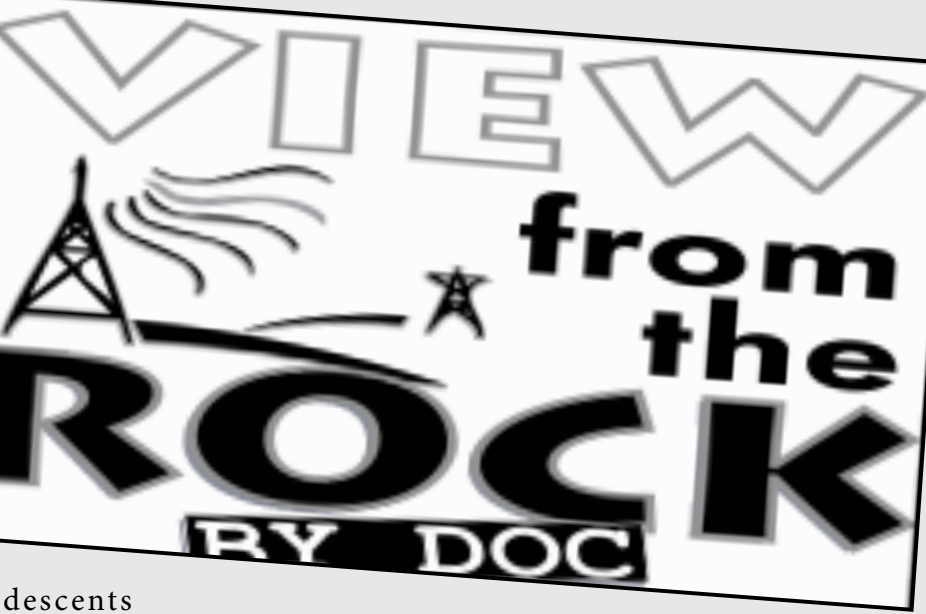
Unfortunately, Middle Eastern

Conflicts date back thousands of years to Ancient Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq). There were conflicts between Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians and the Assyrians around 4500-539 BCE.

Ancient Egypt and Nubia, modern day Egypt, and Sudan conflicts around 2500-656 BCE. The Persian Empire, modern day Iran, vs. Babylonian empire. These conflicts lasted around 550-539 BCE. Arab -Israel conflicts date back to the 7th century CE. The Ottoman empire, modern day Turkey. Persian Empire around 1514-1821.

If you want to go back further you must go all the way back to the beginning when two Old Testament brothers linked to the Middle East conflict are Esau and Jacob. They were the sons of Isaac and their conflict began when Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of lentils. This led to a perpetual hatred between the two brothers and their descendants. Esau's descendants, the Edomites becoming a source of constant affliction for Jacob's descendants, the Israelites.

So, who are the Edomites today? They have been absorbed into various cultures and their direct



descents are unclear. However, they are believed to be among modern day Jordans and Palestinians as well as some Jewish people, especially Sephardic Jews They are also believed to be among some Bedouin tribes in Jordan and the Arabian Peninsula. These descendants have never gotten along well.

One of my life's highlights was traveling with the tribes throughout Iran. And of course, the United States had to try and consolidate everyone under the idea that EVERYONE deserved a democracy, even if it meant killing everyone. We have a knack for that, and once again, we backed a dark horse. I've forgotten so much that they only pop up as foggy

memories. But I remember betrayals. And it's a long list. General Draza Mihailovich, President Ngo Dinh Diem, President Nguyen Van Thieu, General Nguyen Cao Kye, Bay of Pigs Revolutionary Pepe San Román, and the Persian Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. And the list will continue because as a nation, we are totally corrupt. The United States just can't fathom that money is just a figment of imagination and anything based on it is just a game of "deals". Any deal with Iran is just an opportunity for them to buy time so they can do what they what to do. A deal with Iran is never really much of a deal. And of course, it's because of the water! ■

The Station Fire's 17th Anniversary

Next week, August 21, 2026, marks the 17th Anniversary of the Los Angeles Station Fire, the largest and deadliest fire recorded in the history of Angeles National Forest and the tenth largest fire in California since 1933. Many will recall the immense thundercloud that emerged over the local mountains.

The Station Fire was started by workers tending an illegal marijuana grow in the Angeles National Forest and was named for its proximity to the U.S. Forest Service Ranger station on the Angeles Crest Highway -2. The fire threatened the local communities of La Canada-Flintridge, Glendale, Acton, La Crescenta, Littlerock, Altadena, Pasadena, Sierra Madre, Sunland and Tujunga.

Lasting nearly two months, the Station Fire was finally at 100% containment on October 16, 2009. The task required more than 4,847 firefighters, 13 helicopters, 11 air tankers, 399 engines, 44 hand crews, 48 bulldozers and 43 water tenders to contain the fire; the cost was \$95,300,000. The fire burned a total of 160,577 acres and destroyed 209 structures—89 of them being homes—and took the lives of two Los Angeles County Firefighters.

More bodies were found months after the fire was extinguished. California firefighters and "Hot Shot" crews from as far away as Washington were able to save the burning slopes of Mount Wilson from complete involvement as well as save the threatened television, radio, cellular telephone antennas and the Mount Wilson Observatory,



the latter which includes several historically significant telescopes and multi-million dollar astronomical facilities that are operated by UCLA, USC, UC Berkley and Georgia State University. The fierce fire left the Angeles Crest Highway (IS 2) destroyed, left 40 miles of barely passable lanes on Route 2, melted road signs, burned guardrails off their wood moorings, scorched tree limbs, and left debris and large boulders covering the road. To date, the U.S Forest Service has re-planted more than 4,000 acres and 23,000 trees a year on the 75 acres along the major roads to recover the 11,000 acres which were burned too deep in the soil and too wide-spread for nat-

ural seed regeneration. The California Department of Transportation has spent \$16.5 million to repair the Angeles Crest Highway, which re-opened in June 2010. More than 300 volunteers working thousands of hours succeeded in re-opening Deukmejian Wilderness Park after being closed for a little over a year. The hillsides were singed and the winter storms eroded parts of the park and filled the park with mud and debris.

Please see
The Station Fire's 17th Anniversary
on Page 5

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



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The Station Fire's 17th Anniversary
continued from page 3

The fire destroyed 709 park acres. Fire fighters were able to save the historic oak tree in the lower portion of the park. Two Los Angeles County firefighters: Captain Tedmund Hall, and Specialist Arnaldo Quinones, who were searching for an escape route from prison Camp 16, which supervised inmates, were killed during the fire when their vehicle went over the side of the road near Mt. Gleason. Circumstances suggest that Hall and Quinone were repositioning their truck on a small path near the prison camp when

they plunged 800 feet over the side of the road into the canyon. During the height of the Station Fire blaze, 6,6000 homes were under mandatory evacuation and 12,500 homes were threatened. Eighty-nine residences were destroyed in Acton, La Paloma and the Vogel Flats in Big Tujunga Canyon. The Forest Service began implementing the training and retrofitting of helicopters to use at night to fight wildfires in Southern California, a practice that was not in affect during the 2009 Station Fire. Please be fire safe and prepare for evacuation if need be. A really bad fire season is coming and you need to be prepared.■

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ANOTHER DAY IN THE HOOD

Rural living problems!

For those who want to know how to keep rodents from eating car wires, here are some tips to help you do just that:

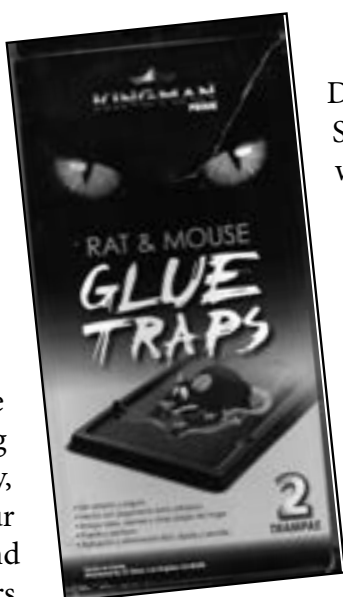
I had an emergency run and when I tried to start the engine, all

I got was the engine maintenance light lit. Opening the hood I found this mess of a rats nest and lots of chewed wires. \$1,200 worth of damage in the engine compartment.

So, along with the houseless parking in your driveway, crooks stealing your licenses plates and catalytic converters, you also have to protect

against rats setting up house in your engine compartment and eating your wires.

I sat back and declared war on these rasty rodents. And I won.



BEFORE you have a problem, here's what you can do. AFTER cleaning out the mess and smell and locating what wires have been damaged (your mechanic can help you there.)

1. Set a Trap. ...
2. Use a Smell or Taste Deterrent. And no, Irish Spring Bars of soap don't work...
3. Park Your Car in a Sealed Garage. ...
4. Remove Any Food from Your Car. ...
5. Run Your Car Regularly, at least once a week. ...
6. Keep Leaves Away from Your Car. ...
7. Leave Your Car's Hood Up at

Night. ...

8. BUY A STICKY PAD for your engine compartment. I like KINGMAN GLUE TRAPS and I get them from 99 Cent stores.■



For fun, I was sitting outside cleaning my fire and I heard a rat moving around under the hood where I had just removed the "used" glue trap. I grabbed a CO2 fire extinguisher and put out his fire. Quick, painless and efficient (But expensive).

Make Sex a Priority—Dr. Glenn Mollette

Covid-19, national tensions, unemployment and a strained lifestyle change have been tough.

One of the best things couples around the world can do right now is turn off your phones and televisions and have sex.

Couples more than ever need to re-focus on sexual intimacy. The news makes us feel bad. Politics makes us feel bad. Religious issues drain us. National tensions are draining us. Unemployment, money problems, family worries and more beat us down. You'll feel better if you have sex. Your relationship will be better if you have sex.

Before you were married, you could hardly wait to be married so you could have sex all the time. Years later some couples can't find the energy, the interest or a time on their schedule to consider sex. What happened? Why the big change?

Life and our bodies and even interests change for people. Work weeks often take a lot out of couples leaving them sometimes too tired. Aging zaps us. Sickness and medications bring unwanted changes that make intimacy sometimes difficult if not impossible. Too often people become drained, mentally and emotionally exhausted.

The intimate experience of hot, sweaty sex becomes a distant memory too often. He falls asleep on his recliner, while she dozes off on the sofa and then later to bed. Some couples are zoned out by the time they've finished Wheel of Fortune.

After twenty, thirty- or sixty-years life changes. The fire and passion that once ignited your bedroom has long subsided. Now, it probably feels like Antarctica as someone in the marriage is constantly over hearting

one direction that the man may want to go in life may be entirely different for the woman or vice versa. Compromising or at least reaching a point where there is peace and open communication is vital.

Find something to laugh about and make sexual intimacy a priority. This doesn't mean you are having sex every day. It does mean it's a part of your life. It may not even be close to what it used to be. It may no longer even be spontaneous. It may become

ten minutes feels even better. The time will likely come when I can't jog at all. Aging happens. However, I hope to keep moving, walking and being active in whatever way I can. Couples must do the same when it comes to sexual intimacy.

The key is don't let your intimacy die. For men today there is an arsenal of medication and help available. There is no reason for you to give up. See your doctor. Your marriage and your sexual intimacy that you enjoyed for so many years does not have to die an early death.

Make sex a priority. The kids are important, the grandkids are important, the yard is important, the news will replay a hundred times. So, turn off the tv and the phone and you and your spouse figure out some way to have sex.

Contact him at GMollette@aol.com. Learn more at www.glenmollette.com Like his Facebook page at www.facebook.com/glenmollette

additional biographical, Dr. Glenn Mollette is a graduate of numerous schools including Georgetown College, Southern and Lexington Seminaries in Kentucky. He is the author of 12 books including Uncommon Sense. His column is published weekly in over 600 publications in all 50 states.■

Many years ago, I usually ran a mile under six minutes. Today nine minutes is a real push and usually ten minutes feels even better. The time will likely come when I can't jog at all.

and burning up all the time while one of the partners is freezing to death.

Lots of little issues pop up in marriages that come between couples. Often, it's work, money, kids, in-laws, her kids, his kids, church stress, moving, all the above. While both partners would like to be intimate too often all the stress, friction and resentment over previous discussions or outright arguments drive wedges between people. The

the Saturday morning or Friday night scheduled event that you keep your calendar cleared for. Why not? You schedule your dentist and your doctor. Couples need to make sure they have their intimate bedroom time reserved. You will feel better, sleep better, be less stressed and your overall health will be better. Plus, you'll be smiling more.

Many years ago, I usually ran a mile under six minutes. Today nine minutes is a real push and usually

ASK RUSTY



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

Dear Rusty: Sadly, I was in business with my ex-husband. I'm a nurse and he was a chiropractor. He refused to pay me "on the books" and now, at age 73, after divorcing him due to his financial irresponsibility (I don't want to burden you with the thefts that he perpetrated), I am stuck with a small \$773 Social Security payment each month. At age 73 I am now faced with having to go back into the workforce. Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years for my husband but wasn't paid? **Signed: Distressed Divorcee**

Dear Distressed: We are so sorry to hear of your unfortunate circumstances. Assuming your ex-husband

I Worked for my Ex-husband but Wasn't Paid and now have little Social Security; What are my options?

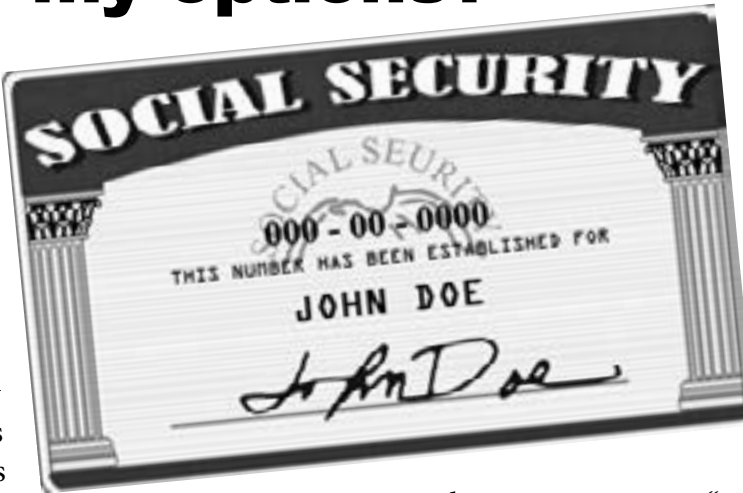
is now collecting Social Security retirement benefits (or is at least eligible to if you are divorced at least 2 years), you should be able to collect an ex-spouse benefit as his former wife. In that case, you would be entitled to receive 50% of the Social Security benefit he was entitled to at his own full retirement age (because he and you were married for over 10 years).

The way that will work is that you would continue to receive your personally-earned \$773 monthly Social Security retirement amount earned from other employment, but you would also be entitled to a supplemental "spousal boost" to bring your payment up to half of the SS payment amount your ex-husband is entitled to at his SS full retirement age. In other words, because you were married to your ex for more than 10 years, you are entitled to the same Social Security benefits as though you were still married. That is true, even if he has remarried and his new wife is also getting a spouse benefit from his record. You will still be entitled to an ex-spouse

benefit from your ex-husband as his former wife. And if he dies before you, as a surviving ex-spouse you will get the same Social Security benefit he was receiving at his death, instead of the smaller amount you will get while you are both living.

Regarding rejoining the workforce, while you can certainly go back to work at age 73 without it negatively affecting your Social Security benefits, if you are struggling financially, I suggest you visit this website sponsored by the National Council on Aging: www.benefitscheckup.org. At this website, you can enter your zip code and find much information about other supplemental assistance you may be entitled to where you live, including health-care and medication assistance, housing, nutritional assistance, etc.

Regarding your question: "Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years and wasn't paid?" Social Security determines benefits based solely on your personal earnings as reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which is, in turn, dependent on how your joint income taxes were filed over the years you worked in your husband's business. Social Security is unable to assist you with IRS matters. I'm afraid yours is more of a legal matter you would need to pursue by discussing your situation directly with the IRS or engaging an attorney for assistance.■



Neighborhood Watch Meeting Notes

21 attendees heard crime stats, local updates, enjoyed spirited Q&A, and gratefully accepted complimentary iced tea and coffee at Joselito's Mexican Restaurant in Tujunga!

- **SUNLAND** serious crimes down from 175 to 150 total, year-to-date.
- **TUJUNGA** had **140 YTD!** (Lowest in Foothill Div.!)

Compare those stats with another Foothill area that suffered **343!**

LAPD Senior Lead Officer Gloria Caloca led off with news that Tujunga's crime stats rose by two burglaries over last year, year to date! (See paragraphs and home/business hints below!)

SLO Caloca said self-protection and prevention are FAR cheaper than mopping up after a burglary. Stolen items can be valuable but just as often your cost to repair bashed-in windows is more than they stole.

SLO Caloca has avidly pursued a board-up for a deserted office space on Commerce, but that will cost the City (inexplicably) \$15,000! Several offered to do the job for much less!

CD7 Rep Ricardo Flores adds that the property owner is MIA, and CD7 will put a lien on the property, a process that costs \$35K!

Local allegations include drug sales from that vacancy, and its person-

nel drifting into Little Landers Park! There have been occasional arrests and many citations. Complain to LADBS to board up empty buildings.

HOMELESS: Billions spent! Thousands housed. (LA City, do the math!)

Our officers are diligent using applicable laws to discourage S-T homeless from settling too long in one spot and thus becoming difficult to dislodge. Among the barriers...

- Homeless won't submit to sensible shelter rules for community living
 - Drug-riddled minds can't manage even a small apartment
 - They demand housing in S-T.
- We're SAFER than almost anywhere else. One such person held out for the beach, then fatally OD'd.

Near Hansen Dam on private property, is an encampment, but removal requires owners' help. A staffer is working on it.

BURGLARIES! Recent ramped-up break-ins in Crystal View exemplify this issue!

Wherever you live, ALL residents can band together to "harden" homes, apartments and neighborhoods against break-ins! Thieves want an easy, silent in-and-out with maximum take! YOU can discourage them and make them choose a different home!■



LA County buys helicopter from EU for \$43 million, including cost of tariff

The price includes a 15% tariff imposed on all EU products exported to the United States, part of a trade deal by the Trump Administration

Los Angeles County Supervisors approved the purchase Tuesday, Aug. 4, of a Sikorsky S-70i Firehawk, a specially-equipped helicopter for battling wildfires, at a cost of \$43.1 million. Fire Chief Anthony Marrone, in a letter to the board, said includes the add-on cost of a 15% tariff that is expected to be imposed on the high-tech aircraft.

Why a tariff? Because the 15% fee is applied on all goods imported into the United States from the European Union, according to a deal made by the Trump Administration with the EU in July 2025. The trade pact also includes investments by the EU in American energy and military equipment — a deal made under the threat of escalating tariffs, according to a report from the World Economic Forum.

The precise cost of the tariff could not be specified, Marrone wrote, until the final payment is made. So the final cost to taxpayers may be adjusted later, according to the motion. The L.A. County Fire Department did not respond to requests for comment.■



Two Sikorsky S70i Firehawks arrived from Colorado to Barton Heliport in Pacoima, in August of 2020. (Photo by Gene Blevins/Contributing photographer)

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