

SHPOA

Shadow Hills Property Owners Association
Dedicated to Preserving Rural Community

A Neighborhood Where Families Grow



Volume 49, Issue 5

SHPOA Sep-Oct 2026

Recap and Minutes of July 14, 2026 SHPOA
General Meeting

By Tina Eick, SHPOA Board

On July 14, 2026, the Shadow Hills Property Owners (SHPOA) held their Summer Social at Tierra Del Sol. The lovely event was held in the garden area, under the tree canopy on the west side of the property. The evening featured a Sing-A-Long with our local musical talents, Fletcher Beasley, Thom Despres and Sedley Jensen. Their band, Thirty Three and A Third, carried us back to the 60's and 70's (think "Sweet Caroline" ... or "California Girls") featuring guitars, sax, mandolin and flute. A truly magical, musical night! And we did sing-a long!

State Senator Nick Schultz and his Field Deputy, Alex joined us, along with our very own Council Deputy (CD7), Arthur Javadyan for some delicious, homemade pie a la mode and musical entertainment. Thanks again to all of our creative bakers in the community. The pies were incredibly tasty. And thanks to Betsy Kennedy, Hospitality Chair, for supplying the ice cream and necessary accoutrements.

All in all, it was a very pleasant, relaxing evening spent with friends and neighbors. A much needed respite from the long hot, stressful summer days.



Behind the Counter: Navigating Building & Safety
in Los Angeles

By Carlos George, SHPOA Board

There's a moment many property owners in Los Angeles know all too well. You walk into a city office with a simple goal—pull a permit, ask a question, fix a problem—and leave with more questions than answers. It's not frustration that hits first. It's confusion. A homeowner decided to make a modest improvement: repair a structure, bring everything up to code, and do things the right way. They turned to the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, expecting a clear path forward. Instead, they found themselves navigating multiple departments, conflicting instructions, and requirements that seemed to change depending on who they spoke to. What should have been straightforward quickly became complicated. At first, it seemed simple: submit plans, get approval, begin work. But step by step, new layers appeared: planning approval, engineering sign-off, and zoning review. Each step came with new forms, new timelines, and new interpretations, often without a clear roadmap tying it all together.

(Continued next column)

SHPOA GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Tierra Del Sol, 9919 Sunland Blvd.
Shadow Hills
7:00-9:00 PM
Dining Hall at Tierra Del Sol

**Please mark your calendar for the SHPOA
General Meeting on Tuesday, September
8th**

Land Use Issues to include:

*SHPOA analysis and notification to LA city regarding the multiple areas of concern about Sunland Blvd and its future, presented by Mushegh Muradyan and Carlos George.

*Illegal trucks eastbound on Peoria and Stonehurst.

*Stop sign on Johanna at the Shadow Hills Presbyterian Church?

*E Bikes on trails throughout Shadow Hills

*Signage update

*Arthur Javadyan, Traffic and Shadow Hills Deputy from CD7, will be in attendance to address these issues

Ice Cream Sundaes with multiple toppings.

(Continued)

Recent audits and public feedback have highlighted what many already experience. Two people asking the same question can receive two different answers, creating uncertainty and costly delays. Projects often involve multiple departments including Planning, Public Works, Fire, and Zoning, but coordination between them isn't always seamless. There is no single, simple guide outlining the exact steps for a project, forcing residents to piece the process together themselves. Applications can sit waiting for review, corrections, or another department, often without predictable timelines. Applicants frequently go through repeated correction cycles where fixing one issue leads to another being identified, increasing frustration and costs. Behind every permit is a real story: a family improving their home, a business trying to open, or an owner trying to stay compliant. When the process is unclear, delays, expenses, and

(Please see "B&S" on p.)

2025 SHPOA Board Members(if no email is listed, please send to board@shpoa.us)**Executive Officers**

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board@shpoa.us

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Recording Secretary: vacant

Treasurer: Michael Stein

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Neighborhood Watch: Vacant

Daily Fodder and
Lost/Found Pets Susan Wong
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Traffic Safety Coordinator Carlos George

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Newsletter Advertising Michael Stein
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Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council (FTDNC)

www.ftdnc.org

President: Kevin Davis
president@ftdnc.org

Shadow Hills Rep: Gerardo Barrientos

("B&S" cont'd from p. 1)

missed opportunities follow. Building and Safety is not just about regulation—it's about protecting the public, ensuring quality construction, and supporting responsible development. But when the process becomes too complex, it discourages compliance. A better system does not require changing the rules, only improving how they are communicated. Clear step-by-step roadmaps, a single point of contact, unified communication between departments, defined timelines, and identifying requirements upfront would make a significant difference. The Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety plays a critical role in shaping our city. Improving transparency is about restoring confidence in a system that affects so many. Most people don't mind following the rules. They just want to understand them. Because in a city built on growth and opportunity, navigating Building and Safety should not feel like navigating a maze. It should feel like a path forward.



**The Land You Own... and the Land You Share:
 Understanding Easements in Shadow Hills
 By Carlos George, SHPOA Board**

In Shadow Hills, land means freedom. Room to breathe. Room for horses. Room to live a lifestyle that feels far removed from the rest of Los Angeles. But every so often, a homeowner discovers something unexpected: Not every part of their land is entirely theirs to control. A property owner decided to install a new gate—something simple to improve privacy and security. The posts were measured. The materials were ready. Everything seemed straightforward. Until someone asked: have you checked if there's an easement there? The answer was no, and that's when the real story began. An easement is a legal right that allows someone else—often a utility company, the city, or even a neighbor—to use a portion of your property for a specific purpose. In Shadow Hills, common easements include utility lines, access roads or shared driveways, drainage areas, and equestrian or trail access. That means even if you own the land, you may not be able to build on it, block it, or change it. Unlike fences or walls, easements are rarely visible. They exist on title reports, in old subdivision maps, and buried in recorded documents. The homeowner reviewed their records and discovered that a strip of land along the edge of their property—right where the gate was planned—was designated as a utility easement. There were no markings on the ground, no signs, just a legal boundary quietly limiting what could be done.

In newer developments, easements are often predictable and clearly documented, but Shadow Hills is different. Many properties were subdivided decades ago, have irregular lot shapes, and include shared access paths and historic use areas. Some easements were created long before current owners purchased their land, and even long-time residents may not realize they exist. Most of the time, easements go unnoticed until they surface during projects such as installing fences,

(Please see "**Land**" on p. 3)

("Land" cont'd from p. 2)

building additions, running utilities, or selling a property. That's when homeowners discover that plans must be revised, projects must be moved, or in some cases, work must be removed. In a community like Shadow Hills, easements can also involve neighbors, including shared driveways, trail access paths, or long-standing routes used over time. These situations require communication, understanding, and cooperation. While the land may belong to one person, its use may involve others. Easements are not a problem, but they are something every homeowner should understand. Review your title report carefully, look for easements before starting any project, confirm details with professionals, and communicate with neighbors when shared access is involved. A little knowledge upfront can prevent a lot of frustration later. The homeowner eventually moved the gate. It wasn't where originally planned, but it worked. More importantly, they gained clarity. In Shadow Hills, land represents independence, lifestyle, and space. But sometimes that space comes with shared rights and unseen boundaries. Understanding those boundaries doesn't take away from ownership—it protects it.



A History Of The Tujunga Wash By Elektra Kruger, Resident

The 650 acres of the Big Tujunga Wash fans out at the foot of the steep escarpment of the San Gabriel Mountains. From a distance it looks like a hunk of the Mojave Desert plunked amid the pastures and subdivisions of Sunland. The loose, pebbly, dry surface of the Wash is difficult to walk on. On occasion across the north side is a rare sight for LA – a natural river flowing freely over rocks complete with sandbars and even white egrets. The Wash is far from untouched by human hands. To the east is the Big Tujunga Dam with the reservoir of waters coming down from the mountains. Further west is the 210 Freeway that bisects it. Initially the freeway was intended to pass right through the middle of Shadow Hills totally taking with it a large portion of our community. That was when SHPOA was born to save as much of our community as we could. A portion of the eastern end of Shadow Hills was still lost, but thankfully due to the hard and endless fight of SHPOA, the majority of Shadow Hills has stayed intact. And just a bit further to the west is a levee, the 2-mile long earthen Hansen Dam levee crossing the Wash. Now-a-days homeless encampments frequent the Wash and illegal bulky item dumping is not an uncommon site. When driving along Wentworth St., how many of you notice the two rock columns bordering a driveway entrance into the Wash, a driveway called Cottonwood Ave.? Have you ever entered the Wash here to take a hike in the Wash and passed by some cement foundations where once-upon-a-time office buildings of the gravel mining company Consolidated Rock Products stood. Consolidated Rock leased 348 acres of land situated in the watercourse of the Tujunga Wash, leased from the property owner Valley Real

(Please see "Tujunga" on p. 4)

Shadow Hills Property Owners Association

SHPOA

Membership Form

Shadow Hills area residents, it's always time to join SHPOA! We are here for you!

Your support and participation are vital
to the preservation of our rural community.

Membership only = \$30

Newsletter only = \$10 (non-Shadow Hills area)

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Benefits and Value of SHPOA Membership

Preserve Country Lifestyle

- ✓ Fight for code enforcement to protect residential zoning
- ✓ Provide legal counsel and referrals
- ✓ Expand trail system, open space and wildlife corridors
- ✓ Support equestrians and equestrian organizations
- ✓ Advocacy with government and law enforcement agencies
- ✓ Assisting families impacted by fires or other natural disasters

Protect Public Safety, the Environment and Property Values

- ✓ Initiate Neighborhood Watch groups
- ✓ Liaison to local police and fire departments
- ✓ Assist animal health and care
- ✓ Reduce speeding, unsafe driving and trash truck traffic
- ✓ Community beautification and clean-ups
- ✓ Partner with real estate community
- ✓ Leading the fight to defeat the high speed train proposals

Promote Shadow Hills

- ✓ Market unique lifestyle and real estate properties
- ✓ Conduct SHPOA membership drives
- ✓ Hold general member meetings with guest speakers, helpful information and entertainment
- ✓ Bi-monthly newsletter
- ✓ Daily email outreach and information
- ✓ Website information
- ✓ Special events and signage

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("Tujunga" cont'd from p. 3)

Estate Company. The property is composed of rock, sand and gravel to a depth of about forty feet and for those Shadow Hills residents having lived here long enough to remember, the community fought and eventually won a very long and hard-fought battle to have Consolidated Rock shut down because, per our Community Plan, surface mining is prohibited. The Sunland-Tujunga area had a national reputation as a haven for sufferers of respiratory ailments. Many who suffer from these ailments have called this area home and a considerable portion of its economy had long been based on this reputation. Even though operated with all possible safeguards, extraction of sand and gravel at the ConRock site would still create substantial quantities of dust which could be carried by prevailing winds to the residences and sanitariums of Sunland-Tujunga. This dust could have a damaging effect on those suffering from respiratory ailments. Also such operations could adversely effect properties in surrounding communities. All power to those who took up this fight.



Navigating the Maze of E-Bike Regulations
By Susan Wong, SHPOA Board

You may be a rider of e-bikes, a parent of riders of e-bikes, or someone who has experienced e-biker rowdiness while walking, hiking, or horse-back riding. Laws aren't adjusting as fast as they should to this new availability of speed to bike

(Please see "E-Bikes" on p. 5)

("E-Bikes" cont'd from p. 4)

riders, especially those riders with teenage and pre-teen minds and hormones.

Just what are the rules these days about how and where to ride e-bikes? If you are a parent of an e-bike rider, you are responsible for both teaching your children how and where to ride, as well as financially responsible if your children's e-bikes hurt people or damage property.

What is an e-bike?

Under California State Law, an e-Bike is an electric bicycle with fully operable pedals and an **electric motor** with a maximum power output of 750 watts. California follows the three-class electric bike system:

- **Class 1:** Pedal-assist only, with motor assistance cutting out at 20 mph. There is no throttle.
- **Class 2:** Both Throttle-assisted and pedal-assisted, with motor assistance cutting out at 20 mph
- **Class 3:** Pedal-assist only up to 28 mph. Riders must be at least 16 years old and wear a helmet, and the bike must have a speedometer.
- **Electric Motorcycles.** NOTE: Electric "bikes" capable of traveling faster than 28 mph with pedal assist or 20 mph with throttle assist, or producing more than 750 watts of power, are NOT classified as legal e-Bikes under California law. Instead, they are treated as e-motos or electric motorcycles, meaning they require registration, licensing, and insurance, and are generally restricted to road use. Also a clue - If no pedals, it's not a bike! That's an e-motorcycle.

Of course, if any of these bikes whiz by you, you may not be able to tell exactly what they are at the moment. If you are a rider, you need to know what type of e-bike you have.

E-bikes have batteries and can be a fire hazard if riding near dry brush. The risk comes from their lithium-ion batteries, which can fail, overheat, and cause intense fires. Failing lithium-ion cells expel superheated gas, sparks, and molten material reaching temperatures over 1,000°F, which easily scorches nearby flammable ground cover. Thermal runaway is sudden and explosive; users often cannot get close enough to suppress the pack before the surrounding dry brush catches. Standard dirt or small extinguishers struggle to stop internal battery chemistry once ignited, leaving the surrounding dry terrain vulnerable to a fast-moving spot fire.

So, common sense means you do not ride e-bikes on our tinderbox trails.

BUT WHAT ARE THE ACTUAL LAWS?

In the City of LA:

- E-Bikes are not allowed to be ridden on sidewalks in Los Angeles City. E-Bike usage is also expressly forbidden on Ocean Front Walk between Marine Street and Via Marina within the City of Los Angeles.

(Please see "E-Bikes" on p. 6)



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("E-Bikes" cont'd from p. 5)

- E-Bikes are not to be ridden on bikeways, or boardwalks with "a willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property," which I take to mean that e-Bikes must be ridden with care and consideration for fellow cyclists and pedestrians.
- Electric vehicles with side-by-side seating or with a sidecar are not permitted on beach bike paths.
- E-bikes are generally prohibited on unpaved hiking trails. All E-bikes and other motorized vehicles are prohibited on the **Fond Land** in Shadow Hills. Bicycles and e-bikes of any kind are completely prohibited on all dirt trails, fire roads, and bridle paths in **Griffith Park**. (Enforcement by park rangers is strict. E-Cycling is restricted entirely to paved roads).

In April, 2026, The L.A. City Council's Arts and Parks committee voted 3 to 0 to ban electric bikes from most recreational trails. The measure then went to the Transportation Committee. Councilmember John Lee introduced the measure, saying it is needed to keep the trails safe for people hiking and riding horses on the trails.

On August 4, 2026, The Council's Rules Committee approved a motion Tuesday calling for ways to regulate e-bikes. The measure now goes to the Public Safety Committee, then the full council. Possible restrictions include bans on e-bike modifications and requiring riders under 18 to take a training course.

California law allows its **individual cities** to set their own cycling policies. Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, etc., all have their own laws about e-bikes. Always check local ordinances or follow local signage when riding on bike paths in or around Los Angeles, especially in pedestrianized areas and shared-use paths. If any place you are thinking of riding says "No Motor Vehicles", do not ride an e-bike there. Also, you know: COMMON SENSE.

Laws In LA County unincorporated areas:

Established by the Los Angeles County Department of Business and Consumer Affairs, this e-Bike local ordinance applies to unincorporated LA County. These rules reinforce and expand on California laws.

- It is recommended to wear a helmet
- E-Bikes are to be ridden on streets and, where available, in bicycle lanes and bicycle paths.
- Riding e-Bikes on streets with a speed limit greater than 25 mph is prohibited unless they are in a bicycle lane.
- Riding on the sidewalk is strictly prohibited
- Users shall ride responsibly
- Users shall yield to pedestrians
- Devices must be parked in permitted areas only
- When riding on-street, follow the rules of the road and all motor vehicle laws.
- E-Bikes are not to be used for racing, stunts, or jumps

(Please see "**E-Bikes**" on p.7)

("E-Bikes "cont'd from p. 6)

Laws in our National Forests (USFS)

- E-bikes are only allowed on trails and roads **designated for motorized use** (unless a trail has been officially approved for e-bike access.
- Use the **Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)** provided by the local forest district to verify legal routes.

Anyone seeing a motorcycle or e-bike on our Shadow Hills trails has been advised by LAFD to call 911 to get the LAPD out to try to catch the culprits. Since they haven't actually started a fire (yet), this is a low-priority call, but they have come out and caught the riders, who are often minors, and spoken with them. Next step would be to hold their parents responsible.



David Edward Romley
By Swan Stone, Resident

David Edward Romley passed away on June 12, 2026, at home in Sunland, CA. He was 74.

He is remembered as a brilliant lawyer; a generous and caring husband, father, and human being; and a man who constantly pushed himself.

This was particularly noticeable in athletics. As a young man, David won Southern California regional awards as right guard for the Hollywood High School football team. In 2003 he was inducted into the Loyola Marymount University Hall of Fame as part of the 1969 Loyola Lions national championship football team. He tested limits all of his life, earning a black belt in Kung Fu in his '60s.

David was born on Dec. 9, 1951, in Detroit, Michigan, to Patricia and Paul Romley. He was the oldest of five children. His family soon moved to Pittsburgh, PA., where his father served as pastor of St. George Orthodox Church. Ten years later, the family moved to Los Angeles, where his father was named the first dean (senior priest) of St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church and regional leader of clergy.

Although he was always interested in philosophy, David found his calling in the law, and after graduating from Loyola Marymount University in 1973, he earned his J.D. Degree at Loyola Law School in 1978. That year, he was admitted to the State Bar of California, passing the California Bar Exam on his first try. David worked as an attorney for nearly five decades, most of that time in the private practice as a civil rights and criminal defense attorney. He became a recognized expert at appellate law, ultimately handling over 100 appeals and writs in both federal and state courts. He was particularly fond of cases involving civil and personal rights of the individual. David loved his legal career and never retired. Nothing gave him more joy than protecting the rights of innocent clients.

In 2020, when the country was in the depths of Covid-19, David was giving free legal advice at a local Starbucks to anyone who needed it. You might have thought the long line was for a special on macchiatos, but in fact, it was people waiting for a 10-minute consultation with the man

(Please see "**David**" on p.8)

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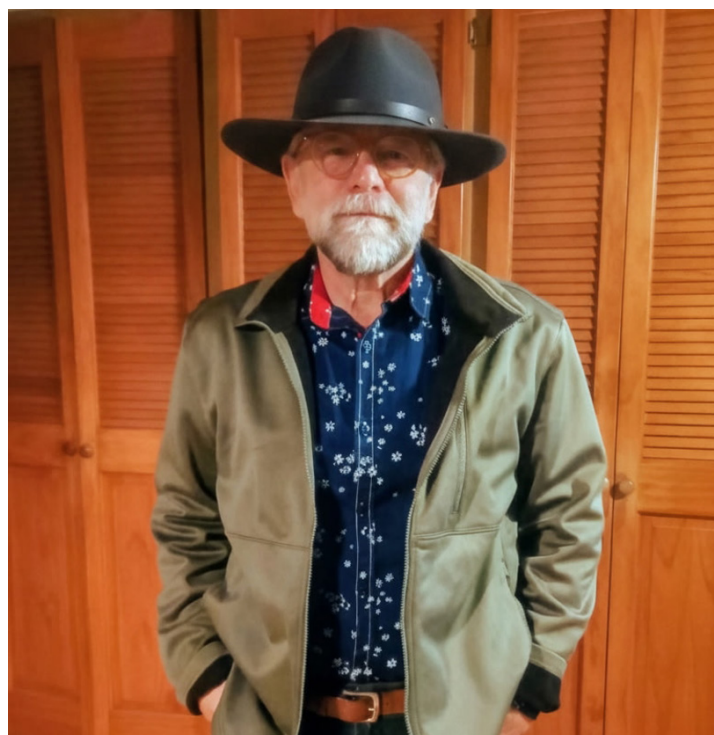


(**David** "cont'd from p. 7)

in the tie-dye shirt (this in contrast to the courtroom, where he was a sharp dresser in a silk tie and crisp, white shirt).

The pro bono service David provided reflected his giving nature, whether it was handing out generous Christmas bonuses at his law firm or routinely over-tipping waiters and delivery people. He was paying it forward from his youth when he earned generous tips as a delivery boy for the legendary Pink Elephant Liquors & Deli in East Hollywood.

David had many hobbies and passions, including poetry, for which he won the 1996 Editor's Choice Award from the National Library of Poetry. Another passion was fishing, which he traveled to Alaska to pursue. He loved cars and motorcycles, and had several classic machines in his "toy chest." But his greatest passion in life was his wife, Swan V. Romley, who was by his side for more than 27 years. The two met when Swan answered David's ad in the PennySaver newspaper for a caregiver. He had suffered a heart attack and needed help with his recovery.



David Romley

Swan inspired him with her tender love and adventuresome spirit and they immediately formed a deep and lasting bond. Together they hiked, rode motorcycles, sky dived, and went white water rafting, cave tubing, gold panning at the Kern River and more. In the evenings at their camp-site he would pull out his harmonica and serenade her with "All I Have To Do Is Dream."

David also took great pleasure in working with his hands, building and creating things. At their home in Sunland, David built a tiny house in their backyard, along with an elaborate tree house. He also constructed a deck on the main house, where he sometimes played his harmonica and shared music with friends.

Two years ago, David and Swan traveled to Southeast Asia, including to Swan's home country of Laos. Their dream was to return to the region, where David could teach

(Please see "**David**" on p.9)

("David" cont'd from p. 8)

English as a second language and Swan, a chiropractor assistant and certified herbalist, could provide healthcare. But cancer intervened, and for the last eight months of David's life, Swan was again his dedicated caregiver. In a final act of selflessness, David donated his body to a medical school.

David is survived by his beloved wife, Swan V. Romley; four siblings – Joe Romley, Laila Lawyer, Lynn Farradj, and Mary Farradj; four children from a previous marriage – Daniel Romley, Chloe Romley, Griffin Romley, and Brooke



"One-Size" Definitely Does Not "Fit-All" For Zone "0" Regulations By Elektra Kruger, Resident

The State's proposed Zone "0" regulations impose a "one-size-fits-all" solution on an enormous and diverse State the size of California. Case studies used in devising the proposed Zone "0" regulations are based on conditions more commonly found in the forested areas of Northern California. LAs hillside communities are a mix of irrigated landscapes, over-cleared degraded hillsides and those often densely-built residential areas, with urban fires being driven primarily by house-to-house ignitions during wind events, rather than vegetation making it structure spacing and home hardening more effective than widespread vegetation removal. In a letter to the Zone 0 Advisory Committee, a non-profit wildfire advisory group called MySafeLA urged the Committee to recognize the geographic and structural differences between Northern and Southern California. Homes in the Wildland-Urban Interface of Los Angeles are generally located in densely populated neighborhoods with limited setbacks, multistory construction and closely spaced neighboring structures. These conditions contrast sharply with many Northern California communities where larger parcels offer greater opportunities for so-called "defensible Space". The hotter drier climate of Southern California combined with persistent drought, Santana Winds and highly-flammable invasive species complicates fire management in Southern California and highlights the necessity of creating strategies far more tailored to our Southern California conditions. Peer-review studies on urban conflagrations in Southern California Wildland-Urban Interface areas where fire spreads uncontrollably from structure to structure, have shown that building materials, home spacing and moisture content in nearby vegetation is more predictive of home survival than the mere presence of nearby vegetation. Following the January fires, a US Geological Survey fire ecologist observed that fires changed when they went from chaparral to neighborhoods, the bottom line being that winds far outweighed fuel in terms of fire spread in a high wind situation. When you have these winds, it makes fuels less relevant when fires get into the urban environment because the primary fuels are actually the homes themselves. A 2025 study analyzing five California fires from 2017-2022 showed that of ten primary drivers measured as factors for fire risk, structure spacing was the most significant with vegetation separation being eighth not

(Please see "Zone 0" on p.10)

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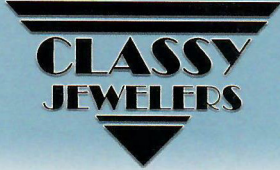
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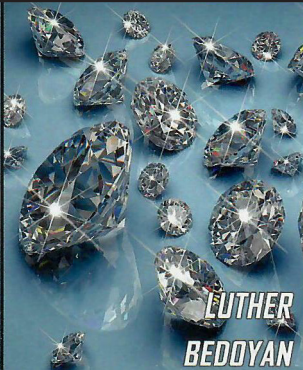
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("Zone 0" cont'd from p. 9)

taking into account that irrigated vegetation would have reduced that role even further. Despite the requirement for local input, the Board of Forestry's Zone 0 Advisory Board made little attempt to include Los Angeles City representatives or LAFD officials in discussions on the proposed fire mitigation changes nor had the Forestry's Zone 0 Advisory Board visited our region to observe conditions first hand until persistent pressure from local advocates pressured the Board to hold a meeting in Southern California in September 2025, six months into the rule-making process. Determination of Zone 0 regulations will be further up-dated in future issues of the SHPOA newsletter.



Who Decides Our Streets? A Call for Transparency from LADOT

By Carlos George, SHPOA Board

Every day, we rely on our streets to be safe, visible, and clearly marked. From stop signs and speed limits to crosswalks and traffic studies, these decisions shape how we move—and how safe we feel doing it. But many residents are beginning to ask an important question: How are these decisions made—and why aren't they clearly communicated to the public who pays for them? The Los Angeles Department of Transportation is responsible for installing and maintaining street signs, setting speed limits, conducting traffic and engineering studies, and managing signals, crosswalks, and road markings. These are not minor decisions. They directly affect public safety, traffic flow, and neighborhood quality of life. In most cases, decisions like speed limits or signage changes are based on traffic surveys such as speed studies and volume counts, engineering standards following state and federal guidelines, and internal reviews and approvals. However, for many residents, this process is largely invisible. Residents are often unaware when traffic studies are conducted, speed limits are being evaluated, or signage changes are under consideration. Decisions that impact neighborhoods can happen with little or no notice. Traffic studies are rarely published in an easy-to-access format or shared proactively with the community, leaving residents asking what data was used to justify decisions. There is no centralized system where residents can track requests for signs or signals, see the status of evaluations, or understand timelines for decisions. When requests are made, often through MyLA311, residents may receive a confirmation or status update, but rarely a detailed explanation, supporting data, or a clear outcome. This is not just about process—it's about trust. When taxpayers fund street lighting, sign installation, and traffic enforcement studies, they deserve visibility into decisions, access to data, and clear communication. Without transparency, even good decisions can feel arbitrary. Lack of transparency can lead to confusion over changing speed limits, delays in addressing safety concerns, frustration when requests appear ignored, and reduced confidence in city agencies. In neighborhoods like ours, where safety, equestrian activity, and community character are critical, these issues are magnified. A modern, accountable system would include public notice of studies with advance notification and clear explanation of purpose, published results with easy online access and simple summaries, trackable requests through a dashboard showing status, and clear decision explanations outlining why a request was approved or denied. Transparency is not about criticism—it's about partnership. Residents are not asking for control over engineering decisions. They are asking for clarity, communication, and accountability. Because when people understand the "why," they are more likely to support the "what." As conversations around infrastructure and safety continue, this is an opportunity for the Los Angeles Department of Transportation to lead by example: open the data, share the process, and engage the

(Please see "**LADOT**" on p. 11)

("LADOT" cont'd from p. 10)

community. Our streets belong to all of us. And when it comes to decisions about signs, signals, and safety, the public shouldn't be left guessing. Transparency isn't optional—it's essential.



Needs A Good Home By Susan Wong, SHPOA Board

For many years Shadow Hills had a hand carved "Shadow Hills Country Living" sign on Sunland Blvd. It disappeared during COVID, and a Shadow Hills artist, Gerardo Barrientos, has completed a new one!

We have been searching for a good location for this artwork along Sunland Blvd. We have two possibilities, but are still looking for the perfect spot.

There are MANY private properties along Sunland Blvd that have walls or fences between the street and the homes, and/or the homes are far away from the street, up or down a hill. We are hoping that someone will volunteer a small strip of their land next to Sunland Blvd where we can install the sign.

The sign is about 2 feet high and about 6 feet long, is hand carved wood, and is currently attached to two poles. The height of the sign can be adjusted. The installation will be done by SHPOA with the property owner's input and approval.

Please contact SHPOA at shpoa@shpoa.us if you are

(Continued next column)

(Continued)

interested in discussing this possibility with us.

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How Can Equine Structures And ADUs Coexist? By Elektra Kruger, Resident

Laws passed by the State resulting in ADUs being ministerially by-right resulted in a surge of ADU construction often placing these dwelling units in conflict with horse-keeping properties, in some cases even causing loss of horse-keeping rights on equestrian-zoned properties. In late January 2025, Councilmember Monica Rodriguez presented a Motion to City Council asking that they instruct the Department of City Planning with the assistance of the Department of Building and Safety, the Office of the City Attorney and the Department of Animal Services to prepare and present a report with recommendations to revise the Los Angeles Municipal Code to:

- Reduce the required distance of an equine enclosure from any habitable room whether on the equine-keeping property itself or on neighboring properties from 75 feet to 35 feet which is still supported as an acceptable health and safety barrier by Los Angeles County.
- Establish a Conditional Use Permit process for new animal-keeping structures on properties unable to comply with distancing requirements where ADUs are present.
- Establish grandfathering rights for equine structures in Equine-Keeping K-Overlay districts.
- Clarify enforcement responsibilities of the differing relevant departments.

The City Council's Planning and Land Use Committee recommended that the full City Council adopt the Motion as written which it did at its March 5, 2025 session. The Department of City Planning submitted a report in response to this Motion. Initially, the County of Los Angeles' Health and Safety Code stated that a property owner could not keep animals other than cats or dogs within 35 feet of any residence, dwelling or other building used for the habitation of human beings. However, the County's Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 2025-0029 at its July 29, 2025 meeting amending its ADU Ordinance specifically as it referred to its Health and Safety Code carving out an exemption for ADUs from the 35 foot minimum distancing requirement from animal keeping areas. This amendment was made to ensure that the County's ADU regulations continue to comply with State law. In light of the County's amendment to its Health and Safety Code to exempt ADUs from providing the 35 foot minimum distance from animal keeping, the Los Angeles Department of City Planning is recommending that the City Code also be amended to align the City's equine keeping distance requirements with those of the County's. These amendments would eliminate the need to establish a new Conditional Use Permit process for new animal keeping structures on properties that have come to be unable to comply with distancing requirements where ADUs are present. To be continued in a future issue of the SHPOA newsletter.



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Summer at the Ranch By Eva, Lund, Resident

Summer at the ranch continues to bring new faces, new experiences, and plenty of joy. This past month has been filled with exciting changes, wonderful new team members, and meaningful moments with our clients and community.

Changes for the Goat Crew: It has been a big month for our goats! Flip, Felix, and Memes have packed their bags, quite literally, and headed to Northern California to begin their new adventure as pack goats. We have no doubt these energetic boys will thrive on the trails. Meanwhile, Rascal is staying at Special Spirit with her daughter, Pippa, along with Rue, as our current and future milking goats.

Welcome to the Team: We're excited to welcome Danielle, our newest instructor, to the Special Spirit family. With a background in art therapy and horsemanship, she brings a wonderful combination of skills to our programs. She is patient, kind, knowledgeable, and has already become a valued member of our team.



(Continued)

We're also grateful to one of our newest volunteers, Marie. In a short time, she has made a meaningful impact in both our therapeutic riding program and around the barn. Her dedication and enthusiasm have made her a wonderful addition to the Special Spirit family.

Dreamers and Believers Camp: This month we had the pleasure of hosting Dreamers and Believers, an adult vocational nonprofit serving individuals with special needs, for a camp at the ranch, generously sponsored by Horses in the Hood. From the moment they arrived, the participants filled the ranch with joy and enthusiasm.

The week included meeting our farm animals, watching Shenae milk the goats, learning to lead and groom horses, and taking their first rides. As the week progressed, so did their confidence.

Campers also enjoyed liberty work with Remi, learning horse anatomy, painting and bathing horses, and working together to guide our alpacas, Rufus and Casper, into the arena. A meditation session with Liz created a special connection with Cherokee, and the week concluded with a showcase where participants demonstrated their riding, grooming, and leading skills for family and friends.

It was a joy to host such an inspiring group, and we look forward to welcoming Dreamers and Believers back again soon.

Meditating with Horses: Liz also led another evening Meditating with Horses session, introducing participants to meditation and nervous system regulation alongside our horses. If you haven't experienced one yet, keep an eye on our website

(Please see "Summer" on p.14)



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("Summer" cont'd from p. 13)

for upcoming dates.

As always, thank you to our neighbors and friends in Shadow Hills for your continued warmth, encouragement, and support. Your generosity helps make everything we do possible, and we are grateful to be part of such a wonderful community.



Shall We Arm Our Park Rangers? By Elektra Kruger, Resident

A large portion of a Ranger's duties are related to law enforcement. Every sworn Park Ranger is required to complete a six-month Certified Academy Training Course which, among other things, includes firearm training alongside our police officers which classifies them also as full law enforcement officers. Yet, while they have the power to detain, arrest, book and investigate under California Penal Code, they have no power to carry arms in the City of Los Angeles. This pretty well makes all other law enforcement powers mute. Who is going to take an attempt to arrest seriously, if the law enforcement officer does not carry a firearm to assure compliance? In saying this, I am by no means an NRA activist. In mid-February 2020, Councilmember Joe Buscaino presented a Motion to City Council asking that they direct the City Attorney to prepare and present an Ordinance amending the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) to allow Park Rangers to be armed while on duty in accordance with State law and further to direct the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Los Angeles Police Department to report on policies and procedures to be implemented in a program to arm Park Rangers. In 2020, the Motion was forwarded to the City Council's Parks Committee for their review and recommendations. I found it surprising that both Public Comment and Neighborhood Council Impact Statements expressed both support and opposition to the Motion almost half and half. Those in support reiterated that Park Rangers are trained peace officers receiving the exact same police training as our LAPD Officers while protecting the public in areas the LAPD does not. They may have to deal with armed persons, attempt to make arrests and protect general wildland areas, all without proper firearms for protection. What may appear as a minor offense from individuals drinking or smoking in a park can easily escalate to a dangerous situation especially if these lawless individuals might be concealing firearms. How can Park Rangers effectively protect the public if they cannot truly protect themselves. The Los Angeles Police Protective League stated that with an approximate 24,000 acres of parkland within the LA City limits, given that Park Rangers have received the same level of police academy training as the LAPD, arming our Los Angeles Park Rangers would free up our LAPD resources to serve neighborhood safety in communities.



Re-Home LA Zoo's Elephants Billy And Tina By Elektra Kruger, Resident

Billy is a male Asian elephant who was born around 1985 amongst his familial herd in Malaysia. He was captured as an infant and imported to the United States in 1989. Since then, he has been deprived of the ability to engage in any natural elephant behaviors at the Los Angeles Zoo. In 2007, the Zoo was sued, in part, for its improper treatment of elephants. During litigation, it was revealed that zoo trainers used a block and tackle to force Billy to lie down as well as using painful devices such as bullhooks and sticks with nails. Billy has also been subjected to at least 55 attempts at semen collection procedures over a three-year period as part of a captive breeding program. This involved restraining Billy in a device that rendered him immobile while a human inserted their arm into his anus to stimulate ejaculation. Despite these repeated and invasive procedures, Billy never sired any offspring. In addition to traumatic training, long-term isolation and highly invasive semen collection procedures, Billy also suffered from inadequate foot care which is incredibly important for elephants held in small, unnatural environments since foot disease is a leading cause of death in captive elephants. In 2023, the zoo did not perform any regular foot care on Billy for eight months while he was in musth resulting in overgrown nails with cracks that could have lead to a fatal infection and did indeed result in a significant accumulation of dead tissue. Billy is also overweight and has suffered from a fractured tusk. Tina is a wild-born female elephant who has spent nearly her entire life in captivity. She was taken from her familial herd in 1967, was imported to the United States in 1969 and spent decades performing in circuses and casinos under threat of physically painful treatment if failing to performing as required. In 2010, Tina was transferred to the Los Angeles Zoo from the San Diego Zoo along with her long-time companion, Jewel with whom she had lived for 40 years. Jewel died at the Los Angeles Zoo in January 2023. Less than a year later, the female elephant Shaunzi, also housed at the Los Angeles Zoo collapsed and was euthanized. Since losing her companions, Tina is now the only female elephant at the zoo and is being kept separated from Billy since she has frequently been seen rocking and swaying, a feature of psychological decline known to be directly linked to a captive environment.



Spooky Decorations...Or Actual Wildlife Deathtraps?

By Susan Wong, SHPOA Board

Beware of the tangled webs you weave this spooky season. Those fake spider webs that give your house a creepy feel are even scarier than you might think.

Experts warn they can be a literal death trap for insects and other wildlife—like bats and birds.

When a bug gets stuck in a real spider web, it's a normal part of the food chain, but a fake one can impact our ecosystem. They are strong enough to snare owls, bats, small birds, butterflies, and bees. Larger birds and animals can escape natural spider webs, but can DIE in fake ones.

Last year, a peacock in Shadow Hills was caught in a fake web, and managed to get free, but his legs were wrapped together so he could not walk. Neighbors tried to catch him to try to free him from the web, but no one seemed to be able to catch him as he flew up to rooftops. Eventually, he was sighted with the web no longer keeping his legs wrapped together, but the remnants of the fake web stayed around each leg for months.

"Every time an animal gets injured or gets affected by a fake spider web, we are affecting the food chain and biology and natural history of these species," said Dr. Ernesto Dominguez, a Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center veterinarian.

Please consider an alternate decoration.



Owl caught in fake spider web



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- Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council (FTDNC)**
- 4th Tuesday, Every Month 7 p.m.
 - Lakeview Terrace Recreation Center
 - www.ftdnc.org
- FTDNC Land-Use Committee meeting (currently inactive)**
- 1st Thursday, Every Month 7 p.m.
 - Via Zoom (see www.ftdnc.org calendar)
- FTDNC Equestrian Committee meeting**
- 2nd Thursday, Every Month 7 p.m.
 - Via Zoom (see www.ftdnc.org calendar)
- FTDNC Public Safety Committee meeting**
- 2nd Tuesday, Every Month 6 p.m.
 - Lakeview Terrace Recreation Center
- LAPD Community Coffee Time**
- 1st Thursday, Every Month 9:00 a.m.
 - SVANC Office, 8720 Sunland Blvd., Sun Valley
- Hansen Dam Park Advisory Board**
- LAST Tuesday, Every Month 7 p.m.
 - Hansen Dam Horse Park Club
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Lake View Terrace Recreation Center: 11075 Foothill Blvd.,
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Shadow Hills Presbyterian Church: (Johanna/Sunland Blvd.
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Stonehurst Park: 9901 Dronfield, Stonehurst/Shadow Hills
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Tierra del Sol: 9919 Sunland Blvd., Shadow Hills (818-352-1419)
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