

"Together we have clout!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **COMMUNITY MEETING** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

— WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2025 - 7:15 PM — SOCIAL HOUR/DINNER - 6:15 PM —

SHERMAN OAKS EAST VALLEY ADULT CENTER • 5056 VAN NUYS BLVD

OUR CANCELLED JANUARY MEETING IS MOVED TO FEBRUARY

NATHAN HOCHMAN IS ANGELENOS' HOPE FOR A SAFER CITY



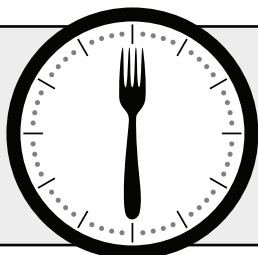
Hear his plans for:

- **Restoring Trust in the DA's Office**
- **Making LA Safe Again**
- **And much more...**

On December 3, 2024, Nathan Hochman was sworn in as the 44th Los Angeles County District Attorney, defeating the incumbent DA by getting almost 60 percent of the vote. Nathan vows to improve public safety by pursuing appropriate sentences for violent and serious offenders, while offering counseling and rehabilitation to those whose crimes were motivated by addiction or mental illness.

A lifelong Angeleno, DA Hochman served as Assistant US Attorney General for the Tax Division of the Department of Justice in 2008. Prior to that, he was an Assistant US Attorney for the Central District of California from 1990 to 1997, serving in the Criminal Division. He has had an extensive career in the private sector, as a partner of several nationwide law firms and as a leading expert in tax law, criminal defense, and environmental law. Nate previously served as President of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission. He graduated magna cum laude from Brown University and earned his law degree from Stanford Law School.

Don't miss our live meeting and the opportunity to ask your questions directly to our new DA. Or you can email your questions to SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com no later than noon Tuesday February 18th. Streaming starts at 7:15 pm. Zoom ID is 869 9358 3466 with passcode SOHA914. Zoom link is on SOHA914.com. The meeting video is available a day after the meeting – search YouTube.com for "SOHA Community Meeting".



RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH - THE VALLEY INN

FIND OUT MORE ON PAGE 3 - SOHA SOCIAL HOUR @ 6:15 PM

MOTHER NATURE EVICTS LOS ANGELES

by Larry Slade, Homelessness Committee Chair

In recent weeks LA has experienced shocking impacts of the power of Mother Nature. No rain. No humidity. High winds. All a recipe for the disaster we experienced last month. We must have every reason to believe that this will happen again and again. We have cultivated and inhabited an ocean-front desert. Mother Nature is blind and harsh, and she seems pissed.

It's said that "homelessness is an ocean fed by many rivers." An endless river of poverty, mental illness, domestic violence, sickness, addiction, and the collapse of the family keep tens of thousands on the streets of Los Angeles. However, this past month we were reminded that Mother Nature can be and now has been the most powerful force to cast tens of thousands of us into "homelessness."

Anyone want to count the number of homeless in LA during the fires? Nope. The LA Annual Homeless count was rescheduled to mid-February due to the fires. A wise move. Whatever housing gains LA experienced were wiped away in 72 hours. We can expect LA's number of homeless to jump significantly. This, as we head towards hosting the World Cup this summer and the Olympics in less than four years.

How many Los Angelenas who lost their homes remain in temporary housing, hotels, rentals, or couch surfing with friends and family? Thousands! It will take years to rebuild. Mother Nature evicts its tenants without regard for title, economic status, age, color, faith, or ability.

Clearly, the newly homeless (like mostly all homeless) find themselves so due to no fault of their own. No one asks to be homeless. To be sure (and unlike most homeless) some of this group can afford to rebound from such a catastrophic event. Many more cannot and will struggle for years to come.

We can and should expect more fires in the future. We are going to need bold leadership to help guide LA through the changes in our climate. Whatever the cause (a debate for another time), the changes in the weather are readily apparent to anyone with a pulse. As our weather continues to be "weird" to the extreme, Mother Nature will continue to force Los Angelenas out of their homes. This is our new norm. Sure, we get an average of 284 days of sunshine a year in LA. We do live in paradise. But just like any paradise, it's not all good. We have our trifecta of natural disasters – earthquakes, fires, mudslides – that will continue to fuel the homeless problem in LA for many years to come. Not an uplifting message I know. But its real and we need to face it.

We are going to need a bigger boat (see "Jaws", 1975).

SUPPORT THE GREATER LA HOMELESS COUNT

It's time again for the annual Point-In-Time Homeless Count. Jodie Francisco is once again the site coordinator for the Sherman Oaks Count and would love to have more volunteers to help with this year's count. This annual count helps determine local, state and federal funding and is critical in our response to the homelessness crisis. Jodie is asking for volunteers for the Sherman Oaks count on February 18th and would love to have your help. You can contact her at jodiefrancisco@aol.com or (818) 970-3936. Or feel free to choose another location if that's more convenient for you. For example, the Westside count is on February 19th. You can register and choose your location at <https://count.lahsa.org>.



They Count. Will you?



RISING TO NEW CHALLENGES - NOT TO DESPAIR

by Maria Pavlou Kalban, Legislative Committee Chair

As we all begin to recover from the devastation of the recent fires, we must take a moment to express our gratitude to the first responders that gave their all to protect our communities.

In the first week after the fires, Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association provided meals to fire station crews that serve Sherman Oaks. We also helped coordinate the delivery of food to other stations citywide by activating the network of communities that make up United Neighbors.

We want to thank everyone that helped in this effort, but especially to our many restaurants. Despite facing their own challenges, they stepped up – preparing nutritious meals, offering steep discounts, and even donating food. Special thanks go to Valley Inn, Bone Yard Bistro, Maria's Italian Kitchen, Carnival, Cava, and Casa Vega for being partners with us in this effort. Many other restaurants volunteered on their own and often partnered with other groups and organizations. Now more than ever, we need to support these restaurants that are very much a part of our community.

Looking ahead, we recognize the growing concerns of the Palisades and Altadena residents where large investment firms may attempt to acquire distressed properties and take advantage of new state laws to increase housing density, changing the character of these neighborhoods. Currently the city, county, and state have put in emergency measures that will protect residents from this scenario by allowing only the rebuilding of housing within a similar footprint as was allowed before. The county is even reaching out to the state to pause some of the state housing bills that could enable overdevelopment in fire-affected areas.

We must remain vigilant. Pro-development groups continue to push for increased density citywide using the fire as an opportunity to advance their agenda of eliminating single-family neighborhoods.

We continue to support the city's Housing Element that was meticulously crafted and put into place in December with our support. Our city should build with purpose and care. We do not need to end single-family neighborhoods to provide more housing. We need to concentrate our efforts on our major corridors that can handle more density and create more community benefits. We must not lose our focus because of these fires. We have the capacity to build what we need within the commercial corridors we have.

Building new housing while replacing destroyed housing will be challenging, but not because we don't have the space, but because we now need more labor, materials, and funding all at the same time.

We have some pretty impressive councilmembers that see the challenge ahead as an opportunity to build better and more thoughtfully. We will stand with these councilmembers as we move forward to rebuild.

HELP MAKE SHERMAN OAKS A CLEANER PLACE



The Volunteers Cleaning Communities Sherman Oaks Group makes our community a cleaner place. The group's volunteer cleanups are held on the first and third Saturday every month, usually from 8:30 to 10:30 am. The group provides the cleanup equipment and cleanup plan. All they need are volunteers to help them. For more information, meet-up locations, cleanup times, and volunteering to help, please contact Howard Jaffe at h.jaffe@sbcglobal.net.

RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

THE VALLEY INN



By Jane Kaplan, Restaurant Chair – We're thrilled to announce that The Valley Inn Restaurant will take center stage as February's Restaurant of the Month! This legendary establishment, with its vintage charm and irresistible menu, continues to remind us why it has remained a beloved institution for generations. They will treat SOHA to a special showcase of their celebrated fare. Whether you're a regular or a first-timer, this is a chance to experience the flavors that have made The Valley Inn a cornerstone of our community. This isn't just about savoring steaks and burgers – it's about celebrating a restaurant that has been there for us through thick and thin, a place where memories are made and traditions are kept alive.



Step back in time and savor the taste of tradition at Sherman Oaks' oldest culinary gem – The Valley Inn Restaurant. Celebrating 77 years of culinary excellence has never tasted so good! Since opening its doors in 1947, this cherished local treasure has stood as a testament to timeless flavors, warm hospitality, and a deep connection to our community. It has been the go-to spot for comfort food that feels like home, whether you're stopping in for a hearty lunch or an elegant dinner. From classic sandwiches and fresh salads to juicy steaks and gourmet burgers, the menu offers something to delight every palate. It's not just food; it's a slice of history served with a smile.

Why You Should Be Excited! The Valley Inn is more than a restaurant – it's a story of resilience, excellence, and community spirit. It's where families have celebrated milestones, friends have toasted to good times, and locals have found comfort in its timeless ambiance. If you haven't yet experienced the magic of The Valley Inn, now is the time to do so. Join us on February 19th to honor this iconic Sherman Oaks landmark, indulge in its incredible cuisine, and connect with neighbors who, like you, appreciate the unique legacy of this treasured restaurant.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

by Matt Epstein, President

Exciting Changes and Comebacks on Ventura Blvd

Remember those evenings at Augustine Wine Bar, where you could unwind with a carefully selected glass – or perhaps a bottle – of exquisite wine, paired with delicious appetizers and great conversation? Sadly, in May 2023, a devastating kitchen fire swept through the beloved wine bar, destroying much of its prized vintage collection and forcing it to close its doors.

But here's the good news: Augustine is back! They've reopened their doors, and are once again pouring some of the most beautiful wines in town. You can stop by Tuesday through Thursday from 5 to 10 pm and on Fridays and Saturdays from 5 pm to midnight to sip, savor, and celebrate their return. If you're like me, you're thrilled to have this neighborhood gem back in business.

And speaking of comebacks, it looks like Mark's Garden is making strides toward reopening as well. Fingers crossed that we'll see them back soon!

A Colorful New Addition: Green Qween

If you've walked past Petit Trois on Ventura Blvd recently, you may have noticed the striking artwork that's transformed the adjacent building. The bold, colorful mural caught my eye, and now the doors have officially opened to reveal Green Qween, a cannabis dispensary that's more than just a retail shop – it's a community-driven space with a mission.

Green Qween, which first launched in May 2022, is a queer-owned dispensary dedicated to supporting LGBTQ+ brands. They honor queer history and identity through the products they sell, the local artists they showcase, and their community-based philanthropy, partnering with organizations like DTLA Proud. Inside, you'll find everything from cannabis-infused cookies, gummies, and chocolates to sodas and shakes. And since they've just opened their Sherman Oaks location, they're offering 10 to 40% discounts on select products.

A Fresh Take on Relaxation

If you're anything like me, you're always on the lookout for a great massage spot. For years, my wife and I enjoyed unwinding at The Massage Place on Ventura Blvd near Woodman. It was a go-to for relaxation, and it thrived there for a long time.

Now, I was surprised to see that it has transformed into Gaaya's Massage Therapy, but it's still in the same location. I'm eager to check it out, though I have to admit, it'll be tough not to default to our usual spot. One thing's for sure – Sherman Oaks is spoiled for choice when it comes to great massage places!



A Neighborhood on the Rise

With longtime favorites returning and exciting new businesses bringing fresh energy to Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks is experiencing a welcome revival. Whether you're rediscovering old haunts or exploring new ones, it's great to see the neighborhood buzzing with life again.

Have you visited any of these places? Let's raise a glass (or book a massage) to the exciting changes in our community!

SOHA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE UNDERWAY IF YOU'RE NOT YET A MEMBER – PLEASE JOIN!

SOHA's Annual Membership Drive has begun. Subscribing members who paid last year by credit card are all set – your dues subscription will automatically renew in 2025. We will email renewal reminders and then mail renewal envelopes to members who paid by check.



SOHA membership is only \$45 per year and includes our monthly newsletter, community meetings, special notices, and much more.



- ▶ Go to www.SOHA914.com and click "JOIN OR RENEW SOHA" to pay by credit card subscription.**
- ▶ You can instead mail a check with your name, address, and email to: SOHA Membership, PO Box 5223, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5223.**
- ▶ IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT US AT JoinSOHA@gmail.com or leave us a voicemail at (818) 377-4590.**

SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The **ONLY** member-supported,
volunteer-run, non-profit
community organization
dedicated to preserving and protecting
the quality of life here in Sherman Oaks.

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restore trust in the DA's Office and make LA safe again. ◀

▶ **Find out about Mother Nature's mass eviction,**
how our city rises to new challenges, a Sherman Oaks
clean-up, and a way to step back in time. ◀