

SHERMAN OAKS SUN

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www.ShermanOaksSun.com

JUNE 9-15, 2006



SUNDIAL
Community CALENDAR

Community

Sherman Oaks Galleria's Live
Summer Entertainment

Cool jazz, Latin fusion and rock n' roll bands provide free outdoor ambience at the Galleria on summer weekends. June 2-Sept. 2, Fri-Sat nights, 7-10 pm. June 9-10: The Sam Graham Trio, 15301 Ventura Blvd. (818) 382-4100. www.shermanoaksgalleria.com/live

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council
Meets second Mon. of each month, 6:30pm. Next meeting June 12. Sherman Oaks Elementary School Library, 14755 Greenleaf St (818) 503-2399. www.shermanoakscnc.org

Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association Community Meeting
Councilmember Wendy Grael will be the guest speaker. June 21, 6:30pm social, 7:30pm meeting, 14130 Riverside Drive. (818) 377-4590. www.sohainfo.com

The Pleasures of the Palate at the Studio City Branch Library
Zagat Guide editor, radio talk show host and author Merrill Shindler will discuss the art of food and sign copies of "American Dish" and "The El Cholo Cookbook." June 12, 7pm, 12511 Moorpark St. (818) 755-7873. www.studiocitylibraryfriends.org

Neighborhood Garage Sale
Yearly garage sale to raise money for Neighborhood Watch group. June 10, 7am, At Margate and Weddington St. (between Fulton and Leghorn). Look for the signs

Rockin' Airfest 2006
Celebrating aviation's living history. Historic aircraft displays, live music, first Los Angeles flyover of the advanced F-22 Raptor. Sun. June 11, 9am-5pm. Van Nuys Airport

2006 Body Image Fitness Challenge and Fit Family Expo to Benefit "Childspree"
The Jaycees (Junior Chamber) are raising money for the annual Childspree event where low-income children receive a \$100 back-to-school shopping spree at Mervyn's. Help sponsor by participating in fundraisers at Body Image Gym, 5077 Lankershim Blvd. in North Hollywood. Sat. July 15. \$25 minimum sponsorship. www.ucnhjayceeschildspree.org

"Pups for Peace" Meeting of Professional Women in Travel - Los Angeles
Learn about the Pups for Peace organization, which aims to reduce terrorism-related injury and death through the use of explosive-detection dogs. June 20, 6pm. Sportsmen's Lodge, 12825 Ventura Blvd. in Studio City. \$30 guests, \$25 members. RSVP to Paula Harness, (818) 368-7283. www.pwtila.com

Robert Hansen at NoHo Modern
Selected works, 1957-1987, through July 15, 11225 Magnolia Blvd. in North Hollywood. (818) 505-1297. www.nohomodern.com

IDEAS Film Night in the NoHo Arts District
Festival for student filmmakers the last Fri. of every month. Doors open 6:30pm, screening at 7:30pm. Theatre Hub, 5245 Lankershim Blvd. in North Hollywood. RSVP to (818) 203-4179

Los Angeles Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association Meeting
A free presentation open to all butterfly lovers, featuring a talk with naturalists and *continued on page 24*

INSIDE

News	5
Habitats	7
SOHA	8
Comings and Goings	9
Community Compass	10
Technology Triumphs	10
School Notes	13
Back to the Kitchen	18
Restaurants	19
Theater	20
On My Radar	21
Short Cuts	22
Scoops	23
Destiny Quest	25
Sudoku	26

Creating a common bond between hands and paws *Actors and Others for Animals aims to protect L.A. pets*



Sophie Sargis (R) and Scamper.

BY RACHEL HELLER

On any given day, as many paws as feet traverse the North Hollywood office of Actors and Others for Animals.

Annie the Pit Bull roams quietly from desk to desk, joined often by shaggy white pals Clio and Kelly, a West Highland Terrier and a Maltese-Lhasa Apso mix, respectively. Cats Meisha and Marmie - short for Marmalade - make their permanent home in a cozy back office, sometimes emerging to snooze by the filing cabinets.

Many of these animals were rescued from lives that weren't always so carefree. In fact, a terrifying number of pets each day are neglected, abandoned or abused. In a bustling city like Los Angeles, their suffering often goes unnoticed. For the past 35 years, the non-profit Actors and Others for Animals (AOA) has worked to change that.

"We consider pet overpopulation the greatest cruelty to animals, because it

defines them as disposable objects and they're not," said Executive Director Susan Taylor.

Six to eight million dogs and cats are taken into shelters every year, according to the U.S. Humane Society, only half of which find available homes. The rest of these unwanted pets are ultimately killed.

"The only way to check this overpopulation is to stop the tap," Taylor said. "And the only way to do that is through spay/neuter."

Each year, the organization partially subsidizes more than 10,000 spay and neuter surgeries for dogs, cats and rabbits. Covering an area that spans L.A. and Or-

continued on page 17

A Little League of Their Own *Girls of summer give the boys a run*

BY LYNN MILLS

It's a sunny spring Saturday at Sherman Oaks Little League (SOLL). Games are on, stands are full, and every once in a while, a ponytail pokes out under a cap. Someone will say, "Is that a girl playing?" Invariably they're told, "Just watch. She's good."

For many girls who play in SOLL, this may be their only chance to play

organized baseball. Generally girls are steered towards softball and can't hope for college scholarships on men's teams. Only a handful of women have ever played in the big leagues, and the last time there was a women's professional baseball league, Eisenhower was in the White House.

The girls in SOLL play in the moment, purely for the love of the game,

continued on page 14

Galleria Live! ♦ Clay Camp ♦ Renters Speak ♦ Cruising to Mexico

LEAGUE continued from page 1
and Sherman Oaks is a welcoming place for them.

"From my point of view, I think it's great having girls in this league," says SOLL president Dave Schwartz. "I love to see them out there playing and having a great time and competing with boys — and many of them do that very, very well."

Little League went co-ed in 1974, and it was estimated in 2003 that 100,000 girls were participating in baseball, and 10 had played in the Little League World Series. A flip through yearbooks over the past seven years shows the number of girls at SOLL is generally between 20 and 25.

Schwartz coached a team of eight and nine year old boys with three girls and says it was a pleasure. "I think at that age, they listened more and paid more attention." In the draft, managers are requested to take multiple girls instead of one whenever possible to make the girls feel comfortable. "And nobody has to be convinced to take girls on their team," he adds.

The girls are treated like one of the guys, with one exception: in the stands many mothers of opposing team members cheer for the girls, even though they're playing against their own sons. "I hear them say, 'Girl power!' and 'Show those boys how to play!'" laughs Georgia Huston (just turned 12), a catcher with a low passed-ball percentage, who never shrinks from leaping in the air or diving



Veronica Huston, 9.

in the dirt for errant pitches. She and sister Veronica, 9, started playing "t-ball" in kindergarten. They mirror their favorite movie, *A League of Their Own*, which chronicles two sisters in "The All American Girls Professional Baseball League" — Georgia is the poised catcher and Veronica is the feisty pitcher with a fierce right arm.

Georgia says she enjoys playing with boys because they're generally more

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Georgia Huston, 12.



Marti Sementelli, 13.

easy-going than girls. "If you have an argument with a boy, the next practice, he'll be like, 'Hey, what's up?' And we'll just forget about it."

The question for girls, especially petite ones, is at what age will the boys' strength and size overpower even a highly skilled girl? The majority of girls who play in SOLL are in the T-Ball and coach pitch divisions, with a drop-off at the higher levels. SOLL has a Juniors Division for 13 to 15 year olds that play at Encino Little League and thirteen-year-old pitching phenom Marti Sementelli is the only girl who has moved up to Juniors in recent memory.

In Little League, Marti was the strike-out queen, with an uncanny ability to place the ball and psyche out batters (her 500th career strike-out last season was covered by the news media). Despite a bigger field and bigger boys, Marti (at 4' 10", 80 lbs.) is proud that she has continued her success in Juniors. Some of the other teams that don't know her think it's rally time when she walks out to the mound — until she starts pitching. "When they're up, they don't do as well as they talk about doing, and I usually get them out. I like striking out all the boys; that's a good feeling." At an age when many baseball-playing girls move to softball, she doesn't want to switch. "It's a totally different game. I want to keep playing in Juniors and then maybe play in high school and then keep on forward." To Major League Baseball? "Yeah, I'm hoping," says Marti confidently.

Georgia is also petite, but her fantasy is to play for the Cubs, though she acknowledges that is probably unlikely. She says, "You know how Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier? I want to break the gender barrier."

However, women's baseball may be gaining momentum. National organizations such as American Women's Baseball Federation, Women's Baseball League, and USA Baseball field women's teams across the country. There are two women's leagues in California -- one in San Diego and another in the Bay Area.

Who knows where the girls of summer will end up playing? For now, Sherman Oaks Little League is the place to be. *

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