

SUMMIT LIFE

VOLUME 9



February 2014

FOR WHOM THE CELL TOLLS

Ask not for whom the bell tolls, wrote John Donne. “It tolls for thee.” In today’s era of wireless communications, cells have all but replaced bells. At the Summit, however, cell phones still occasionally fail to toll for you and me. The park was once called “Summit, D.C.,” the capitol of Dropped Calls.

What causes calls to drop? Hello! Hello! Let me rephrase that question now that we’ve been reconnected. According to Ken Muche, Verizon’s California public relations director, the answer to the dropped call problem is complicated.

Wireless networks are like freeways made up of towers covering a limited geographic area or cell. There’s only so much traffic that any one lane or any single cell tower can handle. Adding more lanes or more cell towers creates a situation where the towers have to talk to each other, explained Mr. Muche.

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Wireless transmission tower is silhouetted against the setting sun near Box Canyon. Larry LaCom/Summit Life photo.



Photo shows Verizon Catwalk Distribution Antenna System (DAS).

FOR WHOM THE CELL TOLLS

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The term we use is ‘handoff,’” he said. “Based upon terrain like the Santa Susana foothills, the height of buildings and so forth, there may be many handoffs over a relatively small geographic area. Not only is your cell phone provider handing off in this scenario, but other competing network providers are handing off as well including landline providers. They all have to talk to each other all the time.”

It’s easy to see that as smart phone applications and usages multiply, hand off capacity must also increase at an almost exponential rate. Otherwise, the wireless system would become a Tower of Babel where the same question would be repeatedly asked, “Can you hear me now?”

Customers hear Verizon better because, among other things, their handoff equipment is better. The company remains the first and foremost Fourth Generation wireless provider in the U.S. Initially fielded in 2010, Verizon’s 4G Long Term Evolution (LTE) hardware and software have changed cell phones from what Mr. Muche calls a first generation “brick” to sophisticated 4th generation equipment that

can download full feature films without lag in less than 15 minutes. The technology may soon include VOLTE or improved long-term voice evolution (fidelity).

In short, the company stretches Moore’s Law when it comes to systems design and engineering. Named for Intel co-founder Gordon Moore, the law holds that the number of transistors or chips found in complex integrated circuits like microprocessors roughly doubles every eighteen months - leading to a proportional increase in performance and a proportional decrease in hardware size.

Over the past eight years, Verizon opened two “innovation centers” in San Francisco and Waltham, Mass. The Waltham center focuses on new hardware development while the City by the Bay focuses on software innovation. “They’re open to any third-party developer willing to participate,” said Mr. Muche. “After signing a proprietary agreement, these innovators are allowed free access to our network with the goal of improving and expanding their product lines using the Verizon system exclusively. It’s been a win/win situation for both the third parties and the company.”

The results were modest at first. A tiny semiconductor chip was born that attaches to golf clubs,

baseball bats and tennis racquets and provides a 3D laptop image of the plane and speed of the swing or stroke. The centers also produced the Belkin Baby Monitor, allowing laptop-wielding parents the remote capability of watching and hearing their infant in the crib or playpen. The system can analyze the decibel level of the baby’s cries and build a database in text message form that tells parents if their youngster is ill or simply in need of food or a diaper change. Both products are in Verizon stores now.

And it’s only the beginning. An agricultural system under testing could soon increase crop yields. Termed “Aqua Spy,” the system consists of tiny sensors buried several meters below the ground across hundreds of acres of farmland. The sensors provide 3D data points on water and pesticide levels across the property, directing irrigation and pesticide use to needy areas only while saving money on water, gas, electrical and pesticide distribution to areas already protected and irrigated.

How does all of this relate to dropped calls at the Summit? Wireless technology is like a rocket moving through space at warp speed. So do not ask why cells toll or do not toll for thee. In the blink of the eye, the problem will be light years behind us. ❖

LOCKSMITH IS PROBLEM SOLVER ON A MISSION

Shortly after dawn on Super Bowl Sunday, 79-year-old Norman Weisenburger left his mobile home in Canoga Park and drove his van to Lancaster where an anxious customer waited on pins and needles to be rescued.

“I don’t know about the needles, but one of the pins in the customer’s front door lock was stuck, and he couldn’t open his Auto Zone store,” said Weisenburger. “The fact that I’m rescuing people from difficult situations is what drives me at my age. “Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor

hail shall keep me from my appointed rounds,” he jokingly quotes. “I’m a locksmith on a mission.”

Early one cold winter morning, Weisenburger literally rescued a damsel in distress. She was a young female Army officer parked with a “friend” in front of an Agoura Motel. The pair couldn’t go to their motel room because the car’s ignition key was stuck and the engine wouldn’t stop running. “Disconnecting the battery didn’t do it,” noted Weisenburger. “The engine finally quit when I removed the fuse to the fuel

pump. Then I treated the two of them to McDonalds, drove them back to their room and said goodnight.”

But the tall, soft-spoken man rarely works on automobiles these days. It’s become a specialty, he said. Today’s carmakers are busy discouraging thieves, not making life easy for locksmiths. “It’s nearly impossible anymore to slide a ‘slim Jim’ between the car door and side window to open the lock,” Weisenburger said indignantly. “Electronic chips are frustrating us. Would you believe that some Lexus models lock themselves back up the instant a locksmith unlocks them.”

There are still plenty of locks to be picked in residential structures, however. While biometric devices such as fingerprint and optical readers are slowly replacing the old cylinder locks in some development projects, there’s enough stranded homeowners out there to keep Weisenburger busy for the rest of his days. He’s a fixture at the Summit where he’s assisted residents for many years and often helps park management rekey newly sold and leased mobile homes.

“I helped a lady at the Summit the other day who hadn’t locked her front door for several days,” said Weisenburger. “The strike plates on her door jam didn’t line up with the locks anymore and I had to move the plates. That may be okay in a secure and gated enclave up the side of a mountain, but I still wouldn’t recommend it, he said.” Even in an earthquake, you can call Weisenburger at 818-704-6197. ❖



Norman Weisenburger works out of his van to rescue locked-out residents and motorists throughout the L.A. area “It’s a worthwhile mission that keeps me going,” he says. Larry LaCom/Summit Life photo.

ADVERTISING NOT PERMITTED ON SUMMIT ENTRANCE GATE

Please be aware that advertising is not permitted on the park’s entrance gate. Advertising and notices of lost pets will be carried for free on a one-time basis in the park’s monthly newsletter. Submit your ad along with your telephone number to the park office or via email at www.summitmobilecommunity.com. Ads submitted by the last day of the month will appear in Summit Life the following month.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

NOTHING COMES EASY FOR ICU NURSE AND LONGTIME RESIDENT PAMELA HAGENDORN

Summit resident Pamela Hagendorn was a child when she and her mother fled Jacksonville, Florida, in 1950 in the wake of Hurricane Easy. “That single event shaped my life,” said Pamela. “Absolutely nothing has been easy since.”

As an ICU nurse for most of her 30-year nursing career, Pamela has been spit upon by hospitalized prisoners and derided for her single-minded advocacy for better nursing care. She has steadfastly refused at times to take scheduled breaks from the bedside of her charges. You may someday read all about it in her book “Shattered Soul,” now in its formative stages.

Frank Gobel, Pamela’s live-in boyfriend for the past four years, is also writing a book about nutrition and exercise. He’s a retired LAPD sergeant who’s at war with sugar-centric diets and who’s own health advocacy may someday revitalize Pam’s shattered soul. In the meantime, the pair – each divorced twice – can’t help but look back on the rigors of their former employment.

“I was in police internal affairs and luckily retired just before the Rodney King scandal,” explained Frank.

“Nothing is easy for me. It’s either sink or swim. That’s truly the story of my life.”

Pam has lived at the Summit since 1987 and retired last April after 27 years in the ICU at Good Samaritan Hospital. “Thank heaven for Obamacare,” she said. “I’m still too young for Medicare and would have been left high and dry without implementation of the Patient



Pamela Hagendorn has lived at the Summit for more than 26 years in two different mobile units and still loves the rustic atmosphere. She recently retired from nursing after 27 years in the ICU at Good Samaritan Hospital. Larry LaCom/Summit Life photo.

Protection and Affordable Care Act,” she said.

“Nothing is easy for me. It’s either sink or swim. That’s truly the story of my life. Patients loved me, their families loved me, but my peers in the nursing community disliked me

because I was an advocate for protecting the patient first last and always; from himself, from the hospital and even from the doctor. It was rare for me to lose an ICU patient simply because I didn’t trust non-advocates to take my place.”

As a SCUBA diver who’s traveled

to many of the world’s exotic diving spots, Pam mostly sinks. That’s because she has never learned to swim. While diving in the Galapagos Islands, she lost a diving partner to a riptide, and played underwater tag with a Whale Shark. “When I surface after a dive, I’m never afraid. I simply inflate my buoyancy compensator and bob around like a cork,” she noted.

“Bobbing around unafraid, isn’t that what retirement is like?” she asked rhetorically. ❖

AROUND THE TOWN

VALLEY HAPPENINGS, FEBRUARY - MARCH

THE MEATBALLS OF COMEDY



Comedy in NoHo Arts Dist.

Day: Friday

Time: 8:00 - 9:30 pm

Address: 10901 Victory Blvd.

North Hollywood, 91606

Phone: 818-646-3129

Cost: FREE

THE REAL THING



Theater in San Fernando Valley

Days: Friday, Saturday, & Sunday

Times: Fridays/Saturday at 8:00 pm;

Sundays at 7:00 pm

Address: 4348 Tujunga Ave.

Studio City 91604

Phone: 323-822-7898

Cost: \$15

THE TRIP BACK DOWN



Theater in San Fernando Valley

Days: Thursday, Friday, & Saturday

Times: Thurs, Fri & Sat at 8:00 pm

Address: 13500 Ventura Blvd.

Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

Phone: 323-960-7712

Cost: \$15 - \$25

THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE



Theater in NoHo Arts District

Days: Friday, Saturday

Time: 8:00 pm

Address: 5269 Lankershim Blvd.

North Hollywood, CA 91601

Phone: 818-508-4200

Cost: \$30

PINKALICIOUS, THE MUSICAL!



Theater in NoHo Arts District

Days: Saturday & Sunday

Times: Saturdays 1:00 pm & 3:00 pm,

Sundays 1:00 pm

Address: 5269 Lankershim Blvd.

North Hollywood, CA 91601

Phone: 818-508-4200

Cost: \$30 adults, \$20 kids

LOS ANGELES BALLET PRESENTS 'QUARTET'



Dance in San Fernando Valley

Day: Saturday

Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Address: 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

Phone: 310-998-7782

OSCAR NIGHT AT WARREN'S BLACKBOARD LOUNGE



Restaurants in NoHo Arts Dist.

Time: 5:00 pm onwards

Address: 4222 Vineland Avenue, North Hollywood, 91602

Phone: 818-255-7290

THE JASON ALEXANDER TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER TOURNAMENT



Time: 11:30 am - 6:00 pm

Address: 4222 Vineland N. Hollywood, 91602

Phone: 818-906-3022

Cost: \$100

SUMMIT LIFE

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