

SUMMIT LIFE

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The only thing that's like a 7-Eleven store at the Chatsworth Lake Market is the schedule of the owner, Vinod Roy. He's on site every day during the week from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. to personally greet his customers and offer a cup of coffee. See story on Page 2.

Larry LaCom/Summit Life photo.

Chatsworth Lake Market: IF YOU ASK OWNER VINOD K. ROY, UP CLOSE AND

By Marci Wormser

You're in the middle of trying out a new recipe for barbecued chicken when you realize – much to your dismay – that you don't have one of the most important ingredients to complete the recipe – barbecue sauce. A round-trip visit to the market, you reason, could take a minimum of 45 minutes – if there are no lines at the checkout counter. What to do?

For several decades, the Chatsworth Lake Market has been assisting residents of The Summit and surrounding community who find themselves in such a predicament.

Conveniently located just two miles away, the store is the closest market to The Summit.

Chatsworth residents Vinod K. Roy, known by local residents simply as “Roy,” and his wife, Kiran, have owned the store since 1990. The market sells basic food items and toiletries, along with alcohol, tobacco products and Lottery tickets. It also boasts a sandwich counter and a coffee and soda machine. It never has long lines.

Nestled in the rustic backdrop of the Chatsworth Lake Manor community, the market “is like a little hidden treasure,” says market clerk and manager Alex Castaneda.

Roy, who hails from India, says he chose to operate a business in the small community because “it reminded me of my village back home.”

“(The area) is different than L.A.,” he says. “The neighbors are really, really friendly. They watch out for each other.” Prior to owning the market, Roy worked in a variety



Grocery clerk Alex Castaneda waits on customers at Chatsworth Lake Market. *Larry LaCom/Summit Life photo.*

of mini-marts, including 7-11 stores and Arco stations.” It was my dream to own something of my own,” he says. But he also knew he wanted to make his business very different from those run-of-the-mill chain marts.

“This isn't like a 7-Eleven where you are just a number,” he says. “I take time with my customers and spend time talking with them.” Indeed, on any morning during the week, you will find Roy sitting outside of the market, shooting the breeze with various local residents, who stop by just to chat. He knows the names of most of their family members. When a newsworthy event happens in the local area, residents sometimes call the market first to get updates.

Roy says he sells his merchandise for a slightly higher price than big-box stores because he “can't get a price break” from wholesalers like WalMart and Target can.

“It's hard for small business owners to compete with big-box stores,” he says, adding that residents are willing to pay a little more for merchandise in order to support local business. “I'm very thankful to the local residents for their support.”

It's because of that support that in 2000, the Roys were able to expand the market from the 400-square-foot store he originally purchased to its current 2,000 square feet. The smaller space, Roy says, didn't serve the community's needs.” I added more variety, and I

PERSONAL IS THE KEY TO MINI-MARKET SUCCESS

added the ATM machine,” says Roy.

It’s not the first time that the community market has gone through some marked changes. According to the Chatsworth Historical Society, the store has been in operation since the 1940’s, when it was known as the Red & White. It went through a couple different owners until it eventually burned down around 1972.

According to the Historical Society, “A few years after the fire, Frank and Joan Cannarella purchased the business, and it operated in the tiny building next to the fire station. A few years later, they bought the vacant lot where the old store was, and moved a small store onto the property around 1977. It was called Canyon Trading Post.”

It again changed ownership a couple more times during the following decade until the Roys purchased it. They bought the land that the market sits on in 1999.

Although the market functions as one of convenience, the business owner hopes to one day expand the location to a full-service market. That plan would be the second phase of a growth plan that Roy has been contemplating for some time. It can only happen, however, if he can acquire the empty lot that sits next door to the market.

“It will take time,” he says. “Rome wasn’t built in a day.”

In the meantime, Roy plans to roll out the first phase of his growth plan sometime next year, which will entail adding a small “fast food” venue to the market. He’s still waiting for approval from the city and county before he can move forward. The fast food would include ready-to-go pasta meals and hot

sandwiches for a cost of \$9 or \$10 each. Instead of adding space, he would simply work with the existing space he already has.

Affordable, ready-to-eat hot meals would fill a need in The Summit and Lake Manor communities, he says.

“We just don’t have anything like that which is also affordable here,” he says.

Although the local community has largely been supportive of his business, including his earlier expansion, he met with opposition from some residents when he got a license to sell liquor some seven or eight years ago.

Residents, he explained, wrongly feared the store would become a hot spot for drunkards and other such types. But that never happened. “It’s just about convenience,” Roy explained. “This is a family store.”

Not all of Roy’s customers are

local. Some people who yearn to get out of the hustle and bustle of the city, Roy says, come out of their way to stop by. On a recent Saturday morning, like they have done each week for the past five or six years, longtime customers Tom Blatz and John Ashcraft stopped by the market to buy Lottery tickets. Even though there are closer markets to where the friends live across the Valley, they prefer the “personal atmosphere” of the Chatsworth market.

“It’s like a mom-and-pop atmosphere,” says Tom. “It’s friendly. At stores like Arco, it’s not personal.”

Chatsworth Lake Market is located at 23400 Lake Manor Drive. It can be reached by phone at (818) 888-8555. It’s open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday. ❖



Celebrating a successful night of Halloween trick or treating are Summit youngsters (from left) Mariana, Amelia, Violeta, Madison and Lucien. *Larry LaCom/Summit Life photo.*

A Christmas Story: THE INSTITUTION MAN

By Garry Wormser

Several years ago in early December, I was reading arrest reports in the lobby of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Station when a transient walked in the door. He wore jail clothes; a Levi jacket, Levi pants and a relatively new pair of sneakers. "I want to take care of a warrant, Ma'am," he told the watch officer on duty behind the counter. He waited while the woman deputy looked up his information. "That will be \$2,400," she said. The man winced. "I have no money. I came here to turn myself in and do jail time instead."

The deputy spoke on the phone while the man waited in the seat next to mine. "What you in for, fellah?" he asked me." I was about to quip "in for a penny, in for a pound," when the deputy interrupted. "Sir, we can't put you in jail. Your warrant's about to expire, which means you'll have to go before a judge before you can go to jail. I may be able to set a court date for you in January."

The transient got up from his chair and paced a bit. "That's no good. I need to be in jail before Christmas." He abruptly left the building, but returned a short time later carrying a bag of candy corn and a can of beer. He placed them on the counter. "This is for you, Ma'am," he said as he popped open the beer can. "You know I can't accept this,"

man repeated his wish to be in jail before Christmas, and the deputy reiterated the fact that he'd have to see a judge first. "In any case," the deputy explained, "the jail is full up this time of year."

The transient turned and addressed the three of us. "I've got no place to go. I've lived in halfway houses, jury halls and jails all my life.

I'm an institution man." Then he walked out the door.

My empathetic story the next day in the Santa Barbara News-Press drew a reassuring word from my editor. Not to worry, he told me, Santa Barbara takes care of its own. Two days after Christmas, I ran into the institution man again. He was eating lunch in the sidewalk patio of Casa Esperanza, one of the city's four rescue missions for the



the deputy replied. "Please get that out of here." The man smiled "Are you going to arrest me now?" he asked.

A pair of uniformed male deputies suddenly appeared in the lobby. One of the men was well over six and a half feet tall. "Hi, shorty," said the transient. "What's the problem, sir?" the other deputy asked. The

indigent. "Hey, fellah," he waved in recognition. "When did they let you out?" he said. ♦

THE POSING OF THE BODY IS THE OLD AND THE NEW WAY OF STAYING IN GOOD SHAPE, ACCORDING TO YOGA INSTRUCTOR PATRICIA HIPSMAN



Yoga is a balancing act for long-time instructor Patricia Hipsman (left) and her students.
Diane Brown/Summit Life photos.

Legend has it that a German actress named Indra Devi first opened a Yoga studio in West Hollywood in 1947, after learning the “asanas” (the posing of the body) while a diplomat’s wife in Bombay where the practice began 5,000 years ago. But the technique was so novel to Angelinos in the 1940’s that during one of Devi’s first Yoga lectures, an audience member thought she was discussing yogurt.

The actress promised that her poses, dietary advice and mental relaxation would defend against aging and illness. Soon, Gloria Swanson and other top stars flocked to her studio and her books. It’s a promise that still prompts a large number of men and women to unfurl their yoga mats and get moving.

And you can do exactly that by driving down the hill a couple of clicks to the Chatsworth Yoga Studio of Patricia Hipsman. It’s that

smooth stucco building on your right just north of the traffic light on Valley Circle Boulevard. Patricia, a registered nurse, will tell you that Indra Devi was right on, Yoga does help defend against aging and illness.

In Patricia’s case, Yoga helped her overcome cancer six years ago. “At that point, I decided to spend the second half of my life teaching Yoga while still using my nursing skills to work more efficiently with clients suffering from chronic pain,” she explained.

Her choice was hardly the road to riches. Patricia holds down two part-time jobs in order to share the unusual studio with noted artist and sculptor Borris Giulian. “Borris works on one side of the courtyard and I work on the other,” Patricia said.

The classes are held all week long including the weekends. “In addition to physical issues,” Patricia explained, “we have students

who have practiced Yoga for years, as well as beginning students and those who have taken a few classes and have become hooked on Yoga’s ability to balance the body against aging.”

Patricia is definitely hooked for life, having spent 500 hours earning an instruction certificate in Yoga and more than 14-years teaching the subject. Now she’s learning “Thai Yoga,” a different way of posturing while in a prone rather than sitting position.

“Yoga is all about harmonizing the body with the mind and breath through various breathing technique, postures and meditation,” she explained. “In short, it’s a way of life and the way of my life. It’s what I love.”

You can contact Patricia at 818-389-8477 or by email at phipsman@aol.com. An hour-long Yoga group session is \$15. ❖

The Digitron Story:

RELIABLE, LOW-COST INTERNET SERVICE 24/7

The name “Digitron” is well known not only at the Summit, but also at our neighboring Mountain View mobile park and in difficult to service Internet areas including Malibu, Chatsworth and Calabasas as well as Lobo, Latigo and Box canyons. That’s because Digitron is more like a cell phone company than a satellite company, broadcasting its Internet-signals from cell tower-like repeaters on the ground instead of from the sky.

Thanks to Digitron’s ever-expanding repeater systems, we can provide high speed, reliable and round the clock Internet service

to mountain communities for one low price of \$50 per month, according to corporate project manager Ari Saggi “Other providers cannot make that claim, charging for up-time use or for service through Satellite signals that can be obscured by cloud cover or through slow, static producing telephone lines,” she explained.

If you’re new to the Summit and anxious for good Internet service, the roofs of the homes in the park tell the story. Most of them bristle with Digitron “line-of-sight” antennas serviced by digitron routers. Service is 24/7 with no additional charge, ever.

Digitron helped pioneer on-line internet service more than 30 years ago. The company, headquartered in Woodland Hills, provides data services to dozens of companies nationwide including Boeing, Tandy, DirecTV, Hughes, Meteorlogix, Costco and Sharper Image. “If you ask us to mount your jumbo TV on the wall and hide all the wires, we can do that too,” says Ari, a 20-year Digitron executive.

If you want to sign up for Digitron service, please call Ari at (818) 884-3588, Extension 100, or email her at asaggi@digitron.net. ❖

A Safe Christmas Tree:

HERE ARE A DOZEN TIPS TO KEEP YOUR CHRISTMAS MERRY

The most significant fire hazard in the home during the holiday season is from dried-out Christmas trees, according to Ready L.A. and the Los Angeles City Emergency Management Department. The Department responds to more than 200 Christmas tree-related fire calls annually that cause millions of dollars in property damage. Some calls have sadly resulted in the loss of lives.

That’s why - for the safety of everyone in your household - it’s important to ensure that Christmas trees are watered, cared for, and removed from the home soon after the holidays, according to the Department.

Here are a few suggestions to help make this a safe holiday season:

*For live trees, make sure the tree is freshly cut. The needles should be flexible and should not

fall off if you run a branch through your hand to test it.

*Make a fresh one-inch cut on the stump end and place in warm water. In the first week, a tree in your home will consume as much as a quart of water per day. Many freshly cut trees will last at least five weeks before drying out. Cutting a tree too early can be a severe fire hazard. If not maintained properly, a Christmas tree can dry out significantly.

*Choose a location to display your tree that is away from doors and heat sources, which include fireplaces, radiators, and air ducts.

*Trees sold on retail lots may have come from out of state. They may have been cut as much as two weeks prior to their delivery and may have started the drying process.

*Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning

stove or discard in an unsafe manner. Recycle your old tree. Most communities offer a special day for Christmas tree recycling.

*Artificial trees should have a label indicating the tree is fire resistant.

*Use only “non-combustible” or “flame-resistant” materials to decorate the tree. Never place lighted candles on a tree or near other flammable items.

*Lights should never adorn a metallic tree. The tree may be electrically charged from using faulty lights or electrical cords and may become charged with electricity, resulting in electrocution if touched.

*For Christmas lights: The use of electric extension cords and overloaded electrical plugs are the main cause of electrical fires igniting Christmas trees and outdoor decorations.

AROUND THE TOWN VALLEY HAPPENINGS, DECEMBER



HARD CANDY CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SHOW

Theater in San Fernando Valley
Days: Saturday Sunday
Times: 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Address: 21338 Dumetz Road, Woodland Hills 91367
Phone: 8188350612
Cost: \$30 General Admission



THE HELP GROUP'S WINTER CAMPS

Recreation in San Fernando Valley
Days: Monday Tuesday Wednesday
Times: 9am-3pm
Address: 13164 Burbank Blvd, Sherman Oaks, CA 91401
Phone: 8187787140
Cost: \$90-\$125 per day



SANTA CLAUS IS COMIN' TO MOTOWN

Theater in Burbank

Days: Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday
Times: Wed. – Fri. at 8pm, Sat. at 4pm & 8pm, Sun. at 4pm & 7pm
Address: 4252 Riverside Drive, Burbank, 91505
Phone: 818-955-8101
Cost: \$29 - \$59



CALIFORNIA SLEIGH RIDES

Ventura Harbor: Cruise the harbor to see decorated boats and houses
Times: 6-7:30 p.m. and 8-9:30 p.m.
Cost: Tickets \$20; \$10 children. Reservations required.
Address: 1575 Spinnaker Drive, Ventura.
Phone: 805-642-7753.
www.CaliforniaSleighRides.com.



CHORAL ENSEMBLE

California Lutheran University, Samuelson Chapel at CLU
Times: 8 p.m. Dec. 2-3 and 4 p.m. Dec. 4.
Cost: Free. 60
Address: W. Olsen Road, Thousand Oaks.
Phone: 805-493-3306.
www.callutheran.edu



THE SOUND OF CHRISTMAS

San Fernando Valley Chorale's The Joyful Sounds of Christmas:
Dates and Times: Dec. 3 at 3 p.m. at Chapel of the Cross Church, 10000 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills
Dec 4 at 5 p.m. at Congregational Church of Chatsworth, 20440 Lassen St.
Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, 15950 Chatsworth St., Granada Hills.
Cost: Admission \$10; \$5 children.
Phone: 818-884-8897.



BOAT PARADES

Los Angeles Harbor's Holiday Afloat Parade
Time: 6 p.m.
Viewing locations:
Port of Los Angeles Main Channel beginning in the East Basin near Banning's Landing Community Center, 100 E. Water St., Wilmington. Other viewing locations include: Los Angeles Maritime Museum, 600 Sampson Way, San Pedro and Ports O'Call Village, 1100 Nagoya Way, San Pedro.
Check website for complete list:
www.portoflosangeles.org.

To protect your family, also consider the following tips:

*Look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) label that indicates the electrical cord has been tested

for safety.

*Check all lights for any signs of damage, fraying or "blackening" to the socket. When damage is detected, take the lights "out of service."

*Use lights as they are labeled: "indoor" and/or "outdoor."

*NEVER leave Christmas tree lighting or decorations lit overnight.
❖



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir:

My thanks to the staff of Summit Life for the excellent article on "The Good Samaritan" in your October issue. The story helped locate "Geno," the Summit neighbor who brought my son home after a bike accident in the park and, in so doing, helped save his life.

Geno is a private person who wants no recognition for his act of kindness. I intend to honor that. There will be no photos of me thanking him, shaking hands with him, hugging him for what he did. As they say, "no banners, no bugles," just my heartfelt thanks for giving 18-year-old Matt a second chance to live a long and productive life.

A total of five cars passed up Matt as he lay helpless on the pavement with a fractured skull. Geno, in the sixth vehicle, stopped, helped Matt into his truck, put his bicycle in the truck bed and drove him home to me. Of the six, Geno was the only one motivated by a better angel. May he live long and prosper.

Sincerely,
Jerry Self #203

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Summit Life is a monthly publication of the Summit Mobile Home Community

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Real estate at the Summit is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 and its amendments.

Please visit us at

www.summitmobilecommunity.com.