SANTA CLARITA HISTORY CENTER
DISPATCH
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SPECIAL- TICKETS NOW ON SALE FOR TWO POPULAR EVENTS

“Not your typical gala” promised here!

What do you do when you’ve been called the “Hysterical Society” for a half-century? You grab the ball and run with it.

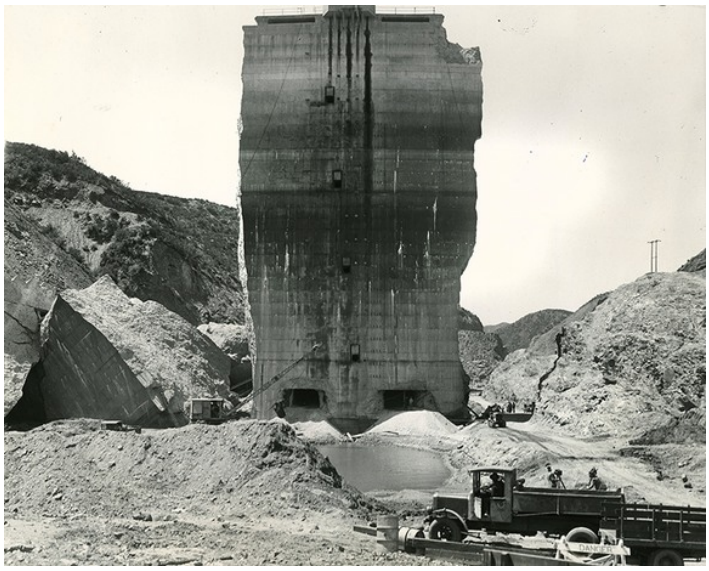
The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary on March 7 with a gala at the Canyon Country Community Center called “SCVHS50: Live From Santa Clarita, It’s Saturday Night!” an homage to the award-winning NBC comedy show also launched in 1975.

The night promises a nontraditional format, with an original SNL-style show written around the critical elements of dinner, awards, and an auction. The musical guest will be the popular cover band The Funslingers, and our host will be none other than local celebrity Ed Masterson! The event also includes a gourmet dinner prepared by Wolf Creek Restaurant, signature cocktails and more! Enjoy a trip down memory lane with trivia about local landmarks, reminisce about kooky news stories during Weekend Update, and join the eager kids cheering on the History Club! **Tickets are available on the SCVHS website at www.scvhs.org and sponsorships are still available by calling (661) 254-1275.**

Of course, the evening wouldn't be possible without the producers - in this case, the sponsors, which include the City of Santa Clarita, Santa Clarita Magazine/Elite, the Rasmussen Family Foundation, the Valencia Auto Dealers, The Signal, Santa Clarita Studios, the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Bob Walker, Jim Ventress, Pat and Guy Horanberg, Bouquet Auto Parts, the Taste Buds, Five Point Valencia, Alan Pollack, Tom Hough, the Val Verde Historical Society and Leon Worden.

The SCV Historical Society was founded to protect and preserve local history from being destroyed and forgotten; its first projects included saving the Southern Pacific train station in Saugus and moving it into Hart Park in 1980, and the designation of Mentryville and Pico No. 4 as California State Historical Landmarks. The Society provided historical outreach programs and eventually moved seven more buildings into the park, as well as a steam locomotive donated by Gene Autry. They developed curriculum for school tours, established an annual tour of the St. Francis Dam disaster site, and hosted various community events to build awareness of the rich cultural and historic resources in the area. Today, the Saugus Train Station Museum has been completely restored to the 1917-1959 era, when it was the busiest, and is open for visitors on Saturdays from 1 to 4.

Tickets for annual dam tour going fast!



A "tombstone-like" piece of the failed St. Francis Dam remains after the fateful break March 12, 1928. This piece was demolished in May 1929 after a person fell to their death from the top.

Popular program explores dam failure, human aftermath

This year's tour of the site of the 1928 failure of the St. Francis Dam in San Francisquito Canyon is scheduled for Saturday, May 16, and tickets are available now (and going quickly!) The tour takes a deep dive into the tragic history of the St. Francis Dam, its construction, the builders, the community, the disaster in the dark, and the victims.

The dam break was the second-worst disaster in the history of the state of California: the failure just before midnight on March 12, 1928, killed more than 400 people, leveled farms and homesteads, destroyed property and livestock and changed the way dam safety was addressed

forevermore.

The SCV Historical Society has assembled a team of experts with years of research and presentations between them; SCVHS President **Dr. Alan Pollack**, will speak of the dam's construction, the challenges and importance of this dam to the California Aqueduct project, the final communications and the dam break itself. **Ann Stansell**, an archaeologist for the State of California Parks, will share her experience researching all the victims for her master's thesis, both those listed in the coroner's inquest and those left behind. **Dianne Hellrigel** will talk about some of the families affected, and **Frank "The Dam Man" Rock** will share insights into the causes, consequences and aftermath of this historic event.

Participants will meet at 10:30 am for the lectures and video presentations at the Newhall Family Theatre, 24607 Walnut Street in Newhall (parking is available behind the school, enter the lot from 11th Street). Busses will then take participants on a tour to the actual site of the dam, with remnants of the dam visible in the riverbed and surrounding area. The speakers will lead a moderate hike and share even more stories of the disaster and its effect on the developing communities of Newhall and Saugus, as well as those along the flood's path through Ventura County enroute to the Pacific Ocean.

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to engage with history and pay tribute to the lives affected by the St. Francis Dam disaster. Join us for a day of learning, reflection, and discovery. Participants are advised to wear long pants, comfortable shoes, hats and bring sunscreen. Snacks, water, and motorcoach transportation is included in the ticket price.

Tickets are $80 per person and are available at https://scvhs.org/st-francis-dam-disaster-talk-tour-2026/. This event sells out every year, so get your tickets now! It is unlikely that seats will be available for purchase on the day of the event. All proceeds benefit operational and preservation projects of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society. To learn more about the SCV Historical Society and the Santa Clarita History Center, visit www.scvhs.org.

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