

Local

Public safety

Venturan accused of threats, robbery; officers find stolen car, arrest one. **4A**

Trump supporters rally in Simi Valley

Crowd of 70 people met by smaller group of foes

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About 70 people wearing red, white and blue gathered Saturday on all four corners of a Simi Valley intersection to rally in support of President Donald Trump. A much smaller group from the opposition was nearby, with conflict between the two sides occasionally erupting. The Trump supporters took over the sidewalks at Cochran Street and Sycamore Drive to express their backing of the newly inaugurated president, who they say is keeping his campaign promises. "I think he's accomplished more in 30 days than most presidents do in four years," said Gil Muramatsu, a Thousand Oaks retiree. Lea Williams planned the event. Social



Supporters of President Donald Trump hold a rally at the corner of Cochran Street and Sycamore Drive in Simi Valley on Saturday afternoon.

media posts led the Simi Valley resident to the conservative website Breitbart News for more information about the "Spirit of America" rallies planned across the U.S. Williams took on the task of planning such a rally in her city. A second pro-Trump rally is scheduled for 1-3 p.m. March 4 at Main Street and Mills Road in Ventura, Williams said. "It's just everyday people coming together and showing support for the national agenda," Williams said, adding that she thinks it's just as powerful to be expressive about what you support rather than what you don't support. Williams and others brought U.S. flags and signs, many with Trump's campaign slogan "Make America Great Again" printed on them, and chanted "U-S-A" and "Trump" as cars passed. Shelly Turley drove from Lake Elsinore in Riverside County because it was the only rally she could attend due to her

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Dogs get new life as neighbors put pack mentality to work online



CASON POINT
COLLEEN CASON

They say it's not the size of the dog in the fight that counts; it's the size of the fight in the dog. Cammie Johnson decided to fight for four dogs that deserved a better life, and her resolve grew with the size of the posse she gathered on social media. Like most of us, Johnson lived for years with a situation in her neighborhood that troubled her. Every time she walked her own dogs past a certain house in her east Ventura tract, she heard loud barking coming from the backyard. Something felt wrong. She never saw the animals leave the yard, which she said reeked of urine. Blankets on the fence blocked the view into the backyard, until one day the fabric slipped a bit and she grabbed a peek. It was summer then and scorching hot. The older three Rottweilers and a German shepherd appeared to lack shelter in the fenced, dirt-floor kennel where they were kept. They had dog houses that seemed too small for them. She saw no water bowls. The animals looked dirty. Two had trouble getting around. "I felt these dogs were being neglected," the 58-year-old told me in her soft voice. Then came our winter deluge. And like our hillsides and rivers, something broke loose in Johnson. She couldn't bear the thought of the dogs slogging around in the mud with no dry place to rest. So she posted on NextDoor, a hyper-local social media site: "I am going to call Animal Control. Go by this house and check it out." It started what she describes as a "firestorm." Soon, neighbors Debbie Paris, Jennifer Lawrence and Cindi Bailey signed up. As the number of people joining her campaign grew, this retired house cleaner felt empowered to clean house. Ventura County Animal Services officers did respond and then turned the case over to the Humane Society of

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COURTESY PHOTO
Cammie Johnson, of Ventura, pets one of four dogs she is helping find new homes through a neighbor-to-neighbor social media campaign she started.

SCOUTS COLLECT FOOD FOR COUNTY'S HUNGRY



PHOTO BY DAVID YAMAMOTO/SPECIAL TO THE STAR
Boy Scout Connor Koeppel and Andy Rickelmann empty a car filled with food donations Saturday at The Oaks mall for the Scouting for Food drive.

The Scouting for Food drive collected about 53,000 items of food Saturday in Ventura County. Each year as part of the drive, the boys drop off paper bags for donations. The filled bags were collected and then dropped off Saturday at The Oaks mall in Thousand Oaks. Last year, Scouts in Ventura County collected 125,000 food items, said Andrea McClellan, a district executive for the Scouts. This year, 92 Scout units participated in the food drive, more than in previous years, McClellan said.



Maya Swartz, a volunteer from Oak Park High School, carries a bag of donations Saturday. The collected food will be distributed by Manna Conejo Food Bank to families in need.



Donations are transferred from bags into crates Saturday as Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts participate in the national Scouting for Food drive at The Oaks mall in Thousand Oaks.



Volunteer Julie Swartz puts donated food into crates as part of the national Scouting for Food drive. She was helping out during operations Saturday at The Oaks mall.

First part of Chumash Park to open in Simi Valley

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The first portion of Simi Valley's newest park will officially open Monday. Construction of the initial phase of Chumash Park, 3200 Flanagan Drive on the east end of the city, was recently completed for about \$2 million, said Larry Peterson, manager of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Most of the 52.7-acre park will be preserved as open space, Peterson said. Only

7.1 acres are to be developed on three separate graded areas, including the just-finished, 3-acre northernmost area. It features a 29-stall parking lot, play areas for toddlers and youths, a half-court basketball court, a large adult fitness area, decomposed granite walkways, and picnic tables and benches. The park does not have restroom facilities and there are no plans for any to be added.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/RANCHO SIMI RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
The first phase of Chumash Park in Simi Valley has been completed. The park will be dedicated and open to the public Monday.