

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BUSINESS JOURNAL

Vol. 25, No. 10

THE COMMUNITY OF BUSINESS™

May 11 – 24, 2020 • \$4.00

Foggy Seas Ahead for Valley Cruise Industry

TOURISM: ‘No sail’ orders inhibit voyage planning.

By **ANDREW FOERCH** Staff Reporter

On January 20, the Diamond Princess cruise ship departed from Yokohama, Japan with 2,666 passengers in tow for what was supposed to be a leisurely 14-day voyage around the South Pacific. Just days later, games, shows and buffets were canceled and guests quarantined in

their rooms as reports began to circulate that a disembarked passenger had tested positive for a virulent, deadly virus that had broken out in China several weeks before.

The ship rerouted back to Yokohama. There, Japanese health officials confirmed 10 active cases of COVID-19 onboard and instituted a two-week quarantine for the ship and its passengers. A week later, the number of confirmed cases had grown to 61.

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Quarantine: Diamond Princess.

NoHo Theaters Seek Funding

ENTERTAINMENT: Distancing halts performances, classes.

By **ANDREW FOERCH** Staff Reporter

The North Hollywood Arts District contains the highest concentration of live theaters in any square mile of the U.S. outside of Broadway. But this cultural and economic asset could vanish with the coronavirus pandemic, as theaters remain dark. “It’s a scary time,” **Ronnie Marmo** at **Theatre 68** told the Business Journal.

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Inside a Zoom Call to Agents

LIST: Residential brokers discuss state of market.

By **MICHAEL AUSHENKER** Staff Reporter

Listen as the chief executive of Century 21 talks to 120 agents about the “very unique market” for selling homes in Southern California during the time of the coronavirus.

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New Rules for Office Tenants

REAL ESTATE: Less demand, more concessions in future.

By **MICHAEL AUSHENKER** Staff Reporter

Two months into the coronavirus crisis, San Fernando Valley area office specialists see landlord and tenant clients alike struggling to stay solvent. And commercial real estate brokers believe the local office market will look quite different on the other side of the pandemic.

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Ready: Dr. Bernard Klein at Providence Holy Cross in Mission Hills.

PANDEMIC PARADOX

Hospitals are central in fight against virus, but they lose millions.

By **AMY STULICK** Staff Reporter

In the coronavirus pandemic, the job of Valley area hospitals has never been more important, but all their efforts will result in the loss of millions of dollars.

Many have set up tents to screen COVID-19 patients at the door, and the patients admitted often require expensive

care. At the same time, elective surgeries — which provide solid revenue — have disappeared.

Gustavo Valdespino, chief executive of **Valley Presbyterian Hospital** in Van Nuys, expects the combination of lost revenue and extra costs will total \$30 million to \$40 million at his facility.

“You are taking care of very high-inten-

sity patients and at the same time, your volume is significantly lower across the board and particularly in the (operating room).” said Dr. **Bernard Klein**, chief executive of **Providence Holy Cross Medical Center** in Mission Hills.

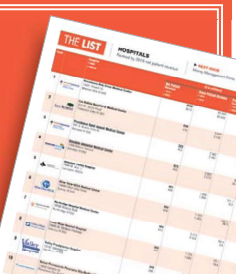
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PHOTO BY THOMAS WASPER

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Toy Company to Manufacture Masks

MGA Entertainment has created personal protective equipment featuring the logo of its Little Tikes line.

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New Leadership at Business Advocacy Group

Valley Economic Alliance has named Sonya Blake, right, as its new chief executive and Fred Gaines as new chair.

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Providing stability during a time of uncertainty.

THE LIST

A Peek into Residential Brokerage Performance

LIST: Business Journal sits in on Century 21 Peak’s virtual meeting.

By **MICHAEL AUSHENKER** *Staff Reporter*

After the pandemic fades, residential real estate brokers will have gained a new tool: videoconferencing courtesy of **Zoom Video Communications** in San Jose.

Home-sales specialists such as the brokers at **Century 21 Peak** at Warner Center (No. 17 on the Business Journal’s list of Residential Brokerage Firms) have adopted the software into everything from virtual leasing to internal company meetings.

According to Century 21 Peak Manager of Operations & Business Development **Erin Nakano**, who works at the firm’s Woodland Hills headquarters at 5900 Canoga Ave., the company has held more than 70 virtual meetings for its agents and more than 40 for staff since the end of March.

“Our ability to conduct business without interruption is remarkable,” Century 21 Peak leader **Eli Tene** told the Business Journal right after a company meeting. “We have full days that include many Zoom meetings.”

One of those Zoom meetings unfolded on the morning of May 4, as **Michael Miedler**, chief executive of Century 21, addressed some 120 employees from Tene’s four branches in a

morale-boosting effort.

Tene and **Gil Priel**, who also have offices in Granada Hills, Upland and Downey with more than 450 agents, hosted the call, which included Century 21 Managers **Erik Rojas** in Woodland Hills and **Kim Schulke** in Granada Hills.

Nakano told the Business Journal that the Zoom technology has been a bonus to the process, despite a few initial bumps.

“Everyone can agree that there was definitely a learning curve when we first transitioned over to Zoom and virtual meetings,” she said. “Previously, we had used a different virtual program for a meeting we hosted once a week for our agents, but it was much less involved.”

“One of the blessings that came out of this was that we were able to switch within 12 hours,” Director of Sales and Operations Southern Division **Jeff Bonafede** said during the videoconference. “That has been a blessing that we never want to lose.”

“It was pretty (user-) friendly” added **Yadira Caamal**, a broker out of the Granada Hills office, in reference to Zoom. “After you do it for a while, it kind of becomes normal.”

Zooming live

For 45 minutes on the May 4 call, Miedler delivered a mix of aspirational pep talk and responses to agents’ specific questions.

“We’re in a very unique situation in a very unique market,” Miedler began the call. “I don’t think anyone thought our spring selling season would end up like this.”



Partners: Gil Priel, left and Eli Tene.

In what he described as “the 121 percent rule,” he broke down the components of what an agent’s mindset should look like.

“We have to wake up every single day with gratitude and put ourselves in a positive attitude to move forward,” Miedler said, asking agents to keep key motivators in mind: family; putting kids through college; and giving back to the community.

“Right now, there is uncertainty, but there are still people who need to buy and sell their properties,” he continued. “People have thousands more dollars buying power than a few months ago with low interest on mortgages.”

Miedler told his team that the company’s digital numbers have been rising. In the last week of April, visitors to C21.com were up 33

percent from March, leads were up 40 percent and organic leads 52 percent higher.

After Miedler’s monologue, Bonafede directed questions from agents. Upland office broker **Hwei-Chu Meng** texted in her query: “What is corporate marketing plan for after the pandemic or Stay at Home order is lifted?”

“From a marketing perspective, television commercial campaign, partnership with Disney which puts on ‘Good Morning America,’ ESPN and was going to put us on ‘NBA Draft,’” said Miedler, who alluded to the virus’ disruption at Burbank-based **Walt Disney Co.** “We’ll continue to try to move things, but we have to wait and see how the market picks up.”

Miedler wrapped the company call by speculating that 2020 business will pick up after summer.















“Do I have a crystal ball? No. But based on what the experts are saying,” he said, “once the issue is under control, they will come back. Fundamentally, we’re in a strong spot.”

Post-virus glimpse

Agents are already seeing how such technology as Zoom and Apple’s Facetime is changing their daily approach.

Caamal closes deals throughout the San Fernando Valley and in West Los Angeles. She said prior to the pandemic, she conducted all of her business in person.

Now she uses video calls to attend meetings within Century 21 Peak, do virtual training and show properties to clients.

THE LIST		RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE FIRMS						
		Ranked by 2019 Valley-area sales volume						
Rank		Brokerage • name • address • website	Valley-area Sales Volume • 2019 • 2018 (in millions)	Valley-area Units Sold • 2019 • 2018	Specialty Areas (partial list)	Profile • headquarters • Valley offices • Valley agents	Top Local Executive • name • title • phone	
1		Pinnacle Estate Properties Inc. 23733 Malibu Road, Suite 500 Malibu 90265 pinnacleestate.com	\$4,151 \$3,900	10 10	condos, income property, land, multifamily units, single-family homes, townhouses, escrow services, title insurance	Malibu 10 902	Dana Potter CEO (310) 456-0880	
2		Rodeo Realty Inc. 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 321 Beverly Hills 90210 rodeore.com	2,934 3,110¹	NA NA	condos, income property, land, multifamily units, single-family homes, townhouses, new construction, commercial	Beverly Hills 7 NA	Syd Leibovitch President (310) 471-2600	
3		Coldwell Banker Realty 190 N. Canon Drive, Suite 200 Beverly Hills 90210 coldwellbankerhomes.com	2,108 1,857	2,122 1,889	condos, income property, land, multifamily units, single-family homes, townhouses, global luxury	Beverly Hills NA NA	Jamie Duran President, Coldwell Banker Realty in Southern California (877) 317-4601	
4		Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices California Properties 16810 Ventura Blvd. Encino 91436 bhhsocalifornia.com	1,941 2,052	1,674 1,839	condos, income property, land, multifamily units, single-family homes, townhouses, commercial	San Diego NA NA	Mary Lee Blaylock CEO, President (818) 501-4800	
5		Keller Williams Forward Living Group 439 N. Canon Dr., Suite 300 Beverly Hills 90210 NA	1,740 1,886	1,442 1,546	condos, income property, land, multifamily units, single-family homes, townhouses	Beverly Hills 2 552	Paul Morris CEO (310) 939-9303	
6		Re/Max One/Gold 11141 Tampa Ave. Northridge 91326 maxoneproperties.com	1,466 1,282	1,885 1,762	condos, income property, land, multifamily units, single-family homes, townhouses, luxury home sales	Northridge 3 120	Keith Myers President (818) 366-3300	
7		Keller Williams Realty Encino-Sherman Oaks 16820 Ventura Blvd. Encino 91436 kwencinoshermanoaks.com	1,304 726	1,342 1,042	condos, income property, land, multifamily units, single-family homes, townhouses	Encino NA NA	Harma Hartouni Operating Principal (818) 380-5100	

¹ Business Journal estimate.
NA - Not Available Note: The information on this list was provided by representatives of the brokerages themselves. Brokerages are ranked by their sales volume in L.A. County. To the best of our knowledge, this information is accurate as of press time. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of the list, omissions and

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Researched by Joshua Niv