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## MEETING INFORMATION:

This is a dinner/meeting venue attached to the Sepulveda Golf Complex at 16821 Burbank Blvd., Encino CA 91436. We are in the smaller room next to the bar by the golf course.

There is a no-host bar starting at 6:30. Dinner is optional and may be ordered any time. Some social business is conducted before our speaker, who will begin at 8:00 PM.

**GENERAL MEETING:  
THURSDAY, APRIL 18  
6:30 PM: Cocktail Hour  
8:00 PM: Speaker**

## FLY FISHING IDAHO with Steph Albano

by Marshall Bissett

The Henry's Fork and Silver Creek rivers of Idaho are where technical water meets exceptional scenic beauty and should be on everyone's destination list. Despite or because of their challenges, both rivers play a key role in the history of American fly fishing. The Henry's Fork watershed in eastern Idaho and western Wyoming encompasses 1.7 million acres and over 3,000 miles of rivers, streams, and canals. High mountain streams and warm natural springs form the headwaters of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River, which flows through deep canyons as it descends to the agricultural land of the upper Snake River Valley. Some of the greatest fly fisherman to ever apply their craft have looked to the Henry's Fork waters to test their skills. What has set a few apart is their ability to kindle the imagination of fishermen everywhere.



## GENERAL MEETING (CONT.)

Steph will talk about both locations -from “The Ranch” to Silver Creek’s preserve, managed by the Nature Conservancy. Whether you want to tackle this as a do it yourself trip or book guides and comfortable lodging, the presentation will share access points, hatches, and details about the famous water you’ve heard about. In addition, there are several not so famous places you might want to consider, and she will provide details and resources for your review.



Her company, Finatical Flyfishing specializes in hosted travel for women as well as booking trips for

couples, and private group or corporate trips. She will have information available on all the trips Finatical Flyfishing has planned. If you are thinking about a personal, group or corporate trip, you’ll walk away with options.



### Steph’s story:

Steph Albano was born and raised in Idaho and her dad introduced her to flyfishing at a young age. He spent a lot of time on Henry’s Fork long before she was old enough to tag along. Before founding Finatical Flyfishing Steph was very career focused and held positions in national marketing, Director of Distribution Center Operations and as a Financial Analyst. Once a year she vowed to fish someplace new. Those goals and busy schedules often left her looking at international locations where she was often the only woman seriously considering the trip. Finatical Flyfishing was founded to offer women more options for flyfishing travel.

Steph has traveled and fished in Argentina, Alaska, Belize, Chile, Mexico, Hawaii, the Bahamas, Cuba and the Seychelles. She enjoys helping other anglers to plan women’s trips and custom trips for private or corporate groups.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Bernie Ecker

This month it is most suitable that I express my thanks and gratitude to those who made the March live auction event a success. Most importantly, my thanks to the members in attendance who bid generously to support our club. I hope everyone enjoyed the evening and will continue to enjoy their treasures. When you are next on [www.spff.org](http://www.spff.org) please look at the recently updated list of sponsors and consider them first as you make future plans for guide trips, travel destinations and fishing gear.



Credits: Rich Hoffman, Director of Development (auctions, etc.); Cindy Wilson, Casting for Recovery & auctioneer; Rich Fricke, Conservation Director and merchandise exhibitor; Michael Peratis, auction records; Jay Bushore, treasurer (substitute); Kevin Radanovich, audio and several other loyal members that helped. We also want to thank the sponsors and club members who generously donated many of the items.

This year's ITFF Graduation outing to the Lower Owens River, Bishop, CA was reported to be one of our better student attended events. Fortunately, there were enough volunteer stream side instructors to support these new fly fishers. The weather and river flows were cooperative and so there were reports of many fish caught for the first time on a fly rod. Saturday night's gathering at Astorga's restaurant closed out the weekend activities and allowed time for new members to mingle and share fish tales. We know not everyone was able to attend the Graduation outing so we are planning, as part of our

Great Summer Outing (GSO), to have at least one event especially for this year's ITFF students to complete their graduation streamside.

This year we again offered ITFF students the option to become SPFF members as part of their registration for the ITFF classes. Many took advantage of this opportunity and I personally feel this act of joining will lead them to many future years of enjoyable membership. Thank you for taking these first steps. With club membership, as with many things in life, you benefit from being actively involved.

SPFF has a tradition of wearing badges at our club events and other gatherings such as the upcoming Castaway at PCC or Fly Buy at LBCC. I encourage you to wear your badges. SPFF is one of a few well represented clubs in the Southwest Council and the badges help our club reputation. Wearing your badge definitely helps us with names of new members but it also helps my memory. Traditionally, we place a red dot on new member badges for the first year to help to us help you interact socially. Not everyone buys a badge and the process for requesting a new badge or replacement is not straightforward. If you are interested in purchasing a badge, contact Jay Bushore, Membership Chair, at [Members@spff.org](mailto:Members@spff.org) or myself at [president@spff.org](mailto:president@spff.org) and we will see that your request is processed.

This April's speaker Steph Abano will be taking us to beautiful Henry's Fork, Idaho. I have fished this area and it truly is a location of natural beauty. This presentation should reinforce the adage that fly fishing allows us to practice our sport in some of the most beautiful locations in the world. I am looking forward to this presentation and highly recommend attending this meeting.

Tight Lines,

Bernie

## SWC-FFI FLYBUY: SATURDAY, APRIL 6



**LOCATION:** Long Beach Casting Club, 5201 E. 7<sup>th</sup>, Long Beach, CA

**HOURS:** 9:00am to 3:00pm | Garage sale starts at 10 a.m.

**ADMISSION:**

**ADULTS:** 20.00 and includes lunch and soft drink

**KIDS,** 16 and under: FREE

**IT'S A FLYFISHING SUPER-FUN-DAY**

Who doesn't love a garage sale or in this case a **YARD SALE** and a huge one at that – right? And what if you could watch world renowned fly tiers and fly casting instructors at the same time with **LUNCH INCLUDED!!**

This will be our 13<sup>th</sup> annual FlyBuy. For those of you that have NOT attended, do not miss out this time!!

**FLY-FISHING GEAR GARAGE SALE AND A FEW “ANYTHING GOES” ITEMS!**

One of the biggest attractions is our Garage Sale! It is the LARGEST of its kind on the entire West Coast. We get donations all year long of waders, boots, rods, reels and everything else related to fly fishing. For fun, we even add some items that are not related to fly fishing. And for our “repeat customers” - well, you know the money you saved in the past and once again, EVERYTHING MUST GO!! Garage Sale starts at 10am.

**FLY-TYING DEMONSTRATIONS ALL DAY**

In the clubhouse we'll have fly-tying demonstrations from the best tiers in SoCal. Two Buszek recipients and most likely more than a DOZEN crazy talented tiers! Just watching them tie - you'll learn skills, tricks and you can ask questions while watching that will help in your own fly-tying skills.

**SPECIAL FLY TYING FOR KIDS!!**

On-site “Kid's University” our fly-tying team will teach kids to tie their first fly!

**CASTING DEMONSTRATIONS ALL DAY!**

Check out our casting demonstration schedule (subject to change):

9:30 am – FRANK BURR: Tenkara

10:00 am – BOB MIDDO: The Double Haul

1:00 pm – JOHN VAN DERHOOF “The Cool Casts”

1:45 pm – Tips for Teaching Beginning Fly Casters (Tentative)

2:00 pm – FRANK BURR: Tenkara

**VENDORS & SPONSORS; RAFFLES, RAFFLES, RAFFLES & SILENT AUCTION**

## DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

|                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| President .....              | Bernie Ecker      |
| Vice President.....          | Rick Russo        |
| Secretary.....               | Roger Backlar     |
| Treasurer .....              | Mike Hembree      |
| Calendar .....               | Tom Wright        |
| Communications/Website ..... | Cece Rubin        |
| Conservation .....           | Rick Fricke       |
| Development.....             | Rich Hoffman      |
| Education .....              | Michael Peratis   |
| Head Fly Tying .....         | Michael Peratis   |
| Membership .....             | Jay Bushore       |
| Newsletter.....              | Ed Swanson        |
| Outings .....                | Haik Topadzhikyan |
| Programs.....                | Marshall Bissett  |
| Project Healing Waters ..... | Dave Hoffberg     |
| Raffles .....                | Steve Esgate      |
| Social Media.....            | Open              |
| Special Projects.....        | Glenn Short       |
| SWCFFI Representative.....   | Tom Wright        |
| Women’s Outreach.....        | Rosemary Ecker    |
| Member at Large.....         | Aran Dokovna      |
| Member at Large .....        | Jim Fleisher      |
| Member at Large .....        | Rich Ress         |

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## SPFF EVENT CALENDAR

### APRIL

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 3         |
| Board Meeting .....   | 4         |
| Casting for Recovery Retreat.....   | 5-7       |
| <b>FLY BUY 2024 @Long Beach Casting Club ..</b>                                 | <b>6</b>  |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 10        |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 17        |
| <b>Dinner Meeting and Program (“Fly Fishing Idaho” with Steph Albano) .....</b> | <b>18</b> |
| Casting Clinic @ Lake Balboa .....  | 20        |
| Spring 2024 Southwest Council Quarterly Meeting .....                           | 20        |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 24        |

### MAY

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 1         |
| Board Meeting .....   | 2         |
| Nature Photography Workshop .....   | 4         |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 8         |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 15        |
| <b>Dinner Meeting &amp; Program (“Iceland - Trip of a Lifetime” with Matt Harkonarson).....</b> | <b>16</b> |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 22        |
| Riptide Rendezvous - Ongoing 5/25 to 6/21 (AVE THE DATE).....                                   | 25        |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 29        |

### JUNE

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 5         |
| Board Meeting .....   | 14        |
| Hot Creek Ranch Weekend 2024.....   | 7-10      |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 12        |
| Granite Creek Camping Trip.....   | 15-16     |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 19        |
| <b>Dinner Meeting &amp; Program (“What Trout Like to Eat and What We Can Feed Them” with Tim Flagler) .....</b> | <b>20</b> |
| Fly Tying (In Person and Zoom) .....  | 26        |

## MEMBERSHIP

by Jay Bushore

The members of Sierra Pacific Flyfishers look forward to meeting you. We hope to get to know you better at the monthly dinner Meetings, in our educational programs and on the water.

New membership signup is at [spff.org/NewMemberSignup](http://spff.org/NewMemberSignup).

Please welcome our new member:

**Mandy Hicks**

## SPRING HAS SPRUNG. AGAIN.

by Bennett Mintz

It might well be the biggest cliché we suffer, but it's true: time flies.

It seems like it was Thanksgiving just a week or two ago and now we're well into spring. What in hell happened to January and February?

May is marked on my upcoming calendar and May means little more than my 91st birthday approaches. Seems like just a few weeks ago I was off on a toot celebrating birthday 90 in Campeche, Mexico by catching baby tarpon. Egad! That was a fast year. My back and hips probably won't permit that kind of nonsense again. I can't even sit in an airplane long enough to make the trip. My back can barely sit in the car long enough to get to the airport.

Years ago, the beginning of April was always marked by my stripping and cleaning (or buying new) fly lines along with planning a few Hot Creek trout trips plus days in my canoe on the Fall River mixed with dorado out of Loreto. I'd spend idle hours skimming catalogs for bargain tackle. I'd check and recheck flight schedules trying to figure out if there was a better deal getting to Anchorage and there never was. Over about 15 years I made either 21 or 22 trips to Alaska. One year, I went three times along with two trips to British Columbia to fly fish for silver salmon and sea-run cutthroats.

Better I should have seen a psychiatrist.

## SPFF PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS AND WORKSHOP

by Glenn Short

Members interested in improving their fly fishing photographs are invited to join a free Saturday morning class and workshop on May 4th. The class will be taught by long-time members Joey Guzman and Glenn Short. Joey and Glenn have extensive experience in photographing fly fishing, and their work has been published in various national publications over many years.

The workshop will be informal, collegial and entertaining. We will explain the important basic principles of photography and show examples to illustrate those concepts. We will discuss practical ways to get good photographs to record your adventures. Joey and Glenn will bring the equipment they use on the water, and will provide a handout summarizing the information we will present.

We will also host a late afternoon session on the water at the GSO this year.

Refreshments will be provided. Participants should bring the camera(s) or phone they normally use to photograph when fishing and the manual.

If you have any questions, please contact Glenn Short at [specialprojects@spff.org](mailto:specialprojects@spff.org).

**Date & Time:** Saturday, May 4  
9:00 am - 12:30 pm

**Location:** Community Building  
21500 Lassen Street  
Chatsworth



# EASTERN SIERRA STOCKING REPORT

by Chris Leonard

Last Saturday, about forty to fifty community members gathered at the Tri-County Fairgrounds to attend a meeting hosted by the Eastern Sierra (District 6) California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). Local DFW fish biologist Nick Buckmaster spearheaded the presentation to educate the group - which consisted of local guides, marina operators, and concerned citizens. Nick was accompanied by other DFW biologists, Hot Creek Hatchery staff, and District 6 game wardens. The message relayed was generally accepted as a very positive one as to how DFW is addressing concerns of a depleted trout population in the Eastern Sierra – particularly in the case of Crowley Lake. Nick has been made aware of the data provided to DFW by local guides and anglers alike of a consistent dropping of numbers of trout caught in Crowley Lake. DFW has also been collecting data that correlates with numbers others have shared with them. Most guides and recreational anglers will agree that the 2023 fishing season was the worst one seen on Crowley, ever. But, Nick and his staff are taking a proactive approach to addressing the issue.

Buckmaster positively reported that stocking efforts in Crowley are bouncing back to pre-2020 fish stocking levels. Since 2020, the local hatcheries have taken a beaten, mostly in the form of disease outbreaks that have led to the eradication of hundreds of thousands of fish. Nick has reported that the hatcheries are operating with healthy fish at this time, and a lot have already been stocked in waters around the region. Crowley isn't the only benefactor of the uptick in stocking. Lakes like Convict Lake and Twin Lakes and a handful of others have also seen more fish being put into the water. Nick emphasized that the data that DFW does have clearly illustrates that of every species of trout, rainbow trout in particular have had the most constant decline in numbers and therefore stocking efforts are largely being concentrated on rainbow trout. But putting fish in the lake isn't just enough, it is also equally important in tracking the progress of stocking. DFW is looking at new, creative ways to data collect per the health of the fishery.

Eastern Sierra (District 6) fisheries branch will begin to more aggressively collect data from anglers. Data no doubt will drive stocking. There was no discussion of regulation changes at the meeting, the conversation centered around increasing stocking. Remember the angler survey cards in the rusty brown metal boxes? The local DFW department will implement "e-creels" for Crowley Lake this fishing season where every angler fishing on Crowley will be asked to log into a website (details coming later from DFW) and report everyday of angling. Their staff continued that they have the goal to roll this same system of data collection out throughout the Eastern Sierra to other fisheries, hopefully as soon as 2025. Nick elaborated that prizes for such logs as biggest fish or most fish caught will be rewarded. DFW has \$10,000 for rewards. The question was asked how DFW will also incentivize anglers who don't catch fish to report out also, as this is equally important. He replied that the department is looking into rewards for categories like "hard luck" or "getting skunked." The department understands it needs a well-balanced reporting system that logs not only fishing being caught but also fish not being caught.

Other questions asked included if the local hatchery will look at stocking in ways that allows fish to escape predator birds that circle the hatchery trucks when fish are being put into the water. The hatchery staff is looking at logistically stocking trout away from feeding birds. Another question was asked if the department can look to the Town of Mammoth Lakes or Visit Mammoth for assistance with funding the stocking of fish considering the millions of dollars spent in Mammoth Lakes that Crowley Lake generates every fishing season. It was pointed out that the Town of Mammoth Lakes collects a noticeable amount of Transient Occupancy Tax from guests who fish Crowley but stay in Mammoth. The question – though be it a good one – was answered that the town most likely won't financially help DFW directly with DFW stocking efforts.

The general feeling from those in attendance at the meeting is that Nick Buckmaster is leading local stocking and data collecting efforts in the right direction. It looks like there is solid leadership at the fisheries branch of Division 6 DFW, and fish numbers should rebound. More so, with back-to-back winters which produced healthy snowfall.

# PIRU CREEK SEGMENT TO BE PRESERVED

by Rich Fricke, Conservation Chair

Less than an hour North of the San Fernando Valley, the storied Piru Creek was not just a place where one could cast a fly nearby, it also once served as the destination for the ITFF's graduation outing, where many new fly fishing careers were created.

Yet, during the 1990's, despite even SPFF's own conservation efforts, Piru Creek was subjected to lower flow rates, mounting trash and overall poor maintenance. The Club had little choice but to focus providing instruction on other waters.

Fortunately, according to one tenured member, acceptable flow rates have returned and thanks to organized clean ups, the grounds have improved – although camping is no longer allowed.

Just this past month, the US Department of Agriculture along with the US Forest Service released it's proposed Piru Creek conservation plan for public review.

Many may not be aware that Piru Creek is part of the largest stream system in California. In its entirety, it's approximately 71 miles long, extending both before and after Pyramid Lake.

However, there is only one section downstream of the Pyramid Dam which now maintains relatively natural flows due to releases from the reservoir. It's this 7 mile section that the Federal government has chosen to protect under the US Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. Of this designated section, roughly three miles are set aside for recreation and the remaining will hold a "wild river" status.

To find out more of the details, you can obtain an official copy by sending your request to: [Conservation@SPFF.org](mailto:Conservation@SPFF.org).

The proposed improvements and river management objectives provide an optimistic future for the preserved waters. Earlier this month, there was unexpected excitement during the SPFF board meeting, over a discussion of the possibility of moving the ITFF graduation back to the original river where it all began – Piru Creek - stay tuned!

To get your own copy of the plan which includes the full map, send your request to: [Conservation@SPFF.org](mailto:Conservation@SPFF.org)

# CASTING FOR RECOVERY FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

by Cindy Wilson, Casting For Recovery, SoCal/Central Valley  
Fundraising and Participant Coordinator

In 2023, maybe late Spring, I began bringing the CfR pink donation boot to our general meetings. During the announcements, I would make a short plea for donations, and then set the bright pink boot prominently on the lunch counter, where it would wait patiently for members to generously stuff it with cash. As my first attempt to collect donations directly from our members, it was effective. We raised close to \$600 for Casting for Recovery, So Cal/Central Valley!! I was both impressed and grateful for your support of this very special program.

After basking in the glow of a successful first campaign, Rosemary and I sat down to discuss possible improvements for 2024. We decided that a more “up close and personal” approach could kick it up a notch. And in January, I rolled out the new and improved fundraising campaign created especially for Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers (complete with a visually stunning donation tracking poster). This year’s campaign uses a 3-pronged attack strategy:

- 1) Give an impassioned speech about the awesomeness that is Casting for Recovery,
- 2) Offer SPFF the opportunity to sponsor a CfR participant if we raise \$1,700, no matter how long it takes, and
- 3) Carry that pink donation boot from table to table, set it down and then hover over members while they stuff it with cash.

Y’all, I was not prepared...let it be known that Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers does not shy away from a challenge. Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers will stare that challenge into submission as it makes its way to their tables. In just two meetings (we skipped the March auction meeting), we have already raised \$744!! In just two meetings, SPFF has already collected more than a third of our goal. I am so stinkin’ proud to call Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers my home. The overwhelming support you give to CfR, SoCal and to me, personally...I wish I could adequately describe how that feels. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. If we reach our goal by the end of this year, we can sponsor a participant in Spring 2025!!

\*\*In case you missed the January meeting, this fundraising campaign has a goal of \$1,700. That is the cost for one participant at our retreats. By raising that specific amount, SPFF will be guaranteed a participant chosen from the applicants who live within the club’s general location. I will explain this completely when the time comes. Sponsoring a woman for a CfR retreat significantly increases a club’s chances of bringing more women into their membership. It’s also an incredible act of human kindness.

\*\*\*Regarding donations: we will keep this campaign open until our goal is met. As a club, we can then talk about applying the sponsorship. Also, I accept cash, checks, PayPal and online donations. I will have the pink donation boot at all general meetings, but I can take donations anytime, anywhere. If you would like to make your donation online, you will need to make it directly to our SoCal program through our national website. Here is the direct link for that: [CfR SoCal Online Donation](#). Please email me a copy of your receipt so I can credit your donation to the SPFF fundraiser totals. [Flyfishinginpink@gmail.com](mailto:Flyfishinginpink@gmail.com)

# ITFF GRADUATION IN BISHOP

by Marshall Bissett

On a crisp morning under sunny Bishop skies, this year's crop of ITFF students met for their final graduation session. Only the snow on the mountains bore testimony to the previous week's storms, that delayed the outing by one week. By tradition, students met their instructors behind what we quaintly call BBQ Bill's (a restaurant that has now been defunct for at least 15 years). In a sign of the times, the revised meeting place should be renamed "opposite the Tesla charging stations." Sixteen students were split between five instructors and took off for either the Lower Owens or the Interpretive Center at Hot Creek. Heavy snow blanketed both the Upper Owens and Hot Creek downstream of the ranch. By ten am a convoy of Jeeps and SUV's made Chalk Bluff Road look like a scene from Desert Storm. With the Lower Owens flowing at a friendly 125 cfs, the students were able to wade and easily cross the crystal clear river. Many were wading in a river for the very first time, and most had yet to catch their first fish on a fly rod.



With techniques ranging from dry/dropper, traditional indicator nymphing and some dry fly action, most students felt that exhilarating tug on the line that made those classroom sessions seem worthwhile. At noon, like clockwork, the Lower Owens threw off a bluewing olive hatch that had instructors rushing to tie on dries and emergers. One lucky student, drifting a soft hackle had "the rod nearly pulled out of my hand." Although the teaching sessions officially ended at midday, many instructors worked with students well into the late afternoon.



The two day graduation wound down with a group dinner at Astorgas Mexican restaurant where the excellent staff were

## ITFF GRADUATION (CONT.)

quite unfazed by over 20 differing orders. Students shared their hilarious stories and, in SPFF tradition, were rewarded with raffle prizes.

Special thanks to instructors Joey Guzman, Bill Woods, Rick Russo, Richard Ress and John Roberts for their tireless enthusiasm.



**2024 FLYBUY: APRIL 6**



**SATURDAY - APRIL 6**

**Location: Long Beach Casting Club  
9:00am to 3:00pm**

**\$20 includes lunch and soft drinks  
Free: Kids under 16**



**Raffles and silent auctions  
Private casting lessons  
with money back GUARANTEE.**



**All net proceeds support SWC programs  
[www.swcffi.org/flybuy](http://www.swcffi.org/flybuy)**

## SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

The Board of Directors and membership of the Sierra Pacific Flyfishers wish to express their appreciation to the retailers below. Their promotion of our club and its activities thorough the year, and their contributions of products and services help us to continue the various public services that we offer.

### **Fishermen's Spot**

14411 Burbank Blvd.  
Van Nuys, CA 91401  
818.785.7306

### **Orvis**

345 S. Lake Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
626.356.8000

### **Pat Jaeger**

Eastern Sierra Guide Service  
2327 Stone Circle  
Bishop, CA 93514  
760.872.7770

### **Patagonia-Ventura**

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Ventura, CA 93001  
805.643.6074

### **Patagonia-Pasadena**

47 N. Fair Oaks Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91103  
626.795.0319

### **Patagonia Santa Monica**

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Ventura, CA 93001  
805.643.6074

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