

Hospitals Move To Main Street

REAL ESTATE: Health providers find retail space lures patients.

By **CAROL LAWRENCE** Staff Reporter



Romick

On its website, **UCLA Health** tells its patients “See you around the neighborhood.” That could be at the large retail shopping center down the street in Woodland Hills, or eventually, next to a French café at a busy Encino intersection.

Moving clinics off hospital campuses into non-medical locations that are also prominent and convenient is a new strategy for many major health systems such as L.A.-headquartered UCLA Health. While the effort is a way to gain more exposure for their brands in the Valley and northern L.A. County neighborhoods, taking retail and regular office space is benefitting building owners by filling vacancies, while also giving a healthy boost to construction projects for local contractors.

UCLA Health’s children’s and women’s health and wellness clinic at the Village at Westfield Topanga shopping center in Woodland Hills, which opened in late 2015, is one of the best examples of this strategy, real estate brokers say. And coming soon is another – a new clinic planned for a ground-floor retail spot next to a Le Pain Quotidien eatery in the Encino Arches building – which sits at a busy intersection.

Managing Director **Scott Romick**, principal with **Lee & Associates-LA North/Ventura Inc.** in

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SPECIAL REPORT LAW



EXPERTISE: In L.A.’s crowded legal market, attorneys succeed by specializing. For example, **Howard Jacobs** has become the go-to lawyer for athletes accused of doping. This Special Report looks at three unusual practices – biotech, sports and equine law – on the upswing in the Valley economy.

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Blow a Tune on That Gold Bar

MUSIC: Phil Sardo has passion for high-end harmonicas.

By **MARK R. MADLER** Staff Reporter

The high-end harmonicas that **Phil Sardo** has invented come with a hefty price tag – more than \$2,000.

The 81-year-old Woodland Hills resident won’t say whatever money he makes from

sales was not the prime reason why he created the Psardo Chromatic 64 harmonica, one of two models in his new product line.

“This is a passion that I have,” Sardo said. “I wanted to make a perfect, fine instrument. I don’t think anything in this world is perfect, but with this harmonica, we have come as close as you are going to get.”

The Chromatic 64 – the “Stradivarius of Harmonicas” according to Sardo’s website – is



PHOTO BY MIKE BAKER

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Toot: Sardo with \$2,695 instrument.



Grand Opening: Employees greet customers on first day at Ikea in Burbank.

MORE STORE FOR IKEA

Furniture chain opens its largest U.S. location in Burbank

By **HELEN FLOERSH** Staff Reporter

Sixteen years ago, Ikea had a functioning mega-store in Burbank with about a quarter-million square feet. But it wasn’t enough.

The Swedish retailer began searching for a site capable of supporting a large

er furniture footprint. Earlier this month it opened the new store at 805 S. San Fernando Blvd. with 456,000 square feet, making it the largest Ikea in the United States.

About a thousand customers showed up on opening day. The event proved that the short move to a larger location less than a

mile from the old store was worth it, said **Joseph Roth**, head of expansion affairs at Ikea North America.

“We had a limited product offering at the old store,” Roth said. “Now, all of our inventory is here on site.”

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5 **News & Analysis:** Water districts want to combine in Santa Clarita – a change backed by some business groups.

9 **Profile:** Lenard Liberman talks about the Latino music stars who visit his Burbank studio.



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PHOTO BY DAVID SPRAGUE



CURIOUS PRACTICES

By **STEPHANIE HENKEL** *Staff Reporter*

For attorneys, uncommon expertise attracts clients. These Valley lawyers help startups file for a patent, athletes charged with doping or horse owners facing accident liability.

With so many lawyers in Los Angeles, how can practitioners set themselves apart from the crowd?

Many specialize their services and become experts in a complex corner of the legal field. Of course, there are large practice areas such as family law, real estate or business litigation. But to succeed in a narrow and uncommon practice, attorneys typically must establish their credentials to lure clients.

"In L.A., it's almost impossible to distinguish yourself as a general lawyer," said **Howard Jacobs**, a sports anti-doping attorney who practices at his

namesake firm in Westlake Village. "From the consumer side, you're either going to choose someone you know or someone, through research, who you've determined is an expert in the type of problem you have."

Just as entrepreneurs should avoid "following their passion," attorneys can't pick a specialty unless there's a market to support it. Luckily, the Valley has such a diversified economy that there are plenty to choose from.

Kira Masteller, president of the **San Fernando Valley Bar Association**, has



Masteller

noticed an uptick in legal work in the region because of its improving business climate.

"It seems to me businesses are relatively healthy based on the amount of work many of the lawyers I have talked to have," she said. "I see a lot of attorneys at events, and I don't think there is an attorney I've run into this year that hasn't told me they were swamped."

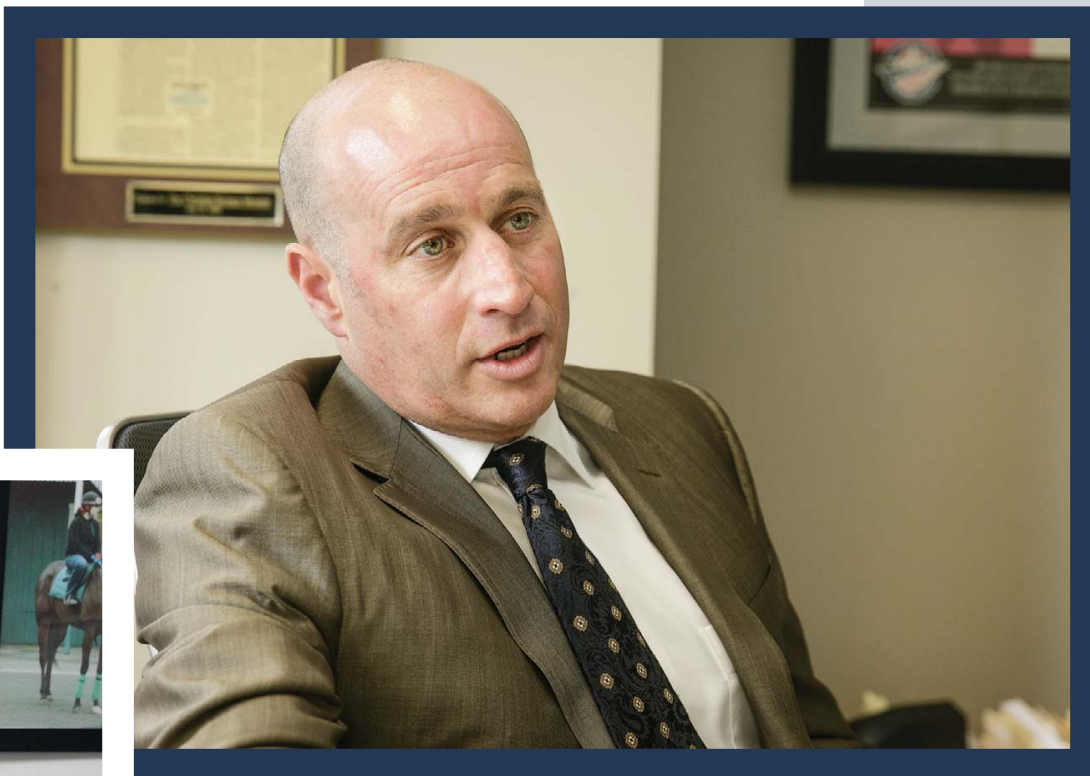
In the Valley, she has seen a greater need for transactional work like contract negotiations; employment law services to comply with the ever-changing California labor laws; franchising needs whether

buying, selling or starting outlets; as well as intellectual property services as everything moves toward digitization. She has also noticed a decline in bankruptcy, which she believes is another result of the economy growing stronger.

This Special Report looks at three specialties – biotech, sports and equine law – emerging as potential future hotspots for firms in the Valley. Short profiles on the following pages showcase firms currently working in these niche practices.

Lab lawyers

Brent Reinke, partner and biotech attorney at **Musick Peeler & Garrett's** Westlake Village office, has seen growth



Practitioners: From left, Brent Reinke of Musick Peeler & Garrett in Westlake Village; Michelle MacDonald at Gray Duffy in Encino; and Howard Jacobs at Law Offices of Howard L. Jacobs in Westlake Village.

PHOTO BY DAVID SPRAGUE

He said this proliferation has attracted investments from Asia and elsewhere outside the region. Ideally, Reinke would like to see the biotech industry develop to the point where established companies move to the area to take advantage of local talent and the resources the cluster provides, further accelerating growth.

"I'd say there has been an increase in the (biotech) startup space," said **Lauren Schneider**, a partner in **Lewis Roca Rothgerber Christie's** intellectual property group in Glendale. "But while many researchers earn their degrees here and may wish to remain in the region, they tend to leave for more established, supportive environments, like San Francisco, San Diego or Boston, when it comes time to start their own companies."

Reinke is in discussions with the city of Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley and other local governments, who are expressing interest in growing the sector through potential advertising campaigns, expedited permit pulling as well as funding and grants for future facilities. Those deals will require extensive legal work if greenlighted, he said.

Sports litigation

Los Angeles has seen a recent spike in sports with two football franchises now in town, a \$2.6 billion football stadium in the works, a 2024 Olympic bid in review as well as a new expansion team from **Major League Soccer** kicking off its new \$350-million stadium in 2018.

"Sports law in L.A. consists of a pretty small group of people, who are truly sports lawyers," said attorney Jacobs. "Certainly, there will be a lot of new opportunities (for lawyers) with the Rams being right down the street, the Chargers moving to L.A. and the new stadium that's being built."

Jacobs said the new teams and their related construction needs open up a plethora of legal work including naming rights deals, contract negotiations and real estate services.

The same applies to the **Los Angeles Football Club**, which paid a record \$110 million to join Major League Soccer a little over two years ago. The team's \$350-million stadium next to the L.A. Memorial Coliseum will include more than 10,000 square feet of retail space.

Also, if the International Olympic Committee chooses Los Angeles for the 2024 Summer Games, the city will need to update its infrastructure in a big way.

"I would expect you'll see the Metro going into the areas where the stadiums and athlete villages are going to be," Jacobs said. "There is also a lot of talk about redoing LAX, and I think they would have to for the games."

In the Conejo Valley, the Rams' temporary headquarters are currently located at **California Lutheran University** in Thousand Oaks. The team is searching for a permanent headquarters nearby. In addition, **Sports Academy**, a 96,000-square-foot sports and fitness facility, just opened in the Conejo Valley, bringing even more opportunity to local law firms looking to specialize in sports.

Horse matters

Compared to sports attorneys, there are fewer lawyers in Los Angeles who focus on equine law. However, the Valley has several known horse regions – around Griffith Park in Glendale and Burbank as well as in Chatsworth, Calabasas, Hidden Hills and Lake Sherwood. In addition, the L.A. Equestrian Club in Burbank provides boarding, training and horse show services, providing a central location for equine enthusiasts and events.

In fact, one Valley attorney who specializes in equine law, **Michelle MacDonald at Gray Duffy** in Encino, owns seven race horses and is licensed to race.

Individuals who own and board pleasure horses typically require legal services in relation to purchase transactions, stable contracts, veterinarian malpractice as well as related insurance and liability issues. For race and show horses, attorneys deal with many of the same legal matters as pleasure horses but also take on business-related needs such as training, payment contracts and commercial disputes.

The local horse business has received attention in recent years as more high-profile competitions have taken place in the area.

In 2015, the Longines Masters decided to make Los Angeles one of the three international hubs to hold its annual series of equestrian events. The other two cities in the competition are Hong Kong and

Paris. The first year the Masters series came to Southern California, the event was held at the L.A. Convention Center with last year's competition taking place at the Long Beach Convention Center.

"The Masters is the largest, most prestigious hunter-jumper show in the world," said **Randolph Catanese**, founder of equine law firm **Catanese & Wells** in Westlake Village. "Every year it hosts the best riders and horses."

In 2016, the Breeders' Cup World Championships, the annual series of top thoroughbred horse racing, was held at Santa Anita Park with record attendance of close to 46,000 racing enthusiasts. This year it will be held at the Del Mar racetrack in San Diego, further solidifying Southern California's presence in the equine industry.

"Having these events would be like having the World Series or Super Bowl here," Catanese said. "There are lots of people in L.A. that participate."

With more racing professionals, horse owners, trainers and expensive livestock coming to the area for these events, the more horse-related legal issues will arise, creating an in for lawyers pivoting into equine law sector.

As the future of business looks bright in the Valley, so does its related legal services. **Bob Baradaran**, managing partner of **Greenberg Glusker** in Los Angeles, agrees specialization is essential to a successful law practice but thinks firms need to take it a step further.

"We are probably returning to the era of hiring lawyers as consiglieres, trusted advisors or counselors, who act as the point person for solving problems for clients," he said.

Musick Peeler's Reinke is already providing these types of services for his clients and considers himself an attorney as well as a business consultant. On one end, he is trying to grow his clients' industry and on the other, their businesses.

"It's really about providing both legal and business advice, at least personally, based on the experience I have and also making connections for them with former executives that could help advise them," he said. "I think the most effective lawyers I ever come across are ones that are not just lawyers but are business-minded people."

in the life sciences sector since the end of the Great Recession. He thinks as the region gets more established, it could attract new law firms to the area or spur local firms to develop larger biotech practices in response to market demand for intellectual property, patent, trademark and business services.

He currently represents a number of biotech companies in the region, which has been named the "101 biotech corridor," due to the cluster of companies forming in the West San Fernando and Conejo valleys along the 101 freeway. Many of these businesses were started by ex-employees of larger local biotechs including **Amgen Inc.** of Thousand Oaks and **Shire** in Westlake Village.

One of the region's greatest success stories was the acquisition of homegrown **Kythera Biopharmaceuticals Inc.** for \$2.1 billion by drug giant **Allergan** of Dublin. Kythera was started by a group of ex-Amgen executives, who have now founded a new endeavor, **Sienna Biopharmaceuticals Inc.**, which they hope will have the same repeat success as Kythera.

"You want more and more of these situations, where the management team leaves one company and branches out and starts five other companies," Reinke said. "That's where you start to see some real traction."

PHOTO BY THOMAS WASPER



The Straight Dope About Drugs and Sports Law



PHOTO BY DAVID SPRAGUE

Heavy Hitter: Howard Jacobs with sporting paraphernalia in his Westlake Village office.

While their clients play to win on the court, local sports attorneys **Howard Jacobs** and **Samuel Fox** earn their victories in court.

Jacobs, of the **Law Offices of Howard L. Jacobs** in Westlake Village, specializes in defending athletes charged with doping. He has worked with high-profile players including Russian tennis star **Maria Sharapova**, whose case was decided last year.

In addition, Jacobs has represented Tour de France cyclist **Floyd Landis**, professional baseball player **Manny Ramirez** and UFC fighter **Jon Jones**, just to name a few.

"I've probably represented close to 200 athletes on anti-doping cases over the last 15 years," Jacobs said. "The thing about sports law is everything is out in the open. If you win or lose a case, everyone knows about it."

While Jacobs was in law school, he was

also a professional triathlete, which is how he got his start in sports law. A few years later, in 2003, Jacobs found himself heavily working some of the cases related to the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative scandal, in which the San Francisco nutritional supplement company was accused of supplying performance-enhancing drugs to athletes.

"Those were the first big national doping stories in the U.S., so then my business just

to evolve with technological changes. At the time, he was representing **Blue Collar Comedy**, which consisted of four comedians whose comedy specials sold out stadiums and DVD shelves alike.

"Blue Collar Comedy turned into a monstrous business," Fox said. "But in the midst of our success, YouTube was born."

So, once again, Fox shifted his career from DVDs to sports, representing professional

'The more well-rounded you are as an attorney, the better you can be as a sports lawyer.' — **SAMUEL FOX**

built from there," he said.

In 2006, he established his current practice, which started in Agoura Hills. By getting in on the ground floor and developing expertise in athlete-enhancing drugs, Jacobs established himself as the go-to attorney for such cases internationally. He has represented athletes in more than 30 countries.

Aside from his doping defense work, Jacobs also helps athletes with salary arbitration, litigation and team selection disputes. Last year, he had over 50 cases come through his office, which employs one other associate attorney. He also partners with a London-based lawyer, who has a practice similar to his, when he needs help with larger cases and vice versa.

In Sherman Oaks, Fox's firm **Fox Law Group** discovered sports law by pivoting from an entertainment-focused practice.

The firm got its start serving music clients. But at the turn of the century, Fox decided to shift his practice into the DVD business

athletes' side endeavors, which turned into what he does now – representing sports-based businesses.

Clients include the **U.S. Polo Association** in Lake Worth, Fla.; Dallas-based golf entertainment facilities operator **Topgolf International Inc.**; and the Silverlakes Sports Complex in Norco. Fox and his associate handle legal matters regarding licensing, branding, promotional agreements, trademarks, strategic planning, new media and whatever else the sports organizations need. However, half of his business is still dedicated to entertainment, mostly in the television sector.

"The more well-rounded you are as an attorney, the better you can be as a sports lawyer," Fox said. "It's important to maintain a focus on the fact that sports is, after all, a business. Sports lawyers should view it as such and leave the glory to those who perform on the field and on the court."

— *Stephanie Henkel*

For Biotechs, Counsel From Startup to Acquisition

As the local biotech industry continues to blossom, law firms have developed to support the sector.

Partner **Brent Reinke** established **Musick Peeler & Garrett's** Westlake Village branch 13 years ago, around the same time the biotech cluster in the Conejo Valley began gaining traction.

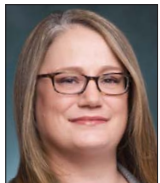
"I saw a really interesting opportunity in the life science space that I wanted to help promote, create and facilitate," he said.

In 2007, he formed the **BioScience Alliance** to host education and networking events for people in the industry. He also positioned his

ing a manufacturing company or technology company," Reinke said. "It's kind of a similar process."

Some of his local clients include cancer and diabetes drug developer **REMD Biotherapeutics Inc.**, bio-equipment company **PBS Biotech Inc.**, both in Camarillo, and a local early-stage nutraceutical maker.

In the beginning of 2016, Christie Parker & Hale in Glendale merged with Phoenix-based Lewis Roca Rothgerber to form **Lewis Roca Rothgerber Christie**. The union expanded the combined entity's intellectual property practice and improved its patent litigation services.



'We really like working with and supporting Lab Launch.' — **LAUREN SCHNEIDER**

law firm as a resource for companies in or entering the business.

Now, his office can serve a biotech company from startup through acquisition. For earlier-stage companies, Reinke can help form the corporation or limited liability company and set up equity incentive plans for employees. As the company grows, his firm handles third-party contract review, intellectual property and patent filings, real estate leases, venture capital and private equity financing. And finally, he can help with mergers or acquisitions.

"At some level, representing a biotech company isn't completely different than represent-

Lauren Schneider, a partner in the firm's intellectual property group, said the move boosted its biotech business as well.

"By building on our strength in intellectual property, the merger has enabled us to be the full-service law firm that biotech companies may need," she said.

Lewis Roca offers similar services to biotechs as Musick Peeler, but the majority of the work it is asked to do relates to patent strategy, counseling and procurement, Schneider said.

The firm also partners with nearby labs and universities such as biotech incubator **Lab Launch** in Monrovia, where Lewis Roca pro-



PHOTO BY DAVID SPRAGUE

Promoter: In addition to his practice, Brent Reinke runs nonprofit **BioScience Alliance**.

vides sponsorship funding and guest speakers to discuss relevant legal issues.

"We really like working with and supporting Lab Launch, because they are very focused on keeping researchers and their budding and emerging companies in the region and providing the resources they need to be successful," Schneider said.

In fact, the incubator will soon make a splash in the Valley as it will open another location, slated for early this year. The new facility, in partnership with **Make in LA**, will be located at the hardware accelerator's Chats-

worth campus.

Reinke is also working on starting an incubator of his own called the Gold Coast Bio Center and is currently considering a facility in Camarillo for the project. If everything goes as planned, the approximately 15,000-square-foot location – which will offer shared and private wet labs, conference rooms and offices for about 10 startups – could open by the end of the year.

"If we can get the Gold Coast Bio Center up and running, I think that could definitely attract even more attention to this area," he said.

— *Stephanie Henkel*

Horse Trade Still Prospers in Suburban Valleys



PHOTO BY THOMAS WASPER

Champions: Michelle MacDonald at Gray Duffy offices with photos of her racing stock.

They're big, expensive, unpredictable and a lawsuit waiting to happen. Horses are oftentimes considered assets, but unlike land or investments, a horse can run rampant, destroying everything in its wake. Two local lawyers are here to help in all horse-related legal matters. From breeding contracts to six-figure sales transactions, **Michelle MacDonald of Gray Duffy** and **Randolph Catanese of Catanese & Wells** specialize in the high-end livestock.

"Equine law is essentially general law except it involves horses," MacDonald said. "There is custom and practice, but really what I face in equine law is what a general practitioner would face in other areas of law."

She has handled horse cases involving employment contracts for ranchers, horse purchases and damaged fencing from a runaway steed. MacDonald came to the Encino firm of Gray Duffy in 1999 and had her first horse case in the mid-2000s, in which she defended a

woman whose horse got loose on the 134 freeway. The woman was riding in Griffith Park while walking another horse, a practice known as "ponying," when the second horse got free and ran onto the Ventura Freeway. A car struck the horse, killing it, and the driver sued the woman for damages.

"In the San Fernando Valley, you're essentially talking about city people keeping horses,"

The remainder of his practice focuses on estate and civil litigation as well as business law. On the horse end, he helps clients with boarding, training and purchase contracts; real estate and ranch matters; equine insurance claims; and one of his largest practice areas – fraud.

In a typical fraud case, the horse's health or competition history is misrepresented to fetch a higher sales price. Catanese said he had



'We probably have the highest percentage of horse-related work.' — RANDOLPH CATANESE

she said. "If you go to Glendale, Burbank and Chatsworth, you will find people with horses in their backyards, but the bulk of people board their horses at a facility."

Primarily, MacDonald litigates employment, personal injury and insurance cases at Gray Duffy but still handles a handful of horse matters each year. Her equine practice stems from her involvement in the horse world as she owns seven horses of her own and is licensed to race horses in California.

At Catanese & Wells in Westlake Village, the bulk of business derives from equine law, as approximately 60 percent of the firm's cases involve horse matters.

"We probably have the highest percentage of horse-related work when compared to most lawyers in the country who do equine work," said Catanese, who founded the firm in 1989.

one case where his client purchased a horse from Europe for \$700,000, and when the horse arrived in the United States, it was a completely different horse. Luckily, the animal was micro-chipped for identification, and they were able to prove it was not the horse originally purchased.

The boutique firm, which currently has Catanese, two associates and a paralegal, represents clients from all over the world and works with many celebrities who purchase horses for both sport and pleasure. Catanese said most of his referrals come from other lawyers representing wealthy clients who need equine legal services.

"Recently we've been getting a lot of business in Kentucky and Florida and other big horse states," Catanese said. "I think we are going to be growing significantly."

— Stephanie Henkel

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