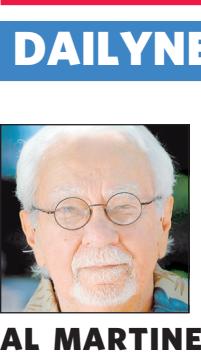


Daily News

Voice of the Valley for 100 years



AL MARTINEZ

Film actress lost career in scare, but won the war

A friend who was still writing when he died at age 101 said to me once that if you're going to live a long time you'd better have something to show for it.

I thought about him the other day as I was probing the memories of actress/activist/volunteer Marsha Hunt who, at a lively 93, has plenty to show for it. She fought for America's civil liberties as much as if she were a warrior on the front lines of battle, and like a lot of soldiers she emerged scarred.

She told her story to me the other day in her secret garden of trees and greenery that fill an acre on a quiet street in Sherman Oaks. Her home is a rebuilt ranch house that was active in the days when there was a horse corral nearby and an egg farm down the block.

An elegant woman with patrician good looks, Hunt's memory crackles with names and dates, particularly of those days in the terrible 1950s when she was falsely named as a Communist sympathizer and her vibrant movie career came to an end.

She was a reigning queen of Hollywood during the 1940s and '50s, a New York girl who came west and found success almost immediately in film, stage, radio and television. But like many others, she took a stand for civil rights and it cost her. In her words, "I lost it all."

During the Cold War between Russia and the U.S. the House Un-American Activities Committee began riding roughshod over the liberties of American citizens, relying on gossip and rumor to label them "fellow travelers" of Communism. When the red scare reached into the movie industry, Hunt was among those who went to war.

A group of actors, writers, producers and directors flew to Washington in defense of those who had been hauled before the committee and had refused on principle to answer any questions. They were charged with contempt of Congress and served time in jail.

Hunt spoke at rallies and joined a Committee for the First Amendment, for which a right-wing publication called Red Channels listed her as a Communist sympathizer. Up until then, she had acted in 52 movies. From the time her name appeared in Red Channels until retirement, she was only cast in 12. She was asked to denounce her activities if she wanted to work, but rose up and refused.

Hunt turned to a life of activism against war, poverty, pollution and homelessness. She labored on behalf of mental health and a youth recreation center and became a vocal supporter of the United Nations. Her work earned her the title of honorary mayor of Sherman Oaks and the interest of a filmmaker named Roger Memos who is out raising funds to shoot a documentary on her remarkable life.

Asked if she and the others who fought for America's civil rights won the fight against political thuggery, she thought for a moment and then, with a slight smile, replied, "I certainly hope so."

Al Martinez writes a column on Mondays and Fridays. He can be reached at almtz13@aol.com.

INSIDE TODAY

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Carving up the Valley

MAPPING: Interest groups give differing viewpoints on how new political districts should be drawn in the region.

By Dakota Smith Staff Writer

NORTHRIDGE — San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles-area political, business and environmental groups got a rare opportunity Thursday to pitch their plans for redrawing California's outdated state and congressional districts.

Not surprisingly, there was little agreement over how to carve up the sprawling San Fernando Valley, whose 260 square miles are home to 1.8 mil-

lion people.

Some plans sounded distinctly imperialistic. One toyed with the idea of absorbing Malibu, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills into Valley districts. And a Ventura County group was reportedly trying to claim a portion of Northridge and Chatsworth.

Others sought to boost the power of Latino voters or preserve existing concentrations of voters as a kind of envi-

DISTRICTS A18



Peter Yao, a member of the California Citizens Redistricting Commission, listens as VICA presents its redistricting plan Thursday at CSUN.

Michael Owen Baker Staff Photographer



THREE-STRIKES LAW

People age 40 and up buck tradition, commit more crime while felony juvenile arrests drop

"We now see a dramatic reversal in the aging of the crime population. It baffles me."

— Mike Males of the San Francisco-based Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice

By C.J. Lin Staff Writer

Researchers studying the effects of California's three-strikes law have found a puzzling trend: older adults are being arrested for felonies in droves, while felony arrests of juveniles are dropping.

The trend can be attributed to an "enormous increase in drug abuse" by an aging population, according to Mike Males of the San Francisco-based Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, during a three-strikes symposium at the University of Southern California earlier this month.

"We now see a dramatic reversal in the aging of the crime population,"

Males said. "It baffles me."

Males' finding was part of a report he released in April titled "Striking Out: California's Three Strikes and You're Out" Law Has Not Reduced Violent Crime." The report fuels the debate over California's three-strikes law, which passed in 1994 and requires life sentences for third-strike felony convictions.

Law enforcement officials differ on the effectiveness of the law, and acknowledge that at times it results in life imprisonments for relatively minor offenses, while costing the government enormous sums of money at a time of budget deficits.

PRISON A6

24,200 Felony arrests of adults over age 40 in 1980

110,700 Felony arrests of adults over age 40 in 2009

97,000 Felony arrests of juveniles in 1980

58,600 Felony arrests of juveniles in 2009

8,700 Prisoners serving life sentences under three strikes in California.

\$1.8 million Cost to incarcerate an inmate from age 43 to 82.

\$10 billion Cost to California to keep the current third-strike population behind bars over the next 25 years.

Source: Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice



Dodgers fans just aren't buying in

The McCourt drama, Opening Day beating and a superstar-less team seem to have created the perfect storm to keep Dodgers fans away from Chavez Ravine. **SPORTS**

Men gaining on women in longevity race, leading to fewer lonely widows

By Hope Yen The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Women still outlive men, but the gender gap among U.S. seniors is narrowing.

New 2010 census figures, released Thursday, show men are reducing women's population advantage, primarily in the 65-plus age group. It's a change in the social dynamics of a country in which longevity, widowhood and health care for seniors often have been seen as issues more important to women.

In all, the numbers highlight a nation that is rapidly aging even as Congress debates cuts in Medicare, an issue with ramifications for the growing ranks of older men as well as women.

Over the past decade, the number of men in the U.S. increased by 9.9 percent, faster than the 9.5 percent growth rate for women. As a result, women outnumbered men by just 5.18 million, compared with 2000, when there were 5.3 million more women than men.

The male-female ratio in the U.S. also increased to 96.7 from 96.3 in 2000, reflecting the narrowing of the female

CENSUS A18



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U.S. troops among NATO casualties

Nine NATO service members are killed in Afghanistan, including seven U.S. troops who died in a bomb blast. **A7**

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