

Bob Danis

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— *Bob Danis*
Fiddlesticks and Ivory Plus



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Bob Danis, 85, is a trumpet virtuoso and the volunteer band leader of Fiddlesticks and Ivory Plus. The six piece band plays during the lunch hour every Wednesday at the Santa Clarita Valley Senior Center. “We get a good crowd in here and they like to dance. We like to see them dance and enjoy themselves,” he said. “I love playing music and watch people enjoy the music. When they get up to dance, that movement is important.”

Danis, a resident of the Santa Clarita Valley for 11 years, is a native of Detroit.

He joined the Air Force during the Korean War and was trained as a Chinese translator. His work was highly classified at the time as involved intercepting transmissions from enemy aircraft.

The unit to which Danis was attached was credited for saving many American and South Korean lives.

After the war Danis moved to Southern California and worked in the electronics industry.

Danis enjoys playing from big bands, Dixieland and Broadway musicals.

“I enjoy the music from my youth,” he said.

His favorite song is “Stardust” and the band finishes each Wednesday lunchtime set with that song.

Danis admits to having some “senior center envy” when he visits the large and modern Simi Valley Senior Center.

“The SCV Senior Center has served its purpose, it is time to move on,” he said. “Our community keeps growing and aging.”

Danis said many of the seniors that attend the SCV Senior Center “have given their lives to the community, it is time to get a little payback.”

After the recent death of his wife, Danis said being active with his band at the Senior Center has been important.

“It is good for me to keep busy having recently lost my wife, and I really enjoy playing music for others,” he said.

When the seniors who attend the SCV Senior Center are asked what their favorite activities are at the Center, a variety of responses are received, but nearly everyone mentions “the band that plays at Wednesday lunch.”

Seniors reported that when they feel lonely, depressed or upset, the lunchtime music has lifted their spirits and improved both their mental and physical health.