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Movie industry begins work in SCV

Drivers on Soledad Canyon Road may have noticed a group of movie trailers parked up on the Golden Valley Road bridge this week, a sign that Santa Clarita's film industry is bouncing back from the recent Hollywood writers strike.

The trailers and vans were all part of the filming of "Super Capers," a family comedy that involves a group of quirky super heroes who attempt to battle crime despite their own weaknesses.

The scenes being filmed atop the Golden Valley Road bridge in Canyon Country, which will be closed through Saturday, are for the climax of the independent film, according to Ray Griggs, writer, director, producer and one of the actors for the film.

He added that the movie, set for a release later this year, includes many references to popular movies in the 1980s, including "Back to the Future."

The cast includes the likes of Adam West, Tom Sizemore and Taylor Negrón.

Referring to local filming, "It's definitely getting back up to speed now," said Jason Crawford, economic development manager for the city of Santa Clarita.

He explained that the nearly three-month writers strike during December and January really affected Santa Clarita's filming opportunities, which include multiple mainstream television shows.

Filming started to come back in February, he said. However, it was only three quarters of what February 2007 was, Crawford said.

However, as productions like "Super Capers" continue in Santa Clarita, the number of film crews in the local area is likely to increase in the coming months.

"March is shaping up to be right back on track," Crawford pointed out.

Although Santa Clarita is home to all types of filming, from music videos and commercials to full-length movies, shutting down a bridge for six days is considered a "major request," as Crawford described.

But after discussions, Crawford said that since the cross-valley connector is not fully completed and the city is hoping to stimulate its local economy with filming, "Super Capers" was allowed to film on the Canyon Country bridge.

As for any traffic problems as a result of the closure, Crawford replied, "A detour is set up and traffic seems to be moving along great."

He added that the film office worked to notify the surrounding community and businesses, which remain open during the week of filming, about the planned closures.

In terms of profits from the bridge's closure, Crawford said the revenue from the film permit and road closure fees will most likely be less significant than the amount of money the "Super Capers" will spend in Santa Clarita during its roughly month-long stay.

The film permit cost \$394 and the road closure fee, with a daily rate of \$563, totaled \$3,378.

Additionally, Crawford said the crew is working with the Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station to keep deputies at the road closure site.

"They're hiring local people, using local companies for a lot of their production," Crawford said. "All of that spending is where we benefit."

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