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La Nueva Voz

The New Voice, a Bilingual (English/Spanish) Publication
Pomona's *only* community newspaper!



Pomona Chamber of Commerce



Member

Issue No. 159

Thursday, October 27, 2022

CANDIDATES FORUM

Suggested for homeless – put 'em in jail?

By Jeff Schenkel, Publisher

Just as La Nueva Voz predicted, it was truly “election time” this month at the Pomona Chamber of Commerce city council candidates forum – new ideas seemed to come out of the woodwork, in at least one instance the gloves came off for a moment, and a controversial plan to eliminate the homeless by locking them up was proposed by a newcomer to city politics.



Jacky Elizalde



Victor Preciado



Nora Garcia



Larry Ortega



Steve Lustro



De'Andre Valencia

De'Andre Valencia, challenging District 5 incumbent Councilmember Steve Lustro, told just over 50 residents in the city council chambers audience that the homeless crisis has been crossing over the 71 freeway and is moving into Phillips Ranch into the

“green belt.” He said since the issue is bigger than the City of Pomona, “we need to work with our state government and our federal government to bring the correct resources locally.”

Valencia, a Pomona resident for the past 18 years, said to fix the problem, the city needs to address temporary housing and bedding for the homeless population “to get them off the street.”

“And we need wrap-around services,” he said. “That way, we can give them an option – either go and get help and those who want to get help will be able to, and we’ll get them into permanent housing.”

“Those who do not want to get help, then they will either get threatened to go to jail and once they know we are serious, they’ll leave the City of Pomona,” Valencia added. “Right now, there is no punishment for being homeless in

the City of Pomona, and we need to change that.”

Lustro, a resident of Pomona for nearly 40 years, pointed out the work the city already is doing to combat homelessness, adding that city staff is a “wonderful resource” for homeless individuals in need of service.

“The city has numerous programs that are funded by a combination of city resources and targeted grant funding,” Lustro explained. “The permanent supportive housing program, Pomona Homeless Outreach program and Continuum of Care Coalition are just some examples of efforts to move individuals and families from homelessness to stability.”

“The city’s Hope for Home service center provides a wide variety of services and referrals for homeless individuals and families desiring to stabilize their lives and move off the street,” Lustro said.

Voicing ideas... pg. 6

La Nueva Voz one of 10 papers in state to win grant

La Nueva Voz has been selected by members of the Latino Media Collaborative as one of only 10 recipients throughout California of a “Stop-the-Hate Small Grant.”

The announcement came last month at the inaugural Latino Media Summit California held at La Plaza de Cultura y Artes museum and cultural center in Downtown Los Angeles.

A total of \$66,500 in grants is being awarded in the program with funding provided by the California State Library in a “Stop-the-Hate” program administered by the California Department of Social Services, all to help raise public consciousness about hate incidents and hate crimes, their



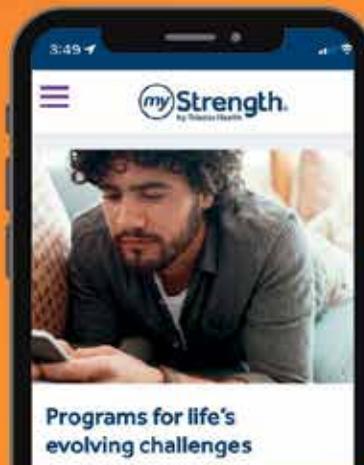
GRANT RECIPIENTS -- Renee Barbee and Jeff Schenkel of La Nueva Voz, at left, pose for a photo with Catalina Villegas, an anchor and reporter for Spectrum News 1 in Los Angeles, who was the master of ceremonies last month at the Latino Media Summit in Los Angeles where recipients of the “Stop-the-Hate” small grants were announced.

La Nueva Voz wins grant... pg. 4

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Victor Preciado is a Community Builder Victor Preciado es un Creador de Comunidad



"Victor is my choice to represent District 2 because he prioritizes the needs of residents, not the needs of outside interests."

"Victor es mi elección para representar al Distrito 2 porque pone primero las necesidades de los residentes, no las necesidades de los intereses externos."

Mayor Tim Sandoval, Pomona



"As a long-time Pomona resident, I know Victor gets it. Our people need help now. He and I are in the community every day serving our people."

"Como residente de Pomona desde hace mucho tiempo, sé que Víctor lo entiende. Nuestra gente necesita ayuda ahora. Él y yo estamos en la comunidad todos los días sirviendo a nuestra gente."

Carlos Goytia, Director TVMWD

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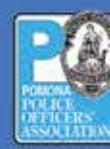


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Senator Connie M. Leyva
 REPRESENTING THE 30th DISTRICT



HILDA L. SOLIS
 First Deputy Mayor

Paid for By Victor Preciado for City Council 2022 FPPC #1403059

Pomona Council approves resolution declaring intent to award citywide waste contract to Athens that could be worth \$29.3 million per year

Pomona City Councilmembers last week approved a resolution declaring its intent to award an exclusive 10-year franchise agreement to Athens Services for residential and commercial solid waste, recyclable materials and organic waste collection services in the city – an agreement that could be worth an estimated \$29.3 million per year.

The vote was 6-1 with Councilmember Victor Preciado opposing.

City staff will bring the item back to councilmembers at their Nov. 21 meeting with a first reading of a proposed ordinance and a public hearing on the agenda.

If approved, it will be brought back for adoption on Dec. 5 and, if adopted, will go into effect after 30 days.

While the city's staff report did not include estimates of total value of the contract, La Nueva Voz did a little quick math based on Athens' proposal to charge \$35.50 for monthly single-family residential service in the first year.

That works out to \$426 for the year and, based on a city estimate of 25,000 residential accounts in Pomona, that could make the residential side of the deal worth somewhere near \$10.7 million.

And the commercial side is an entirely different calculation which is more difficult to work out.

Currently, the city provides its own municipal residential garbage, recyclable materials and green waste collection services and outsources its commercial solid waste operations and multi-family (apartments and condominiums) services to a variety of service providers under non-exclusive franchise agreements with Burrtec, Athens, Waste Management and Valley Vista.

To put it in perspective, since those companies report their revenue to Pomona each year for franchise fee calculation, the figures become public record. And in the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the most recent year numbers were available, the four showed approxi-

mately a combined \$18.6 million in billings for commercial service and multi-family service.

Even at that same level as an estimated jumping off point, that figure combined with the \$10.7 million for residential results in a combined contract value of \$29.3 million – all to a single company rather than a combination, as in the past, to four independent haulers and the city's own waste disposal unit.

While a recent study showed that city staff assigned to refuse operations in the Public Works Department are experienced and operating as well as possible despite rising costs and limited resources, the study noted that insufficient resources are constraining operations.

The issue came down to a decision between making a significant investment to maintain the city's own operation or contracting services as a more efficient and cost-effective approach.

A request for proposals was approved by the City Council last year, and four proposals were received with three meeting filing deadline and minimum require-

ments.

The exclusive franchise agreement with Athens would include two five-year optional renewals which would be at the sole discretion of the city. Billing and collections would shift from the city to Athens, but the city would receive franchise fee payments of 10 percent of gross receipts on residential service and 15 percent of gross receipts on commercial.

Athens also would continue to pay the city a variety of on-going fees including an outsourcing payment of \$1.1 million (essentially an annual payment for the acquisition of the city's solid waste operation); an administration fee of \$350,000; a vehicle impact fee of \$750,000, and others.

Athens would be required to continue to use Grand Central Recycling and Transfer Station until the city's current contract expires on Jan. 26, 2024, and the company would be required to use "low-carbon" vehicles in the city.

The new contract would become effective Jan. 1.

Again, according to the city's staff report, residential rates proposed by Athens would be \$35.50

in 2023, compared to the projected city rate of \$35.78. The city's general fund also would receive an additional \$770,000 next year from franchise fees.

In addition, the city would receive one-time revenues of \$1.25 million from the sale of city refuse equipment (trucks and containers), reimbursement of \$800,000 for street sweeping signage, and \$250,000 for procurement reimbursement.

According to the staff report, keeping service in-house would require residential rates to be increased 45 to 50 percent, becoming \$48 to \$50 per month, to fill vacant and new positions, provide funding for new trucks, carts and containers, and to address state requirements to keep organic waste out of landfills.

The city's request for proposals called on bidders to provide a smooth transition for employees displaced by the outsourcing.

Athens has proposed offering a \$25,000 retention bonus to all full-time employees and \$5,000 to all part-time employees displaced by the outsourcing of services and offered employment by Athens.

Do you have a news story? We want to hear from you or your organization.
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La Nueva Voz wins grant... from pg. 1

harmful impact on individuals and communities, their prevention, and support and resources available for healing.

Grant winners selected serve Latino and immigrant communities that are historically vulnerable to hate incidents and hate crimes because of their ethnic, racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation or other identities.

The La Nueva Voz “small grant” is for \$9,000 and will make possible a series of nine full-page features over the next nine months

including articles and “op-ed” pieces on the “Stop-the-Hate” theme. The first “page” appears in this issue on page 10.

The 10 winners (one is still pending and has not yet been identified) include nine newspapers in Southern California and one in the Central Valley area. All are Hispanic or Latino media outlets.

Among the winners in addition to La Nueva Voz are Hispanic L.A., Vida Newspaper, The San Fernando Valley Sun, El Latino San Diego and others.

La Nueva Voz was nominated for the grant by Rachel Barbosa, a former deputy to Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis.

“We were honored to be selected by the Latino Media Collaborative to be included in this program and we were humbled to be added to the list of winners among these amazing Latino publications,” said La Nueva Voz Publisher Jeff Schenkel.

“We have said for the 13 years we have



Arturo Carmona, Founder ... Latino Media Collaborative

published La Nueva Voz that we have attempted to carry the torch in the spirit of Candelario Mendoza and Al Castro, founders of the original La Voz that published for 28 years before us,” Schenkel

Former L.A. City Council President slams ‘mainstream’ media for passing on Latino stories

By Jeff Schenkel
Publisher, La Nueva Voz

Nury Martinez, who made history in 2020 when she became the first Latina President of the Los Angeles City Council, told participants at the first ever Latino Media Summit last month that mainstream news media is not printing stories of Latinos and is not talking about issues that impact the Latino community.

“Latinos in my opinion are be-

added. “We are very pleased to be recognized for our work in the community from outside of Pomona.”

The topic of the Latino Media Summit was “The State of the Latino Media Sector in California.” Keynote speaker was now-former Los Angeles City Council President Nury Martinez, the first-ever Latina President of the city council, along with a panel discussion with speakers including Gabriel Lerner, Editor Emeritus of La Opinion; Todd Mokhtari, President and General Manager of Telemundo 52 and NBC4; Miguel Santana, CEO of the Weingart Foundation and former President and CEO of Pomona’s Fairplex; and others.

coming more and more invisible to mainstream media,” she said at the event which was sponsored by the Latino Media Collaborative.

Martinez, of course, made history a second time this month when audio recordings of a private meeting with alleged racial overtones prompted her to resign – first as Council President and then as city councilmember.

“It calls for asking for all of us to sort of step up and make sure that Latino voices are represented in mainstream media,” she told an audience of Latino newspaper executives and reporters.

“The largest American newspaper not headquartered on the East Coast but locally here in Los Angeles, as of last year, only one out of the nine members of the L.A. Times editorial board was Latino,” Martinez said, “despite Latinos making up almost 49 percent of L.A. County and 39 percent of California. Latinos, our lives and our concerns deserve a page in, let alone the largest newspaper on the West Coast, in our home town which is the L.A. Times.”

“Our stories are part of our crucial fabric of Los Angeles and we’re being com-

About 100 guests participated in the event.

Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz has been active in Zoom meetings with the Latino Media Collaborative for the past two years.

La Nueva Voz has several slots still open for guest writers to participate by providing a message for a “page” in this series. If interested, please contact Renee Barbee at reneebarbee7@gmail.com for consideration.

The Latino Media Collaborative is an emerging non-profit news media organization that creates and fosters transformative media as well as everyday news for the Latino community. For more information, visit the web site at www.latinomedia.org.

pletely ignored,” she said. “And there’s no clearer example than the homeless crisis here in Los Angeles, and that the mainstream media is simply not covering.”

“Time and time again, the burden on homelessness has fallen on

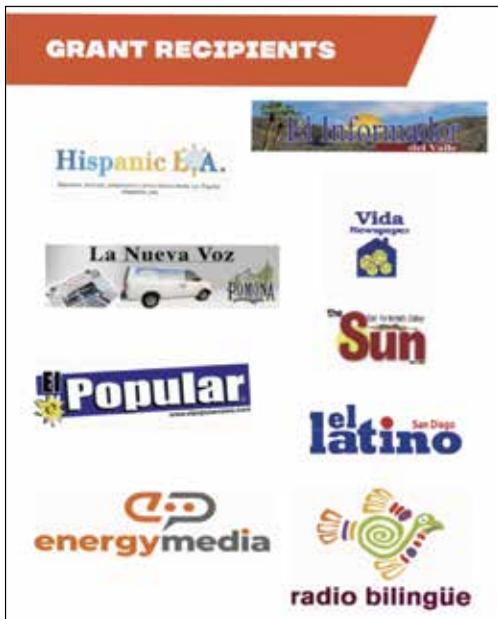


Nury Martinez, Former President Los Angeles City Council

the Latino community,” Martinez said. “But if you read the L.A. Times and what they’re writing, they will tell you how we are not doing enough to house the unhoused and our unhoused neighbors, that we need more compassion for the unhoused neighbors, and that we should care more about the people suffering on the streets in our very own communities in which we live in.”

“More often than not, we’re the only ones that are actually putting in the work and then putting in the work that other communities refuse to do because the overwhelming housing for the homeless has been built in Latino and Black communities in Los Angeles,” she said. “We have been stepping up,

Mainstream media slammed... pg. 19



Pictured are logos of “Stop-the-Hate” small grant recipients selected by the Latino Media Collaborative.



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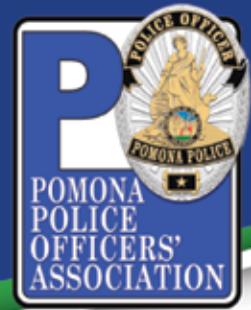
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- **Proveer Una Voz Para el Distrito 5**
Representar constantemente los intereses y las preocupaciones del Distrito 5 a la ciudad.

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 Paid for by Friends of Steve Lustro for City Council 2022 FPPC ID #1444008

Voicing ideas... from pg. 1

Four years without a plan

Interested in that “gloves came off” part?

Jacqueline Elizalde, challenging District 2 incumbent Councilmember Victor Preciado (elected to office four years ago), said “for the past four years our residents have not been presented with a plan” on crime.

“Just last week in District 2, a 74-year-old security guard at Rio Rancho Target shopping center was severely beaten,” Elizalde said, “and he was left with his brains hanging out.”

“Families are scared to shop here, residents no longer feel safe,” she added, “because your typical politicians continue to discuss only what’s convenient to them.”

Elizalde, who said she served on the PTA, booster club and Pomona Public Library board of trustees before taking over as chair of the city’s Vehicle Parking District Commission, worked for 10 years for the County of San Bernardino Human Services Department before taking a job in the office of Congresswoman Norma Torres.

She challenged Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval two years ago in the race for mayor when Sandoval was elected to his second term by a two to one margin (the vote was 62.14 percent to 26.46 percent).

And four years ago, she lost to Preciado when an open seat popped up. Councilmember Adriana Robledo did not seek re-election. Preciado won with 50.6 percent of the vote to Elizalde’s 49.5 percent, a margin of only 31 votes.

“Seeing the direction our city is heading to, homeless crisis is continuing to get worse, residents no longer feel safe, and the costs of housing and services are skyrocketing is why I’m running for office,” Elizalde said. “And with my education and strong public background including life experiences I feel that it’s time that someone steps up to represent the needs of this community.”

“Homelessness is out of control and the city depends on one centralized location to decentralize our homeless population,” she said. “And the truth is we need more than just Hope for Home – if a family that’s being evicted needs emergency services that very day, Hope for Home does not serve families, it only serves individuals. And they only operate during normal business hours.”

“My plan is to bring more resources, partnerships and organizations to help address the homeless population and provide more wrap-around services and emergency same-day services,” Elizalde said.

She also raised the issue of streets and sidewalks.

“Just recently I met a resident who has lived in Pomona since 1982” who she said has never had his street paved or his sidewalk repaired.

“This is unacceptable,” she said. “These are residents that are very vested in our city and I think that it’s unfortunate that nobody is really listening to them.”



Josh Landis, Moderator

Preciado, who described himself as an immigrant from Guadalajara who came to Pomona when he was eight months old, went to work at the age of 12 to help support his family. He said the reason he is bilingual is because he was the one in his family translating for his parents.

And he said he became familiar with city services long before his election to office four years ago.

“Thanks to what I have learned, I have been able to meet with staff and to craft plans to pave streets like Mission is getting paved right now, some of our alleys, installing sidewalks east of City Hall that have never had sidewalks since 1888 in the inception of the city,” he said.

Preciado said the city also is “creating plans to improve our parks,” adding that “Civic Center Park is getting remodeled, MLK is getting remodeled, and we’re

getting new restrooms for Tony Cerda Park, water fountains for some of our other parks.”

“Our direct to home food delivery started during COVID but we’ve been doing them before and after, taking City Hall directly to families’ homes and the inland area, taking City Hall directly to our communities,” Preciado said. “We’ve delivered over 80,000 bags of food. My whole purpose is to connect with our residents. We look at Pomona with solution-driven action.”

On the question of the biggest problem facing his constituents, Preciado said, “some of the things that we are addressing are how to improve safety, the quality of life, help families with basic needs – because of the pandemic, our families need more help now than ever.”

“We have increased the community services budget to surpass what it was since the 2008 crash,” he added. “We have increased our youth services making sure that our community has more movies at the park, concerts at the park, and we’re keeping the kids busy with activities . . . the more we keep them busy, the more that they stay out of negative items.”

“I awarded over \$100,000 in microgrants to classes for a junior

farm program at Lopez Elementary,” he said, along with art classes, free crochet classes and others, partnered with Just Us 4 Youth and God’s Pantry, and created “Pull Up” events every month.

“I look at it as a reimagined ‘town hall’ because we bring food and we bring services to make sure that we’re addressing people as we’re doing it rather than just listening and leaving and never having a full conversation,” Preciado said, adding that the events have grown to involve 40 partners providing free haircuts, free toys and, at last month’s event at Pomona’s Sacred Heart Church, even Cal Poly University Pomona President Dr. Soraya Coley and her staff giving away free bicycles.

“What’s important is that I’m taking City Hall to the community instead of expecting everyone to come through the City Hall doors, all of which are plans that I plan to expand on my second term,” he said.

Nora Garcia vs Larry Ortega

District 3 Councilmember Nora Garcia defeated long-time Councilmember Cristina Carrizosa four years ago with 56.6 percent of the vote to Carrizosa’s 43.3 percent, or about 400 votes.

This time, Garcia, a teacher, is up against challenger Larry Ortega

Voicing ideas... pg. 18

MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

Your Voice Matters

People who molest children will use tricks. Teach your child so that they do not fall for it.

ADULTS WHO ABUSE CHILDREN MAY:

- Treat them like they are special
- Give presents
- Give attention
- Spend extra time with them
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- Be special to the whole family
- Replace the love the child may be missing
- Get time alone with the child

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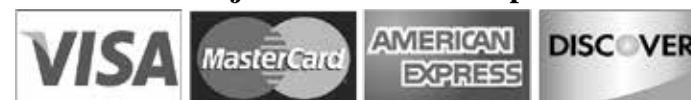
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Inter Valley Health Plan to shut down after 43 years in Pomona

Pomona's Inter Valley Health Care, one of the region's best-known businesses and with most of its 125 employees located in the city's tallest building, will close its doors and shut down operations at the end of the year after 43 years in operation as a not-for-profit federally qualified "Medicare Advantage" health care insurance provider.

Responding to a request from La Nueva Voz, IVHP CEO Michael Nelson cited declining enrollment that made it "difficult to compete in the current environment against companies with benefits and marketing budgets supported by membership in the millions."

"The plan was a minnow in a sea of whales," he said. "The board of directors examined, with the assistance of a national consulting firm, all possible strategies for moving forward. Ultimately, the company decided that an orderly wind down of operations would be necessary and prudent."

"The board of directors, employees and care providers are proud of our 43 years of service

to the community and our members," Nelson said. "We will be providing our signature five-star member service through the end of the year."

He added that members will be going through the Medicare annual open enrollment period to choose a new insurance plan for 2023.

While he stopped short of attempting to identify the cause of declining enrollment, a source close to the company said it appeared to be a casualty of the impact of the COVID pandemic which made it difficult to reach out to prospective new members.

And while Nelson declined in his official response to address financial questions from La Nueva Voz, his finance department staff confirmed the accuracy of published figures appearing on the internet that showed total revenues in 2019 were \$295,318,470 and total expenses that same year were \$295,460,061. Total assets were \$43,609,603.

Both revenues and expenses appeared to be leveling off since 2018 and total assets, listed at just

over \$30 million in 2015, peaked in 2017 at over \$70 million and headed downward in a steep decline until 2019, the most recent published numbers available.

The number of employees essentially remained unchanged throughout the same period.

Compensation of top executives seemed relatively modest compared to other top spots in Pomona, based on 2019 figures.

At that point, key salaries ranged from \$183,000 for a chief financial officer to \$341,000 for the CEO at the time.

Nelson's compensation package was not available. He also serves as executive vice president at Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center.

IVHP was working with Pomona Valley Hospital (Pomona Valley Health Centers) to provide for a "careful, smooth transition"

to a new health plan during open enrollment from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7.

Continuing without another Medicare plan (supplemental plan) would leave members without prescription drug coverage and could eventually result in a "lifetime Part D late-enrollment penalty," members were told in official notices.

The company announced the decision to close in both e-mails and newsletters to members.

"In our 43-year history, this is, without a doubt, the most difficult and heartbreaking news we've had to share – Inter Valley Health Plan will not be offering coverage in 2023," Nelson told members.

The company was formed in 1979 by a small group of physicians and administrators from Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center as a "health plan that put

health care first," he said.

"When it came time to renew our contract with Medicare, it became clear that in today's highly competitive Medicare environment, we would not be able to continue to provide the high level of benefits and service that you, our members, deserve," he added.

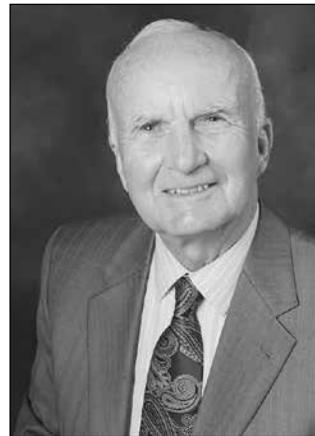
In his statement to La Nueva Voz, he said IVHP's enrollment at its peak was 50,000 commercial members and 25,000 senior members.

Its service area includes members throughout Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside and Orange Counties.

"Instead of feeding our profits back into shareholders, we reinvest in our members," the company web site said. "We put the money back into the health plan for the ultimate benefit of our members."

The web site added that providing coverage for people on Medicare "is all we do."

The company also provided useful health education and wellness programs for members and the community.



Michael Nelson



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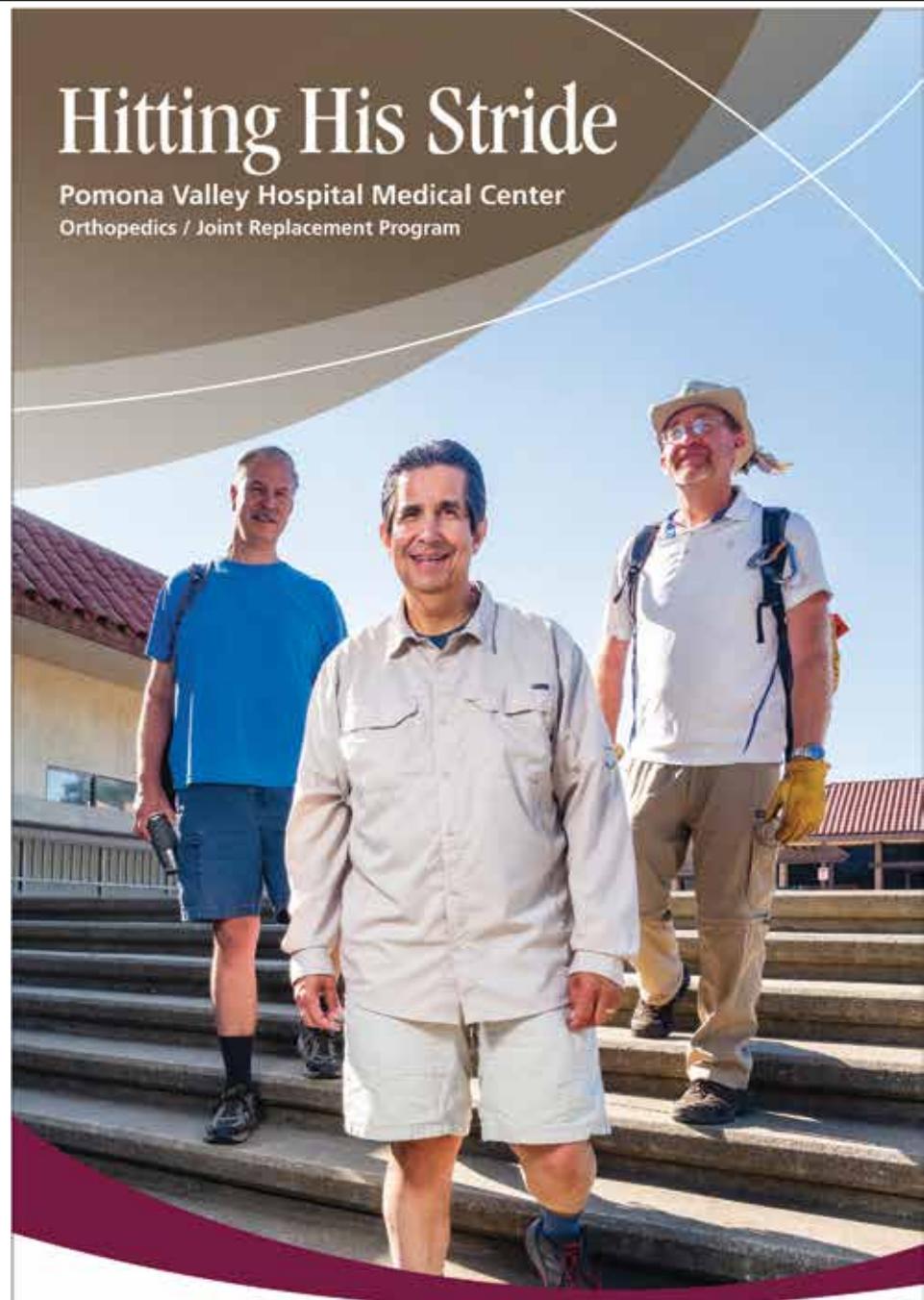
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Members of the "Ezzatt Band" cranked it up for a "heavy metal" performance at the Kindness Carnival this month.



A "Mini Mariachi" performance by students in a special program at the dA Center for the Arts in Pomona, led by Gustavo Zambrano, at right, one of the leaders of the Mini Mariachi program, stole the show and packed Pomona's Second Street during their performance at this month's Kindness Carnival.



CHARACTER CHAMPIONS -- Representatives of the Character Champions Foundation and Compassionate California booth, members of Compassionate Pomona, distributed their new "Compassion Counts in California and Beyond," a 32-page activity and song book including "compassion pledge" coloring pages for kids.



Photos by Renee Barbee
Pomona Optimist Club President Loraine Canales, always known for arranging for helpers at the face painting booth, becomes the recipient of a little face painting herself (actually, in this case, it looks more like hand painting). Artist Maria Jose Gavito, daughter of Pomona Chamber of Commerce board member Daniela Franco, shows what she can do.



The winner of a 24-inch flat screen television donated by Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz for the Kindness Carnival raffle was Alma Romano of Pomona. Pictured accepting the prize are her children Ana, at left, and Angel, with Kindness Carnival organizer Andy Quinones at right.



The Compassionate Pomona booth was popular throughout the Kindness Carnival this month, partly due to those chocolate cupcakes from Kitty's Bakery (always easier to be compassionate with cupcakes).



The "Larry Rhonda Jackson" band performs original songs in front of the fountain on Pomona's Second Street during this month's Kindness Carnival.



KINDNESS CARNIVAL IN POMONA -- Pomona's second annual "Kindness Carnival," presented by the organization Compassionate Pomona and this year "in the street" on Second Street in Downtown Pomona on Second Saturday this month, attracted huge crowds throughout the afternoon and evening. Four musical groups performed 45-minute sets during the event. Pictured is "Jeff Schenkel Live," performing oldies from classic rock to classic country and folk.

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Editor's Note: This page is the first in a series of nine special "Stop-the-Hate" features made possible by a La Nueva Voz grant awarded by the Latino Media Collaborative, a non-profit news media organization, and funded by the California State Library. The "Stop-the-Hate" program itself is administered by the California Department of Social Services as a statewide effort to increase public consciousness about hate incidents and hate crimes, their harmful impacts on individuals and communities, their prevention, and support and resources available for healing.

'Stop-the-Hate' -- A special La Nueva Voz feature series

Respecting each other and standing against bigotry

By State Sen. Susan Rubio

I was a public school teacher for 17 years before I became a State Senator. During those years, I saw firsthand how children model adult behavior. Our young people learn how to relate to and respect each other by watching their parents, friends, and neighbors. Unfortunately, especially in the past few years, there has been a rise of bigotry, coarsening our public discourse, painting entire groups – racial, ethnic, sexual orientation or religious – as the enemy.

While we have always had to be vigilant, today we can show children the right way if we stand together and call out those who seek to divide us. As a coauthor and supporter of bills that help combat bigotry and hatred, I'm proud to have worked with my Senate colleagues and Gov. Gavin Newsom and, to paraphrase Gandhi, be the change we want to see in the world.

People who come here from other countries are usually desperate to escape poverty and violence. My family fled Juarez, Mexico, at a time when it was one of the most violent and dangerous places to live in the world, especially for women and girls.

When I arrived, as child, I faced taunts, bullying, and discrimination. I ignored it, put my nose in books, and set my own high expectations. I did not know yet there was another way to confront this ugliness. Then in 1994, Latino communities, and immigrants specifically, became a political flash point.

Proposition 187 sought to ban immigrants from receiving social services, health care and education. Legal challenges prevented the law from taking effect, but more anti-immigrant proposals followed, including Proposition 209, prohibiting affirmative action, and Proposition 227, an effort to end bilingual education.

Latinos were galvanized, as was I. I became a citizen and wanted to make a difference. I knew in order to change things, people like me, and other minorities, needed to have a seat at the table.

In the years that followed, I helped other Latinos and Latinas get elected, and then I ran. Again, I faced major hurdles. I was told it was not my time. I was not the establishment pick. But I refused to buckle or go away. I won my elections – City Clerk, City Council, and California Senate – with the work ethic, resilience, and fearless attitude my parents demonstrated coming to this country, no matter how difficult the circumstances. With the weight of their sacrifices on my shoulders, I knew I had to do it.

As more and more minorities and women entered leadership positions in politics and business, we had hoped that treating each other with respect despite our differences would become the norm. Unfortunately, national politics has become more publicly contentious over the years and that has led to a disturbing trend.

According to the California Department of Justice, hate crimes have increased across the board. Events involving a racial bias overall increased 33.1 percent from 2020 to 2021, with anti-Black or African American bias incidents increasing 12.5 percent; anti-Latino incidents increased 29.6 percent; and anti-Asian bias increased a horrific 177.5 percent.

In addition, reported hate crime events involving a religion bias increased 21.1 percent, and hate crime events involving a sexual orientation bias increased 47.8 percent.

Due to this surge, over the past few years, we passed historic investments to provide direct support for communities impacted by hate incidents and to support victims. This included support for legal services and case management, mental and complementary health services, and other needed intervention and prevention activities.

As Gov. Newsom said at the time, "This is a critical investment that will go a long way toward uplifting our communities and fighting hate and violence around the state. We aim to help victims of violence, but also prevent violence in the future. History shows we need to do better, and this helps us get there."

In addition to including an unprecedented \$166.5 million in the 2021 budget toward combating bias-motivated attacks, the California Legislature passed legislation to expand protections for our most vulnerable populations. I was proud to be a coauthor on AB 2282, by Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, strengthening penalties against individuals using burning crosses and swastikas and nooses.

I also was a coauthor to AB 1664, by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, which extended the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. It provides funds for critical security enhancements at religious institutions, LGBTQ community centers, reproductive health facilities, and other nonprofits in California deemed to be at risk from violent extremism. I supported a \$50 million allocation to the program last year as well as \$15 million for the program in 2019.

Lastly, I was a coauthor of SB 1161, by Sen. Dave Min, which requires California's 10 largest transit agencies, including LA Metro, to recognize street harassment as a rider safety concern, gather data, and create solutions to prevent and mitigate the harassment.

But we need to do more. We need to educate the public about why this is happening and what we can do about it. Our long-term goal should be to stop this ignorance before it begins, which means working with our children to show civility for one another. I look forward to working with my colleagues and local leaders to ensure everyone is treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

Editor's Note: California State Sen. Susan Rubio represents Senate District 22, which will include the City of Pomona starting December 2022. She was elected to the California Legislature in 2018 and is the first guest columnist in this nine-month special series.



State Sen. Susan Rubio



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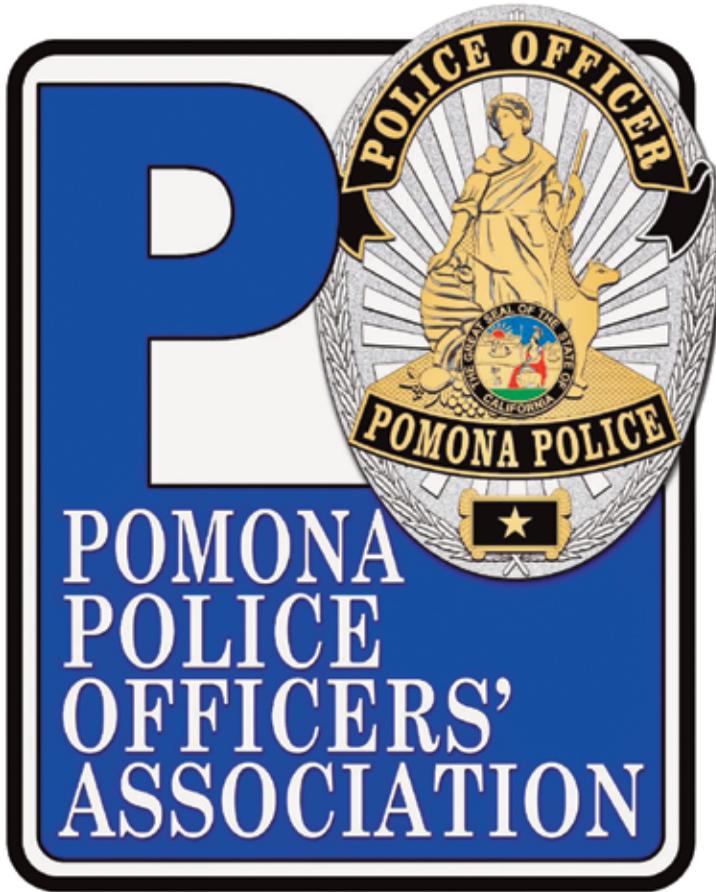
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RED RIBBON WEEK IN POMONA -- Representatives of the non-profit Partnership for a Positive Pomona (P3) were recognized by members of the Pomona City Council last week as they proclaimed "Red Ribbon Week" in Pomona Oct. 23 - 31. Pictured are members of the Pomona Youth Prevention Council, part of P3, with members of the City Council as Mayor Tim Sandoval, at right, looks on. Red Ribbon Week, celebrated in communities across the nation, offers citizens of all ages the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to drug-free lifestyles, something P3 and the Youth Prevention Council work for throughout the year.



CITY COUNCIL RECOGNIZES HOUSE OF RUTH, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH -- Pomona's House of Ruth, a non-profit agency that works to prevent domestic violence and ensure the safety and well-being of those impacted by it, was recognized by members of the Pomona City Council last week as the council proclaimed the month of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. House of Ruth has served 884 individuals through all of its programs so far this year. The city's proclamation cited national statistics that show one in four women, one in seven men and one in three teens will be victims of domestic violence during their lifetime. Pictured, from left, are Councilmembers John Nolte, Robert Torres, Victor Preciado, Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole and Steve Lusto, House of Ruth Executive Director and CEO Pat Bell and Board member Debbie Lopez; Councilmember Nora Garcia and Mayor Tim Sandoval.



SEN. LEYVA HOSTS 'EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT' -- "Amplify your Voice through Action" was the theme of the 8th annual Young Leaders Empowerment Summit, organized by State Sen. Connie Leyva this month for nearly 200 high school students who converged on the Cal Poly University Pomona campus to learn about the power of civic engagement. Keynote speaker was California Secretary of State Shirley Weber, the daughter and granddaughter of sharecroppers who were denied the right to vote in Arkansas and the first Black American elected to the post. Pictured, from left, are Cal Poly Pomona Provost Jennifer Brown; Secretary of State Weber; Sen. Leyva; and Cal Poly Pomona President Dr. Soraya M. Coley.

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What Is fibromyalgia and what are the recommended treatment options?

By **Debbi Huskey, PT, CLT**

In “Fibromyalgia: Creating a Treatment Plan,” Carol DerSarkissian, MD states, “Fibromyalgia is a complicated condition. It has no specific causes or known cure. Yet for those who have it – as many as one in 50 Americans – the chronic pain, fatigue, and psychological strain of fibromyalgia are all too clear.

“Fibromyalgia symptoms are treatable, however,” she says.

“Many experts believe the best treatment is a multifaceted approach that combines medication with lifestyle changes and alternative treatments. You may need to work with your doctor, a physical therapist, and possibly others to tailor a treatment plan to your needs.”

She adds, “Exercise is an important part of managing fibromyalgia symptoms. It can relieve pain, stress, and anxiety. The key is to start slowly. Begin with

stretching and low-impact activities, such as walking, swimming or other water exercises, or bicycling. Low-impact aerobic exercises such as yoga, tai chi, or Pilates can also be helpful. If you want to increase the intensity of your exercise, talk with your doctor.”

Fibromyalgia can significantly affect a patient’s quality of life and lead to extensive use of healthcare services. Common symptoms include tenderness,

sleep disturbance, decreases in physical functioning, and disruptions in psychological and cognitive functioning such as memory problems, diminished mental clarity, mood disturbances, and lack of well-being. The pain of fibromyalgia

is often increased by a variety of factors, which may include exercising too much, being in one position for too long, or doing activities such as chores and cooking.

People often experience excessive sensitivity to touch, bright lights, loud noises, and fragrances, as well as heightened reactions to cold and heat. This increased pain can last from hours to several weeks. People diagnosed with fibromyalgia often state, “It’s like I have the aching flu all the time, night and day.” This constant, aching pain can lead to frustration, mood swings, depression, and general discour-



Debbi Huskey

agement. It becomes difficult not only for the person with fibromyalgia, but also for their family and friends.

At Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare in Pomona, we offer supervised wellness programs that ad-

dress these issues, and we follow a fibromyalgia treatment model that Dr. DerSarkissian recommends. This includes warm-water pool exercise, yoga, tai chi, and general exercise, as well as educational sessions to learn about the long-term management of symptoms to improve mobility and function. Our program also emphasizes lifestyle strategies such as pacing, energy conservation, nutrition, mindfulness, stress-reduction techniques, and general physical and occupational therapy support for individual medical issues.

In addition, Casa Colina offers a free monthly support group for adults diagnosed with fibromyalgia that provides educational and personal support. To learn more, call (909) 596-7733, ext. 3500.

Editor’s Note: Debbi Huskey is a physical therapist with the fibromyalgia program at Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare in Pomona.

Organizers announce theme of

Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade

The 2022 Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 10, “rain or shine,” this year on the theme “An Upbeat Downtown Holiday.”

A Pomona tradition, the two-hour parade gets under way at 6 p.m., beginning at Gibbs Street and Second Street and looping back around on Mission Boulevard.

Sponsors, entries and volunteers already are being accepted at the Downtown Pomona Owners Association.

Online applications are now being accepted at downtownpomona.org/christmasparade. Deadline for applications is Nov. 18.

Registration for the parade ranges from only \$35 for non-profits and schools to \$50 for businesses. Checks should be made payable to DPOA.

To volunteer, call (909) 469-1121, or visit 2022pomona-christmasparade.eventbrite.com.

More than 100 entries representing 3,000 people are expected to participate in the parade including everything from bands, youth groups, car clubs, service organizations, dignitaries, floats, drill teams and more.

Thousands of spectators are expected to line the streets of the parade.

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PEARLS of Service awards 11 students ‘On the Spot’ scholarships

PEARLS of Service, Inc., a Pomona non-profit established in 2018, announced the 11 recipients of this year’s “On the Spot” scholarship awards last month with winners representing four area high schools.

Winners were selected based on their “personal statement” essays which are designed to help students begin thinking about their personal goals and accomplishments.

The awards were announced at the group’s annual mixer and also will be part of the group’s annual meeting in December.

PEARLS CEO Mattie Johnson thanked the community for its continuing support in the event facilitated by Endy Farrow.

This year’s winners were Donner Hailey, Maya Morris, Jordan Peng and Noah Roberts, all of Claremont High School; Evelyn Aceves, Keith Colder and Troy Moatakef, of Diamond Ranch High School; Jonathan Dennis-Plesant, Ethan Dennis-Plesant and Donovan Dennis-Plesant, of Pomona High School; and Joy Mitchell, of Diamond Bar High School.

To donate or contact PEARLS of Service, visit the web site at www.pearlsofservice.org or P.O. Box 1917, Pomona 91769.



Jonathan Dennis-Plesant



Maya Morris



Jordan Peng



Noah Roberts



Donovan Dennis-Plesant



Joy Mitchell



Evelyn Aceves



Troy Moatakef



Donner Hailey



Keith Colder



Ethan Dennis-Plesant

CITY REJECTS REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Harriet Tubman statue inches closer to city approval for Lincoln Park

The statue of American icon and abolitionist Harriet Tubman that was temporarily placed in Pomona’s Lincoln Park for an unveiling on the Fourth of July is a couple of steps closer to permanent installation there – expected as early as within the next 30 to 60 days, but the city will be contributing about a

third of what was requested to pay for it from its public art fund.

Ray Adamyk, of Pomona’s Spectra Company and organizer of the project, contracted with sculptor Manuelita Brown of San Diego to create the 80-inch bronze statue honoring Tubman, who was known in American history as the “conduc-

tor” of the Underground Railroad aiding slaves escaping to the North in the 1800s.

Her statue was completed in time for the July 4 ceremonies in Lincoln Park, but it was positioned on a two-wheeled trailer at the time and not on a permanent pedestal. The statue has remained in storage since

it was formally unveiled.

Also since that time, numerous residents have been contacting City Hall, La Nueva Voz and other organizations asking what happened to the statue and when it will be installed in the park.

After several more meetings of the city’s Cultural Arts Commission

and the Parks and Recreation Commission, city councilmembers last month heard an appeal of a Cultural Arts Commission decision to deny a \$119,000 funding request altogether.

A Citizens Advisory Committee and the Cultural Arts Commission

Statue... pg.17

NEW OWNERS AT SHISHA ROOM -- New owners of the Shisha Room in Downtown Pomona held a ribbon cutting this month at the hookah lounge and bar that’s right in the middle of Downtown’s night life. Pictured at left is Pomona Chamber of Commerce Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz and, at right, Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares and Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado. The Shisha Room is located at 370 S. Thomas St.



Photo courtesy of Pomona Chamber of Commerce



Photo by Tom Zasadzinski, Cal Poly Pomona

CAL POLY PUMPKIN FEST -- What’s Halloween time without the Cal Poly Annual Pumpkin Fest, a tradition for 29 years, which opened Oct. 1 and continues through Sunday. This year’s event featured 30,000 university-grown pumpkins, live entertainment and the ever-popular corn mazes for children of all ages. Festival Director Craig Walters said the event is designed each year for fun for the whole family but also for visitors to “learn something new about farming, which continues to be a major California industry that offers science and technology-related careers for our students.” The event can be found at Cal Poly’s AGRIsclapes Center next to the Farm Store.

The Pomona Chamber of Commerce Presents:

Let’s “Keep the Cheer Here”

Starting every week beginning November 1st, 2022 we will be highlighting local businesses offering “Keep the Cheer Here” deals. We will post weekly in our newsletters, on all our social media platforms and our website.

This offer is FREE for Chamber Members, For nonmembers we are offering affordable pricing!

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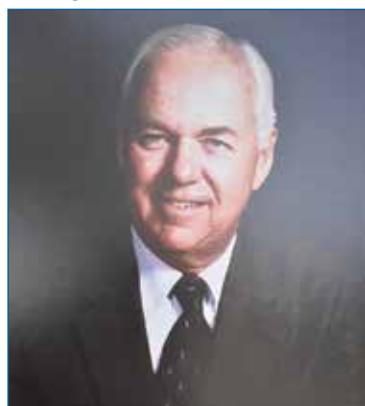
City Council conference room named in honor of Chuck Bader

In the entire 134-year history of the City of Pomona, parks and bandshells have been named after community leaders but never a building – until now, after the city’s ribbon-cutting last month marking a new sign on the wall naming the city council’s executive session meeting room after former Pomona Mayor and Assemblymember Chuck Bader.

The “Chuck Bader City Council Conference Room,” that little building next to the actual City Council Chambers, was officially renamed before an audience of about 100 friends, former colleagues and family members.

Bader died in August 2019 at the age of 79.

Bader’s wife Rosanne Bader, a former schoolteacher and principal in Pomona and a long-time Mt. SAC trustee, thanked the city’s Community Life Commission which held two meetings on the subject before approving the naming.



Chuck Bader

“Chuck spent many hours in meetings in the Council Chambers right there,” Bader said, adding that he moved to Pomona with his family at the age of 4 and attended Roosevelt, Lincoln, San Jose, Emerson and Pomona High School (Class of 1958).

“The only time he didn’t live in Pomona was four years at UCLA and three years in the United States Navy,” she said. “Chuck was always interested in public service and soon after moving back to Pomona this time with a wife and baby and another on the way, he showed an interest in city government and was appointed to a city commission.”

She said a couple of years later in 1971 he ran for city council and was elected. He served six years on the city council before being elected mayor in 1977 and again in 1979. His next step was the California Assembly, where he served from 1982 until 1990.

Bader said her late husband – while serving on the city council – was in-



HONORING POMONA’S CHUCK BADER -- Friends, former colleagues and family members gathered in the Pomona Civic Center last month to officially name the council’s executive session meeting room the “Chuck Bader City Council Conference Room.” Bader, who died in 2019, served as a city councilmember and mayor in Pomona before going on to the California Assembly, where he served for eight years. Pictured at the ribbon-cutting, from left, are Pomona Chamber of Commerce Executive Board Member Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz; Pomona City Councilmembers Steve Lustro and Nora Garcia, Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval and his son, Roy; at rear, former State Sen. Jim Brulte; Bader’s wife, Rosanne Bader; grandson Carson Bader; at rear, former California Secretary of State Bill Jones; Bader’s son, Stephen Bader; former Pomona Police Chief Richard Tefank; Pomona Chamber Board Member Daniela Franco, of Metro Event Center; and Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares.

strumental in solving the problem of more than 1,000 abandoned houses in the city, and he worked to bring Pomona’s College of Osteopathic Medicine, now Western University of Health Sciences, to Pomona.

“There were struggles during those years but Chuck was proud of the diversity in the City of Pomona,” she said.

He attended many of his boys’ baseball games, was an avid reader, from Churchill to everything Abraham Lincoln wrote, and others, and he was president of their church

council during the last six months of his life.

He loved spending time with his family at their cabin in Mammoth, and he enjoyed music and singing and playing guitars.

“During those 55 years I was proud to stand by his side for all this and so much more,” she said.

Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval said Bader was the youngest person to sit on the Pomona City Council at that time.

“He was truly a public servant,” Sandoval said, adding that he lived

at a time when people didn’t have a tremendous amount of trust in government.

“Chuck was the complete opposite,” he said. “He was a man of tremendous integrity.”

He said Bader understood that people elected officials to office because they placed trust in them, “and he had an obligation to never violate that trust.”

Sandoval said Bader cared about houses, the environment, young people and working men and women.

And he said he continued to serve Pomona up until the time he was diagnosed with cancer.

Former Pomona Police Chief Richard Tefank said he got to know Bader when he was a young police officer in Pomona and Bader was on the city council.

“He was a great guy,” Tefank said. “Chuck was a decent man, a family man, a good man, and, to me, he epitomized what an elected official should be.”

“He cared more about the people who he represented than he cared about himself,” he added.

Tefank said Bader was active in the development of Phillips Ranch, was a “real gentleman,” and treated the employees of the city with respect. And he was a strong supporter of law enforcement.

Editor’s Note: To see the complete original Chuck Bader obituary, visit www.lanuevavoz.net, click on past issues and select September 2019 (page 8).



Rosanne Bader



Learn how to save a life! CPR Certification Class

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Mr. Macias was an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) at Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center for several years until he started First Line in 2015.

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Cal Poly communications alumni return for 'learn-by-doing' event

Graduates of Cal Poly University Pomona's communication program will help current communication students practice the polytechnic university's "learn-by-doing" approach at the department's Alumni Night dinner at 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18, at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Claremont.

The 2022 Communication Alumni Night, planned by students in an event planning course, marks the return to an in-person format after it was held virtually for the past two years.

The event will bring together current communication students with communication department alumni from over the years for a networking dinner, a featured alumni speaker and entertainment. Tickets are \$40 per person.

The communication course in Cal Poly's College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences affords

students the opportunity to learn and experience hands-on budgeting, fundraising, operations, event scheduling, program management, hospitality, strategic communications, volunteerism and philanthropy. It is intended to help prepare students for careers in public relations, interpersonal communication, organizational communication, multimedia journalism, hospitality and more.

The class also will benefit communication students – proceeds from the event will support event expenses and help fund the Legacy Scholarship for Communication students.

Students are currently seeking monetary donations and items for the scheduled silent auction.

For more information or to donate, visit www.cppeventplanning.com or contact the class instructor, Sid Robinson, at (909) 227-9589.

'GoFundMe' site raising money for taco stand traffic victim's family

A "GoFundMe" site has been set up to raise money to help Pomona's Cazares family with expenses following the death of Gilberto Cazares this month in a tragic auto accident in which a car slammed into a taco stand at West Holt Avenue and Dudley Street.

Cazares reportedly was buying dinner for his family at the sidewalk taco stand when a car traveling eastbound on Holt veered into the westbound lanes and ultimately crashed into the stand.

Pomona police and Los Angeles County firemen responded to numerous 911 calls and found one deceased male and 12 others who were injured and transported to a local hospital.

Three of those injured were in critical condition.

According to a police department news release, the vehicle's driver allegedly fled the scene but returned an hour later and turned herself in.

The female suspect, a Pomona resident who was 25 years old at the time of the incident, was arrested and booked on suspicion of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence and felony hit and run, according to Pomona police.

It was unclear if drugs or alco-

hol were a factor in the crash.

The alleged driver was identified by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office as Diana Beatriz Martinezumana. The district attorney's office filed a case against her last week, charging her with one count of vehicular manslaughter, two counts of hit and run resulting in death or serious injury, and eight counts of reckless driving causing injury.

She was released on bail and is scheduled to appear for arraignment on Nov. 7 in Dept. N of Pomona Superior Court.

The "GoFundMe" site, established by his family, can be found at gofund.me/4e794d13.

As of last week, it had raised more than \$11,000 of a \$35,000 goal from a total of 234 donors.

The victim's son, Carlos Cazares, said on the site the family is "truly heartbroken."

"Words can't describe the pain we are going through for our unexpected loss of our father, Gilberto," Cazares said. "He was an amazing person and great father."

Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval said during a city council meeting last week that city officials are exploring how the city can assist the family as well.

convened a special joint meeting in August to consider funding the "unfunded" installation portion of the budget but decided the costs "appeared too high and were not sufficiently backed up by cost estimates," according to a September city council staff report.

According to Ean Frank, Adamyk's project manager on the statue, Adamyk covered \$80,000 in costs of the artist and the foundry where the mold was created before final review by the Cultural Arts Commission.

The remainder was to go to the cost of the base or pedestal for the statue in the center of the park's rose garden, a location already approved by the city's Parks and Recreation Commission.

But the city's understanding was that \$98,750 was to go to artist fees including \$22,000 for a "pedestal that has not been created yet," Development Services Director Anita Gutierrez told La Nueva Voz.

Another \$20,250 was included in a revised request for "all other expenses" related to the installation, bringing the staff's revised recommendation to \$42,250.

City councilmembers, however,

Statue... from pg. 15

essentially split the difference and voted to allocate the \$42,250 to cover the costs of producing the pedestal and installing the statue in the park.

As staff explained the sequence of events to city councilmembers in a 90-minute review during the council meeting, the project did not follow the usual procedure but the applicant instead came in with a completed statue, and not a "conceptual idea," seeking compensation when the artist already had been paid.

However, Councilmember John Nolte pointed out that as the applicant claimed in an appeal letter, there was no prohibition to retaining an artist before review by the Cultural Arts Commission.

But staff members said there is a process for selecting the artist and that they could not find a good reason for funding the artist under the circumstances.

Staff members added that this was the first time an application had been received in which the project already had been created and funded.

"We would have hoped to have been approved for the entire

amount, seeing as this is a very important sculpture of one of the most famous African Americans ever," Adamyk said in an e-mail response when La Nueva Voz asked him for his reaction to the city's decision.

As a part of the process, the city will require Adamyk to enter into a contractual agreement to transfer ownership of the statue to the city as "city art" once it is installed, according to Gutierrez.

She pointed out in a telephone interview with La Nueva Voz that the project was one of 137 applications resulting from a call for visual public art, representing 54 organizations that applied for funding under the city's public art fund.

She said more than 40 artists are being funded following a lengthy review process.

The city will be funding nearly a million dollars' worth of art in the city.

By law, specified new construction projects in Pomona are required to either incorporate works of public art into their building design or contribute specified amounts to the city's public art fund to pay for projects somewhere in the city by contributing artists.

The following public service ad is courtesy of La Nueva Voz.

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Voicing ideas... from pg. 6

ga whose family, Ortega said, has been in Pomona for more than 118 years.

Garcia, a resident of Pomona for more than 30 years, graduated from Pomona Unified School District schools and received her bachelor's and master's degrees and her teaching credential from St. Mary's College of California.

She told the forum audience that she returned to Pomona in 2012 to be closer to her family.

"Since my election in 2018, we have approved hundreds of new affordable housing units, required developers to build more affordable homes, and passed rent stabilization," she said. "I've delivered food to families affected by the pandemic, directed millions of recovery dollars to District 3 and the rest of Pomona. We banned the use of no-knock warrants and prohibited hourly motel rentals to fight human trafficking."

And, she said, the city has revoked permits for three recycling businesses, eliminated more than 20 miles of truck route, added "many miles" of bike lanes and planted more than 1,000 trees.

"We initiated a park system master plan and raised fees on developers to build new parks while adding community gardens and more park land to our city," she said. "The city's model cannabis ordinance has created new businesses and a new tax revenue while preventing these businesses from being exclusively located in underserved communities."

"Through prudent fiscal management, we have increased the city budget and our reserve fund, but our work is not done," she said. "Overturning historic inequities that have deprived our District 3 of vital resources will take all of us working together. I'm running for re-election because there is more positive progress to be made."

Then what's the biggest problem?

"The most significant issue in my district is housing conditions and affordability," Garcia said. "As a teacher I cannot afford to live in my own district alone. People need to understand the correlation between too many cars parked on the street, crime, too much traffic in alleys or even too many families in a cramped space due to living costs and con-

ditions."

"The City of Pomona has made big strides to address housing affordability in our city," she said. "Since I have been on the council we have approved and supported the building of affordable units. Just this week the City of Pomona's adopted housing element has been found in full compliance with state housing element law, and it's fully certified for the first time in years."

"The city's inclusionary housing ordinance passed in 2021 and the temporary rent stabilization ordinance passed in 2022 makes clear that the current Pomona City Council is working diligently in order to make sure housing is affordable, and we are combating homelessness in our city," she added.

"The city needs to make rent stabilization permanent and add a rental inspection ordinance to protect residents," she said. "That is what I will continue to work for if I am re-elected."

"My vision for the City of Pomona is to ignite the rocket ship of opportunity that currently stands before us," said Ortega, "through a four-point plan that strikes through the heart of a seemingly 'whack-a-mole' strategy currently employed."

"Together, all of us, we will work on both short- and long-range infrastructure goals creating a foundational vision coupled with accountability, complete with a process of transparency for all our neighbors and business leaders to follow, enjoy and engage," he said.

He said his plan represents the solutions that will answer how the city will deal with crime, slow police response time, homelessness, the "digital divide" (with costs preventing high-speed internet from being available to all), "and streets that seem to go forever un-repaired."

His plan includes calling monthly community meetings with residents, law enforcement and city department heads to discuss community needs.

In addition, he is calling for the elimination of the three-quarter percent local sales tax and, instead, focusing on efforts to encourage the city, the school district, the hospitals and universities to do business with local compa-

nies.

"It would represent, for example, if there was \$500 million spent on an annual basis, it would mean 25 more million dollars for our local businesses if the leading institutional purchasing powers would do business with Pomona's businesses," he said.

"Point number three is wiring our neighborhoods and our businesses with fiber optic connectivity to the internet," he said. "There's money that's available and we have access to that money, and we should be going after that."

He said the project he's been working on already has brought \$500,000 for planning to bring fiber optic connectivity to the City of Pomona.

The fourth point in his plan is dealing with inflation and dealing with food security.

"I see us doing more local farming, more community farming," he said.

Then what's the biggest problem in District 3?

"The biggest issue is crime, crime in our neighborhoods," Ortega said, adding that neighborhoodscout.com rates Pomona at 9 percent, which he said means rates 91 percent of other areas safer than Pomona.

"We must do better in terms of engaging the community and the police," Ortega added, pointing out that this engagement is something that will come out of the community meetings called for in his four-point plan.

Lustro vs Valencia

Back on the Lustro vs Valencia match over in District 5, Valencia said the city's problems and the district's problems "are the same."

"It's just the fact that these issues have been ignored for decades and in the last four years these issues have become crises," Valencia said. "I'm here to fix that. And when elected to city council, my top issue that I will focus on is homelessness. Right now, this has been ignored for the last four years."

He said his second issue is public safety.

"As you all know, with homelessness comes crime, so I want to work with the police department and make sure we get more service from them to make residents feel safe."

"Lastly, I want to talk about

quality of life – we all know that the community of Westmont has been ignored, and it's been neglected," he said. "Our District 1 (the portion of District 1 recently added to District 5 through redistricting) needs a facelift."

And, he added, the "green belt" in Phillips Ranch is deteriorating. Valencia said he's "the most qualified" to fix these issues based on his private career experience (he works as Senior Vice President and Legal Policy Officer of the Building Industry Association of Southern California).

"For the last decade, I've advocated for business and residents every single day," he said, working for "the largest advocacy group in California."

"I will continue to fight for Pomona," Valencia said.

Meanwhile, Lustro cited his list of 60 accomplishments "on which I had a direct influence" over the past four years.

"Beginning with my last campaign and continuing for the past four years, I have focused my service on three primary merits – accessibility, responsiveness and communication," Lustro said. "When residents . . . have contacted me during my tenure . . . I have done my best to respond to each contact promptly."

"My nearly 25-year career working in local government affords me the knowledge of who to contact or where to take a problem or concern to get it resolved," he added.

In addition, he said the fact that he has retired from his professional career gives him the ability to be responsive. Plus, he said he would add "inclusiveness and proactiveness to the list of what I bring to the table."

"Residents should feel that their questions and concerns are being heard and respected," Lustro said. "That's what builds and strengthens neighborhoods . . . a goal to which we should all strive."

Responding to a question on economic growth, Valencia said economic development has two components – "one, taking care of the businesses that are already here, making sure they have their resources to thrive and then also attracting new businesses to come to Pomona and we can expand our tax base."

"But the second component . . .

is economic mobility, making sure that we give our residents and the local businesses the resources to have economic mobility, meaning having our residents go from poverty and into 'out of poverty,' making sure they have a safety net to hold them, to guide them and make them strong," he said. "I will continue to advocate for that."

Lustro said he spent his career in the public sector in community development and planning, and part of his responsibility at the last city he worked for was combining community development and economic development.

"Economic development is any type of development that will grow the city's revenue stream, preferably on an on-going rather than a one-time basis," Lustro said. "New businesses mean additional sales tax and utility tax revenue. New development means increased property taxes and related tax revenue."

He also said the attraction of large businesses often acts as a catalyst for additional new retailers, restaurants and support services.

"Has new development occurred in Pomona over the last decade? Absolutely," he said, "but we can't simply sit back and admire what has been established or what has been done."

Also, he said e-commerce has taken an "enormous bite" out of the number of businesses that actually need a physical location to operate.

"From a city council standpoint, councilmembers need to recognize and fulfill their responsibility," he cautioned, "that is, set appropriate policies and direction for the city that encourages investment and development and task the city manager with carrying out those policies directed through his or her department heads."

"It's not the city council's job to micromanage the day-to-day operations of the city or to engage in secret meetings or backroom deals," he said.

He said councilmembers should set policies and "create a welcoming culture" and "let staff do its job of chasing down new business and development."

Moderator for the forum was Josh Landis of Foothill Transit, an executive board member of the Pomona Chamber.

OPINION

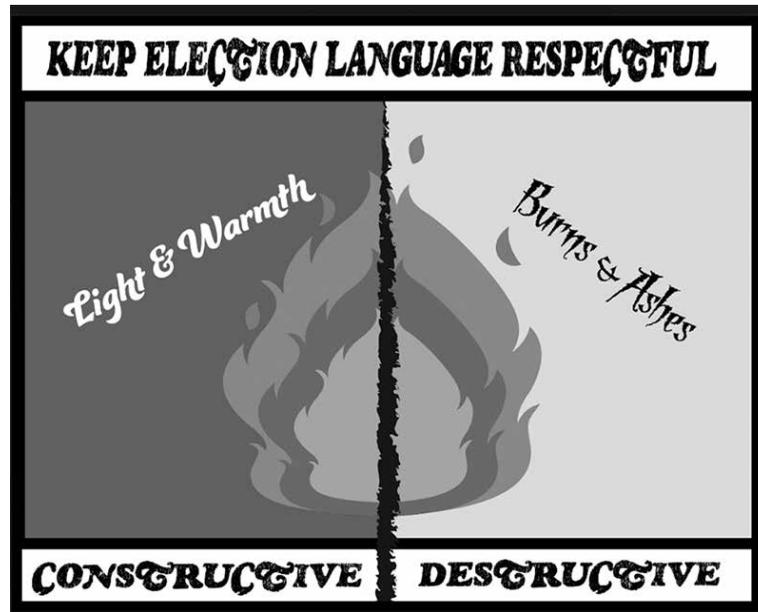
Making compassion a core value of city governance and culture: Reflections

By Dick Bunce, Jan Chase, and Linda Lowry, Members, Compassionate Pomona

Let's begin with a generally accepted definition of compassion. It means to empathize with suffering of others and to desire to alleviate the suffering.

The City of Pomona was in many ways a city of compassion prior to the City Council's signing on to the International Charter of Compassion in 2018. The city has continued in this direction for the past four years – with more intentionality, by all appearances, than before.

Compassion can be easily dismissed as a nice idea but irrelevant to governing. Or it can be seen as window dressing behind which the usual opportunism of city politics, commerce, etc., continues unabated. Three years after the signing the Charter of Compassion, compassion still was not listed as a core value on the city website. However, during the review process of the City Charter during this same time span, advocates of Pomona's "Compassion Movement" were successful in getting compassion included as a value in the newly



Graphic by Andy Quinones

An election message from Compassionate Pomona.

proposed Charter Amendment which will appear on the Nov. 8 ballot for voter approval. If approved by the voters, the new preamble would state that the city shall "affirm the values of representative democracy and open communication, participation in all aspects of our community, compassion for all

living things, respect for the environment . . ."

Compassion is now listed on the city website as a core value. With minimal prompting, Mayor Sandoval agreed to contact the chair of the city's Community Life Commission. This paved the way for a representative of Compassionate

Pomona (an ad-hoc local advocacy group) to get a hearing with the Commission. This effort was aided by adding an important modifier. "Engaged compassion" is the value as now listed on the website.

The common definition of compassion speaks of a desire to alleviate suffering but stops short of actual engagement. The commission took the value more seriously when this key word was applied. The same was true for the Charter Review Commission. It was difficult to get compassion added even

to the charter preamble until it was made clear that this value is more than a feeling. It inspires and goes hand in hand with action.

Building compassion into the life of a city is an on-going challenge. Compassionate policies and programs for people of all ages, races, and ethnicities have a way of shaping the civic culture – how we think and act, even toward our individual selves. It's an endless journey, and fully worthwhile. We will never say we've arrived. Yet, progress is possible, especially in Pomona.

Mt. SAC president to retire in June

Dr. Bill Scroggins, who has served as president and CEO of Mt. SAC since 2011, announced this month he will retire effective June 30.

He has served for nearly 50 years in education, according to a news release.

Prior to joining Mt. SAC, he served as superintendent and president of College of the Sequoias in Visalia. He also served as interim president for two years at Modesto Junior College.

Scroggins, an alumnus of La Puente High School, attended Mt. SAC and went on to earn a bachelor's degree at UCLA and a doctorate at UC Riverside.

Board members already have hired a search consulting firm to begin the recruitment process for a new president and CEO and make it possible for the board to fill the position by July.

Mt. SAC is California's largest single-campus community college district.

Mainstream media slammed... from pg. 4

but they won't say that, they won't ever cover that."

She said that's why it is important for the Latino media to tell the stories of the Latino community.

"We can speak for our communities about what we are doing because we're not rejecting housing anywhere in the Latino and Black communities in Los Angeles," she said. "But they won't give us any credit for that when they write their stories."

"And myself, as a progressive now leading the L.A. City Council, I have never been able to get the L.A. Times to print an opinion piece of any of these issues affecting the Latino community," Martinez said. "Only 4.3 percent of the op-eds published in the L.A. Times were by Latino authors. And even worse, only 1.4 percent of the op-eds that were actually printed were authored by a Latina."

"So, they won't even tell our stories and they won't let us tell our stories by printing our opinion pieces," she said, adding that it is important to the Latino media to "elevate our stories to tell the stories of the Latino community

and teach our young people who we are."

Martinez said according to the 2020 U.S. Census, Latinos account for 51 percent of the country's growth.

"And we rose almost 19 percent in the U.S. population," she added.

In addition she said the gross domestic product (GDP) of the U.S. Latino growth is 57 percent faster in the overall U.S. economy, and 70 percent faster than any non-Latino economy.

Martinez said as a stand-alone economy, the U.S. Latino economy would rank seventh largest in the world, tied to France. And Latinos are responsible for 68 percent of the U.S. Labor force since the recession of 2008.

"We are the voices that the mainstream media should be hearing from," Martinez said. "We are the voices they should be writing about. We are the political power in the state."

She added that in recent years record numbers of Latinos have been elected to the U.S. Congress.

"We can no longer afford to be ignored," she said.




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BEATING THE BIG DRUM -- The group "Women Around the Big Drum" beat a large drum as they sing their Native American prayers at this month's fifth annual Gabrieleno Village of Toibingna Indigenous Peoples Day at Pomona's Ganesha Park. The day-long event, which has grown to include both more vendors and more guests, attracted several hundred area Native Americans and friends. Indigenous Peoples Day recognizes the Indigenous communities that have lived in the Americas for thousands of years. It has become increasingly popular as a replacement for Columbus Day, which was meant to celebrate the explorer who sailed with a crew from Spain in three ships in 1492. While many cities and states celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day each year, it is not yet a federal holiday. Two bills that would create the holiday are pending in Congress, including H.R. 5473 by Congresswoman Norma Torres.



Dee Dee Manzanares, an organizer of Pomona's Indigenous Peoples Day, second from left, and **Naiche Dominguez**, at right, honor Naiche's dad, **Henry Dominguez**, seated, at this month's Indigenous Peoples Day observance in Ganesha Park. In 1972, Dominguez walked across the country in the "Trail of Broken Treaties" caravan to Washington, D.C., with Dennis Banks, who co-founded the American Indian Movement to protect the civil rights of Native Americans.



Photo courtesy of Pomona Chamber of Commerce

LAW OFFICE RIBBON CUTTING -- The law offices of James P. Segall Gutierrez, which opened in 2020 during the pandemic, became the newest Pomona Chamber of Commerce member this month with a ribbon cutting in Downtown Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz; Aldo Macias Arellano, representing Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang; Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado; attorney Gutierrez; Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares; and Pomona volunteer Yessenia Miranda Perez. The offices are located at 301 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona.



Tribal elder and long-time Pomona resident **Steve Manzanares** poses with Congresswoman **Norma Torres** at this month's Indigenous Peoples Day activities in Pomona's Ganesha Park. Torres told participants she is still working on getting her legislation passed in Washington to establish Indigenous Peoples Day as a federal holiday.

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Pomona Unified officials 'debrief' parents on lockdown, suspect taken into custody, following report of gun on campus

A male suspect, reportedly a new student at Pomona's Garey High School who allegedly brought a replica firearm to school, was taken into custody by Pomona police officers last month three days after reports of a student with a gun on campus prompted a three-hour campus lockdown.

The suspect, whose name was not released because he is a juvenile, was in possession of a replica firearm when he was contacted by police, according to a Pomona Police Department news release.

Pomona Police Deputy Chief Christian Hsu told La Nueva Voz in a telephone interview last week that the gun allegedly found in the suspect's possession was not a firearm. While Hsu would not specify where the suspect was taken into custody, he confirmed the location was in Pomona.

He declined to provide additional details as the case was still under investigation, and it was not clear whether the suspect remained in custody or would be charged.

Meanwhile, while the suspect was still at large, an estimated 300 parents and students crowded into a standing room only cafeteria at Garey at a "town hall" meeting one day after the lockdown was called following the incident.

Pomona Unified School District Interim Supt. Darren Knowles told the group no threats were made during the incident and that the campus was safe even though the student believed responsible had not been located.

"Yesterday, I am happy to report that all of our students were safe and there were no injuries as a result of the lockdown," Knowles said. "Our students were safe."

After a round of applause, Knowles added that school district officials always tell students "'if you see something, say something,' and that's exactly what happened here."

He explained Garey Principal Roddy Layton received information at 9:30 a.m. on the date of the incident, Monday, Sept. 26, that a student on campus had entered a restroom and had taken a photograph of a gun in his hand. He then posted the photo on social media.

Knowles stressed that the student did not threaten anybody and did not threaten to shoot anybody.

"He just took a picture of the gun and shared it with people," he said.

School officials immediately went

to work trying to locate the student on campus.

"As a result, we had to go on a lockdown," Knowles said, adding that the student was not in his classroom. If he had been, he said, the lockdown likely would have continued for perhaps 30 minutes at the most.

"We planned right off the bat to have a town hall (meeting) because parents are going to want to hear the details," he said.

"I know that you guys care about the safety of your kids and we care about the safety of your kids, too," he added, calling the process of raising and educating kids a partnership between parents and the school district.

"Lockdowns don't just affect our students and staff but also affect you guys," Knowles said.

In addition, he said school district officials had to work closely with the Pomona Police Department during the lockdown.

"They were very responsive," he said, adding that they brought in both police dogs and a drone to check the top of the school roof.

Pomona police officers at the town hall meeting confirmed they are confident they know who the student is and added that the FBI was working to locate him using cell phone data.

Pomona Police Lt. Ryan Rodriguez told the group that those highly publicized delays going into a classroom that occurred during an elementary school massacre on May 24 in Uvalde, Texas, would not happen in Pomona. That shooting, which resulted in the death of 19 students and two teachers, was said to be the second-deadliest shooting ever at a K-12 school in the U.S.

Instead, he said Pomona police officers are trained to always attempt to de-escalate a situation without using lethal force if no shots have been fired but that, once shots are fired, officers are trained to enter the location, immediately confront the suspect or suspects, and take whatever action is necessary.

Knowles told the parents that the morning of the town hall meeting, school district and police officials were limiting the number of access points to the school.

"We will continue to maintain security to make sure this is a safe place so we can get back to school and get back to educating your children," Knowles said. "This is a safe place, you guys."

"This young individual made a



Officials at last month's "town hall" meeting at Garey High School following the campus lockdown answer questions from a cafeteria filled with concerned parents. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Unified School District Resource Officer Cynthia Jimenez and Sgt. Brad Paulson of the Quality of Life Unit, both representing the Pomona Police Department; Silvestre Maravilla, Pomona Unified's Director of Human Resources and Security Services, who served as an interpreter; and Pomona Unified Interim Supt. Darren Knowles.

Pictured is a photo provided by the Pomona Police Department of the "replica" handgun allegedly used in the Garey High School incident last month. It was unclear whether this was a "BB" gun or other type of replica, although police said it was not a firearm.



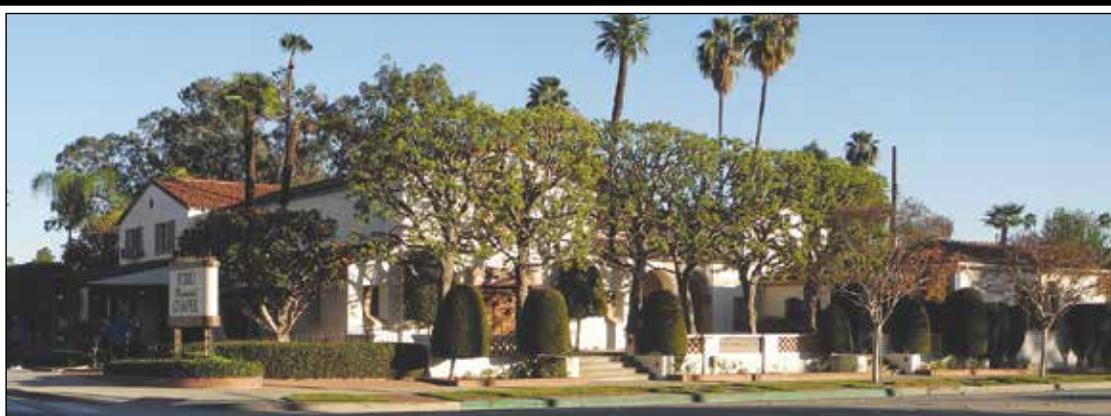
very bad mistake by bringing that to school . . . and we've got to figure out a way to help this young man, too, but I do want you to know he didn't threaten anybody, he didn't threaten to shoot up the school, he didn't point it at anybody, so we have to make sure that we assess the threat properly," he said.

"We're going to find and connect with the individual, but we need to

also help him as an individual as well," Knowles added.

Suggestions from the parents ranged from searching student backpacks and installing metal detectors at entrances to Pomona schools to improving communications with both students inside during a lockdown and parents outside the school seeking information regarding their children.

On hand for the town hall gathering were Pomona Unified School Board President Dr. Roberta Perlman, School Board member Arturo Jimenez, Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval, Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado, whose council district includes the Garey High School campus, Pomona police officers and Pomona Unified School District campus security officials.



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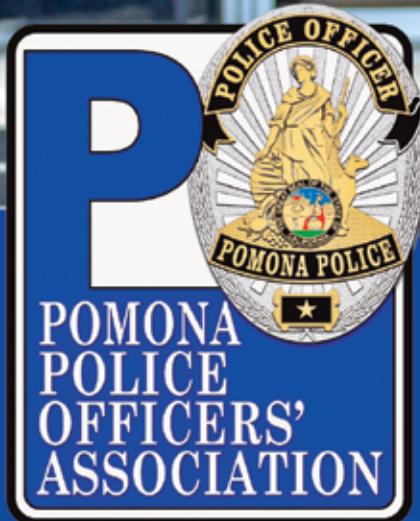
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Pomona Unified School District Board President Dr. Roberta Perlman, at left, and State Sen. Connie Leyva share a laugh before the start of the 5k run this month.



RUNNERS ARE OFF IN SIXTH ANNUAL POMONA 5K -- Runners get off to a great start this month at the beginning of the sixth annual Pomona 5k (followed by a 10k) in Downtown Pomona. About 655 runners, a new record, were registered this year. And, according to La Nueva Voz friend Patricia Lozano, Ryan Byrd, a third-year College of Osteopathic Medicine student at Western University of Health Sciences, came in first in the 10k with a time of 33 minutes 8 seconds. It was his second year in a row to win the 10k. The WesternU "team" of 20 participants in the run included 16 students and four faculty members.



Pomona volunteer Patricia Lozano, formerly of Western University of Health Sciences, cheers the runners on along Second Street with a high five.



Pomona Unified School District Interim Supt. Darren Knowles, at center, and his dog, Kona, take on the 5k run challenge this month with Knowles' wife, Cari Knowles, at right, and PUSD parent Frank Carrillo, at left.



Run organizers Chara Swodeck, at left, and Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado touch base with each other on the stage just before the start of Pomona's 5k run.



It was a cool morning under cloudy skies for this year's 5k run in Downtown Pomona, making the warm-up drill even more important in this photo taken from the stage as the Pomona High School cheerleaders cheered them on.

Posing for La Nueva Voz before the start of the run are, from left, Latino/Latina Roundtable President Jose Calderon, State Schools Supt. Tony Thurmond, Pomona Unified School District Board President Dr. Roberta Perlman, and Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval with his son, Roy.

Two U.S. Marine Corps veterans -- each carrying the Marine Corps flag -- make their way along Second Street just east of Garey Avenue. The two are repeat participants in Pomona's 5k run.

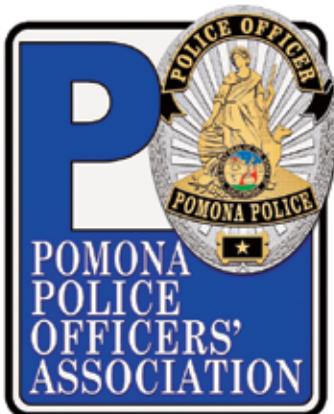


Please visit our web site at www.lanuevavoz.net to see the latest issue of La Nueva Voz, past issues and more!



Members of Pomona's Garey High School cross country team, really a "semi-professional" team in the 5k run, hang out after crossing the finish line. They were among the first to complete the run.

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