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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. 161

Thursday, December 22, 2022

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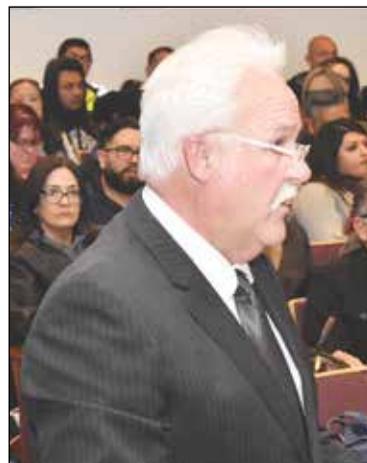
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Pomona councilmembers award 10-year \$29.3 million trash deal to Athens Services

Pomona city councilmembers this month voted to award an exclusive 10-year franchise agreement to Athens Services for residential and commercial solid waste, recyclable materials and organic waste collection services to the entire city in a contract expected to be worth an estimated \$29.3 million per year.

This action marked the first time in 100 years – almost to the day, since the new plan goes into effect in July – that the city decided to take its own trash trucks out of the equation.

Pomona councilmembers on July 11, 1923, first took over their own collection service using a single city trash truck after a one-truck trash hauler – despite the terms of



Gary Clifford



Pomona City Councilmember
Nora Garcia



Carlos Gonzales



Pomona Public Works Director
Rene Guerrero

his three-year contract – stopped providing service while demanding a \$150 per month cost increase, for a new monthly cost of \$250 per

month, according to a report in the Pomona Progress newspaper provided by researchers at Pomona Public Library in response to a La

Nueva Voz inquiry.

The City of Pomona was incorporated in 1888.

The vote on first reading of the more modern ordinance last month was 5 to 1 with only Councilmember Nora Garcia opposing (Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole was absent from that meeting). The final vote on second reading at a council meeting this month was 6 to 1 with all councilmembers voting. Again, only Garcia opposed.

The ordinance was expected to go into effect 30 days after its Dec. 5 approval and, according to Public Works Director Rene Guerrero, services are set to begin on July 1.

Guerrero told councilmembers at

last month's meeting that "preserving affordable rate structure as well as the interest of employees potentially displaced by this franchise agreement were of key importance throughout the process."

Garth Schultz, president of the R3 Consulting Group in Roseville, California, which was retained by the city to assist with the review process, told councilmembers last month in recommending the Athens proposal that key points considered in the selection process were taking care of displaced employees, better rates than the city's cost of service, better services, better flexibility, better overall financial position, and

Trash deal... pg. 6

Former Cal Poly Foundation employee released from federal prison after serving sentence for nearly \$1 million embezzlement conviction

By Jeff Schenkel, Publisher

A former long-time employee of the Kellogg West Conference Center at Pomona's Cal Poly University was released from federal prison this month after serving 16 months for a million dollar felony embezzlement plea bargain conviction that only received news media attention for the first time in recent weeks.

Following an FBI and Internal

Revenue Service criminal investigation, Jeanette Bernardette Paredez, now 52, was charged in December 2020 in an 11-count federal grand jury indictment out of the U.S. Attorney's Riverside branch office with a list of allegations including bilking Kellogg West in a complex "scheme to defraud," mail fraud, and making and subscribing to a false income tax return.

Paredez served as an accounting specialist for the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation, a non-profit charitable/educational organization, which owns and operates Kellogg West, from 2000 to 2020, according to U.S. District Court documents, which indicated she was responsible as part of her job for receiving, verifying and authorizing payment of invoices.

Release from prison... pg 15

PAID ADVERTORIAL

Share your story: Applications now available for Courageous Minds Speakers Bureau

Stigma is a false, negative belief or attitude held about a person or group of people – and despite progress in recent years, stigma surrounding mental health still persists today. Stigma relating to mental health means that people with a mental health condition may be viewed negatively, have assumptions made about them or discriminated against because of their mental health. It also can result in people with mental health concerns feeling shame, guilt and being afraid to tell others about their experiences, while also making it difficult for them to access support and help.

Research shows that the best approach to reducing mental health stigma is through direct contact with individuals who have experienced similar struggles. Tri-City Mental Health's Courageous Minds Speakers Bureau aims to break down the stigma by bringing people together to share their own mental health journey or experiences with supporting someone they care about. Individuals speaking out and sharing their stories about mental illness, trauma or any life-changing experience can have a positive impact and reinforce feelings of strength, resilience, recovery and perseverance.

"We all have a story to tell, and we welcome stories from people of all ages," said Brittany Nguyen, Community Capacity Organizer at Tri-City Mental Health. "It takes courage to share your story, and you have the power to reach others who are struggling. By sharing your story, you can be a mental health advocate and help others feel less alone and more empowered to reach out for support when they need it."

Tri-City Mental Health is accepting applications now through January 4, 2023 for the Courageous Minds 2023 cohort. The program offers a 5-week workshop to help participants share their story in a safe, impactful and empowering way for themselves and others. The workshops are available for anyone who is 18 years of age or older; works, resides, or goes to school in Pomona, Claremont or La Verne; and who can commit to attending all workshop sessions.

"You can be part of a community that is taking action to reduce mental health stigma," said Nguyen. "Your story matters and, together, we can change the conversation around mental health in our community, one story at a time."

Application deadline is January 4, 2023. For more information about Courageous Minds, please contact Brittany Nguyen at (909) 326-4636 or bnguyen@tricitymhs.org. Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/CMspeakers for application and program details.





Pomona's Smiles and Tears Children and Family Services held its annual gift give-away and holiday lunch last week at Golden Corral in Rio Rancho Towne Center. And the gifts were a big hit, as seen here in the smile of one of many young gentlemen and young ladies in foster care through the agency. Pictured, from left, are Board members Renee Barbee, Oscar Ugalde and Christine Islas, President and Chief Executive Officer Jose Islas, and Board member Tila Guzman. Smiles and Tears provides services throughout Los Angeles County and from the high desert to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.



Kids of all sizes helped mom and dad bring in brand new toys to donate at the Pomona Police Department's annual "Stuff a Cruiser" event at Pomona's Target shopping center. Pictured, from left, helping get everything carefully loaded into the back of a Pomona Police SWAT vehicle, are Officer Kenya Ortega, Corporal Chris Lewis, and Capt. Todd Samuels. Donated toys were distributed later in the month at the police department's "Santa Cop" give-away in Pomona City Hall.

Santa's helpers came in all sizes -- sometimes with boxes almost as big as the helpers -- at this year's "Stuff a Cruiser" event.



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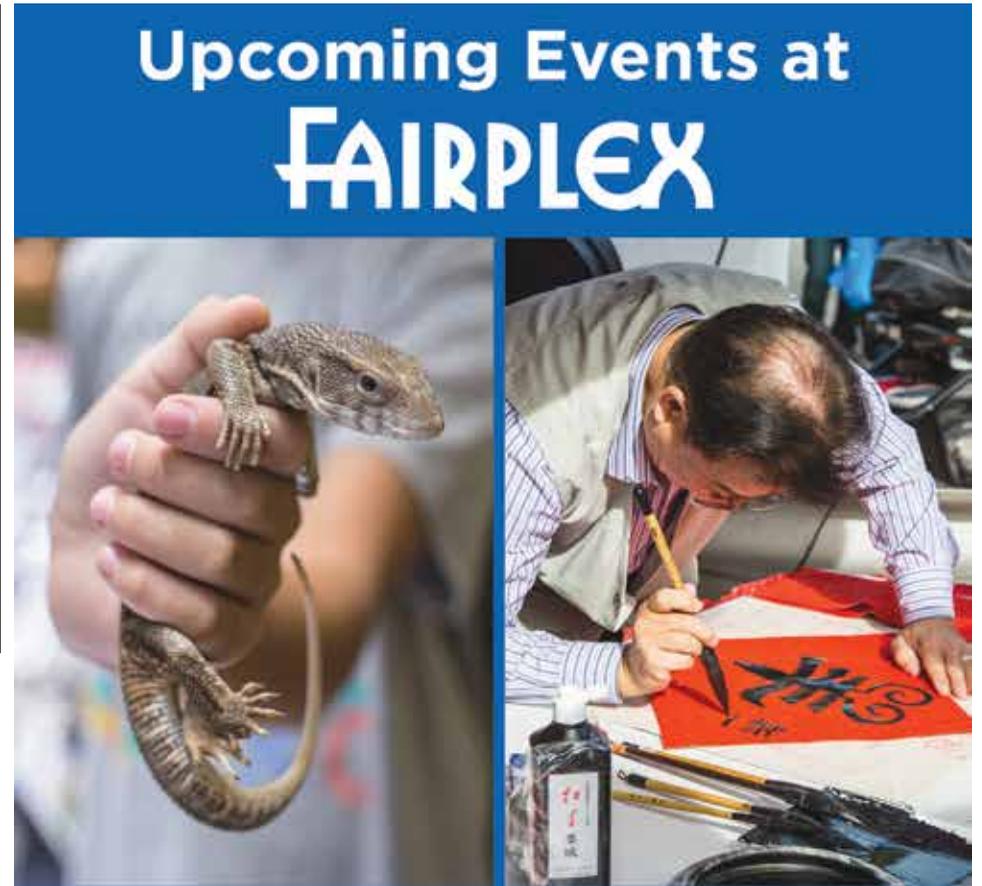
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LA NUEVA VOZ DONATES ARCHIVES TO POMONA PUBLIC LIBRARY -- In an effort to make back issues of La Nueva Voz even more accessible to students, researchers and the general public, the newspaper has donated its complete archives to the Pomona Public Library. What that means is the back issues from the La Nueva Voz web site also will be accessible through the library web site, but as an added feature, through the library, the newspapers will be "searchable." It is still uncertain if the first 22 monthly issues -- published before the La Nueva Voz site was created -- will be searchable. Regardless, they have now been scanned into the library system as the entire set moves closer to "going live" on the internet, going all the way back to September 2009. Pictured, from left, loaning "hard copies" of those first 22 issues to the library this month for scanning, are La Nueva Voz publisher Jeff Schenkel, Allan Lagumbay of the library's special collections department, and Renee Barbee, vice president of marketing and operations for La Nueva Voz.



POMONA MAYOR SANDOVAL INSTALLS DIRECTOR CARLOS GOYTIA FOR NEW TERM -- Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval officiated this month in Claremont at swearing in ceremonies for a fourth four-year term for Director Carlos Goytia, who represents South Pomona on the Three Valleys Municipal Water District Board. Pictured, from left, are Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado, his wife, Marisol Ramirez, Catalina and Carlos Goytia, and Mayor Sandoval. Goytia was first elected in November 2010 and originally took office in January 2011, although since 2014 board members officially take office in December of even-numbered years.



Upcoming Events at FAIRPLEX

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January 8

Asian American Expo LA
January 14-15

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January 14-15

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January 14-15

Sneaker Expo LA
January 14-15

Bart Hall Boat Show
January 20-22

Jurassic Quest
January 27-29

See all events at Fairplex.com



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Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated



Pomona's Beth Brooks displays her handmade, well, everything at this month's Pilgrim Congregational Church Christmas Marketplace in Pomona.



Mark and Connie Ferguson, of Ferguson's Flower Gallery, 181 W. 2nd St., Pomona, show what they have to offer at the annual Pilgrim Congregational Church Christmas Marketplace.



Pomona's M. Joyce Bakersmith displays her wares from Mary Kay at the Pilgrim Congregational Church Marketplace. The event had a steady stream of customers.



Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, at left, stopped by to see her friend Santa and his elves at the city's holiday lighting event. And she had her list all ready.



Lighting the lights at this year's event are, from left, Pomona City Councilmembers Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, Robert Torres, Steve Lustro, John Nolte, Nora Garcia and Victor Preciado, and Mayor Tim Sandoval with his son, Roy.



Two amazing snow machines atop the Pomona City Council chambers were a hit at this month's holiday lighting event.

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Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez and his wife Michelle stack things up inside the district office after this month's toy drive.

Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez took the opportunity of this month's toy drive to hand out a few Assembly certificates recognizing members of the Pomona Police Department HEART team (Homeless Encampment Action Response Team) for the good work they are doing. Pictured, from left, are Lt. Manny Ramos, Capt. Ryan Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez and Sgt. James Gibson.



La Nueva Voz, at the invitation of club president Arturo Jimenez, stopped by the Pomona Valley Democratic Club's "Dems and Jazz for the Holidays" program at O'Donovan's in Downtown Pomona. From left are Jeff Schenkel and Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, Monica and Arturo Jimenez, Pomona City Councilmember Nora Garcia, Ion Puschilla and Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval.



Participants in Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez' 10th annual toy drive this month at the district office in Chino pose for a photo op at the successful event. Rodriguez personally distributes the toys to kids in the district during the holidays.

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Trash deal... from pg. 1

enhanced street sweeping covering all portions of streets.

“Athens has presented a proposal that adds value to your city employees’ work life, keeps residential rates stable and competitive, brings commercial and industrial services to be compliant with our local legislation, and improves the quality of life in Pomona as it relates to waste and recycling services,” said Gary Clifford, executive vice president of Athens Services in the City of Industry.

“This new program will put Pomona at the forefront of landfill avoidance and organic waste



Roberto Arnold

processing,” Clifford said. “Your commercial customers will have recycling coordinator advocates that will help right size their waste stream and assist them in recycling services.”

He added that Pomona will have new equipment that improves its carbon footprint, and the company will use as many local Pomona resources as possible to help Pomona businesses. He said the company will “always consider Pomona residents first for local job openings.”

The company also will include significant abandoned bulky item pickup services, and will provide \$100,000 a year towards helping the city “find your unhoused citizens homes.”

“We have worked with the current employee union business agents and officials to make sure the employees have the best programs and moving forward we have included apprenticeship training, \$50,000 in school grants every year and \$10,000 in scholarships every year,” he said.

“We put our programs and our employees first to ensure Pomona has the best technology, the best

equipment and the best people that the industry has to offer,” he said.

Speakers during the public hearing last month included Carlos Gonzales, staff coordinator and business agent for Teamsters Local 1932, which he said currently represents more than 200 city employees in Pomona including solid waste drivers.

He said that while at a previous meeting he was opposed to the proposal, Athens was the only bidder that reached out to him based on the city council’s direction to take care of the city employees during the transition and to make certain they are represented and have appropriate benefits and union protections on the job.

He said he was able to negotiate an agreement with Athens and was recommending council approval of the Athens proposal. Gonzales said the agreement represented the first time in California that city union members were able to transfer into a non-union shop.

Pomona’s American Legion Post 30 Commander Roberto was among those supporting Athens. He said the company would have a positive effect on the community.

“They are a company committed to the service they provide,” he said. “Athens is going to be the company that takes us to the next level.”

During council comments, only Garcia spoke against the exclusive franchise agreement.

“No outsourcing has ever gone as planned in this city and within years we are asking ourselves why did we outsource this,” she said. “I have yet to see or hear one time ever in my four years here as a councilmember someone saying ‘I’m so glad we outsourced that department.’”

Garcia also said the only reason the city was in this position was that no council previously ever voted in previous years to cover costs of handling its own service.

She added that by removing the city from the equation, trash collection rates are guaranteed to increase.

“We could have done better as a city and we somehow didn’t,” she said. “It’s kind of like (contracting with the Los Angeles County) fire department – once it’s gone, it’s gone.”

Five additional speakers provided comments at this month’s

council meeting, including several who were advocating modifications of the contract to allow more options for community composting programs already operating in Pomona, along with a collection fee reduction for businesses that prefer to keep their composting materials here.

Clifford said the Athens proposal includes more than a 25 percent reduction for customers interested in downsizing their trash in composting.

He said Athens will begin meeting with local groups next year to collaborate on a model of how the company will work with composters to come up with what best meets the needs of the community.

Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval asked Clifford to agree to incorporating that in the contract as an amendment.

And Councilmember John Nolte asked Clifford to delete a phrase “within the city” and change it to within 20 miles to enable current operators of community composters to continue to work with regional community composting sites but not necessarily Pomona.

Clifford agreed to both requests.

Sandoval pointed out that while this is a 10-year contract, the various parties will come back after one year to see how the arrangement is working with a specific focus on composting.

City staff reports did not include estimates of total value of the contract, although Athens’ proposal calls for monthly single-family residential fees of \$35.50 in the first year, or \$426 for the year. Based on a city estimate provided to La Nueva Voz of 25,000 residential accounts in Pomona, residential customers will be paying about \$10.7 million for the year.

Currently, the city provides its own municipal residential services, and outsources commercial solid waste operations and multi-family (apartments and condominiums) services under non-exclusive franchise agreements with Burrtec, Athens, Waste Management and Valley Vista Services.

Those companies report their revenue to Pomona each year for franchise fee calculation and, in the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the most recent numbers available, the four showed roughly a combined \$18.6 million in billings for commercial and multi-family service.

That figure, combined with the \$10.7 million for residential, results in a total estimated contract value of \$29.3 million in anticipated revenue for Athens.

A recent study showed that while city staff assigned to refuse operations in the Public Works Department are experienced as well as possible despite rising costs and limited resources, the study noted that insufficient resources are constraining operations and that continuing on this basis would require a significant investment by the city to maintain its own operation.

The entire process of reviewing options got under way last year and a request for proposals was issued by the city with three of four proposals – from Athens, Burrtec and Waste Management – meeting the filing deadline and minimum requirements.

The 10-year exclusive franchise agreement with Athens will 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 pay-

ment of \$1.1 million (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 will be required to use “low-carbon” vehicles in the city.

The city’s projected rate for residential customers if the city had opted to continue handling residential service would have been \$35.78 a month.

In addition, the city would have continued to receive an additional \$770,000 next year from franchise fees.

With the contract now going to Athens, the city expects to recover one-time revenues of \$1.25 million from the sale of the city’s refuse trucks and containers.

If the city had continued providing its own residential service, it was expected to be forced to increase residential rates nearly 50 percent to as much as \$50 per month to be able to fill vacant and new positions, provide funding for new trucks and containers, and to address state requirements to keep organic waste out of landfills.

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

La Nueva Voz

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P.O. Box 1117 • Pomona, CA 91769

Member:

 **California News Publishers Association**

Publisher: Jeff Schenkel

Tel: (909) 224-0244 • jeffschenkel@verizon.net

V.P. of Marketing & Operations: Renee Barbee

Cell: (909) 762-1446 • reneebarbee7@gmail.com

Layout & Design: Dora Cruz

dcruz1549@gmail.com

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Editor's Note: This page is the third 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

Moving from separation, fear and hate into connection, oneness, and love: A winter holiday analogy

By Rev. Jan Chase

Convener, Compassionate Pomona
Minister, Unity Church of Pomona

Hate is a terrible feeling. Like unforgiveness, it is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. Hate robs us of the joy possible in each present moment. Hate keeps us feeling separate from our essential connections with others and with life itself. Hate keeps our bodies in the "Fight or Flight" response of stress, lowering our immune system's ability to respond, and our ability to cope with stressful people and situations, while driving up our blood pressure, heart and respiration rates.

Hate kills: it kills us.

Why do we hate?

We have bought into the lie of the ego (sense of self) that we live in a limited universe. We believe that we are separate from others, and that if someone has something, it takes away from our good. We have failed to learn that we live in an abundant universe in which the blessings of others also bless us, for we are all connected in many ways. We have also given in to fear, allowing our reptilian brain (amygdala) to reign, running and ruining our lives, rather than the logic of our prefrontal cortex or the wisdom of our heart.

I wrote the following analogy to help us understand how we can transform from the isolation of fear and hate into the wonder of love, light and a sense of oneness.

The weather is cooling off and the days are shorter and darker.

We wrap up to keep out the cold and spend more time in the comfort of our homes.

Yet in our isolation, just as in our COVID isolation, we know we are missing something important.

This season of darkness is really about light in many religious traditions.

This time of separation is really meant to remind us that we are not separate at all, despite appearances.

Think of us as ice cubes or snowmen, created from a common source – water or snow – and kept cold to maintain our individual integrity in the solid state.

This is how many of us see ourselves, as solid and separate. We are lonely, longing to belong to others in the fluid dance of life. Yet feeling stuck, we lash out, putting our inner pain out onto others sometimes in hate-filled ways. Ice cubes clashing into ice cubes in the narrow glasses of our lives.

We let out a long sigh and we let ourselves melt a little.

The fluid essence within us runs to the fluid essence of those melting a bit around us and the essential dance begins. There is a little less "me," and little more "we" as the fluids of our lives mix and blend, twirl and spin in ever-growing ecstasy, hardly knowing or caring where one being begins and another ends.

Outwardly this is the season of song and dance, of celebration and giving, of growing in understanding that we are one with one another. In this time

of often depressing darkness, we turn within and awaken to the fact that we must care, not only for ourselves but care for each other, for this glorious dance of life to continue.

And yet we dream of more. Something within our nature pulls us upward, into higher thoughts, higher vibrations, higher realms. As the sun of life beams its amazing rays down on us, we experience another transformation. The liquid part of us may experience evaporation into an expansive state in which we feel light and free. We have touched into our spiritual state. Miraculously, sometimes we transform directly from our solid and separate state to our spiritual freedom. These are peak experiences in which the light and love that is our deep essential nature is free to express in glorious ways.

We become the light of the world, if only for a short time. But that experience changes us forever, for we know now our essential oneness with all that is. Now our work becomes helping ourselves, our loved ones, and our community to remember the oneness out of which we were all born.

The babe in the manger reminds us of our humble yet amazing beginnings: beginnings that we share with all our human family. This season reminds us of the miracle of lights that burn beyond their expected time and confirms that we are a part of an unfolding miracle of life on earth.

May we all, in this season of darkness, let ourselves be the light that burns for others. As we allow ourselves to be transformed into the joy of our spiritual essence, we become natural givers in the image of our Creator. Therein we bless the world with gifts of love.

Hate has been transformed into wondrous love and light, healing ourselves, each other and our planet. May we begin this New Year of 2023 allowing ourselves and our hearts to thaw, so we can live the amazing life of purpose our souls sent us here to unfold with each other.



Jan Chase

***“If we have no peace, it is because we have
forgotten that we belong to each other.”***

Mother Teresa

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Hitting His Stride

Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center
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Douglas Chiriboga, M.D. lived with debilitating hip pain with every step he took. When non-invasive treatments no longer worked, the Pomona Valley Health Center's primary care physician made the choice to have hip replacement surgery. He chose to go with the award-winning orthopedics team at Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center (PVHMC) to have his procedure.

At PVHMC, our orthopedics program is based on advanced patient and family preparation, education, early mobilization, pain management, experienced orthopedic nursing care, discharge coordination and after hospital discharge follow-up. Our multidisciplinary team provides patients with compassionate, innovative, expedited, high quality care that is dedicated to helping you get back to doing what you love.

Now pain-free, Dr. Chiriboga has a spring in his step while enjoying his favorite pastime of walking and exploring Southern California with friends and family.

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A La Nueva Voz special “pull out” section: The 2022 Pomona Christmas Parade

Brought to you by Athens Services
Your local family-owned and operated trash and recycling company



Pictured is this year's parade grand marshal, disc jockey Angie Vee, from Pomona who is considered one of the nation's top female disc jockeys because of her musical knowledge and her ability to read a crowd. She has rocked the stage with Hollywood's finest, has traveled the nation as Nike's "go to" DJ, and has even played the half time show at the new Raiders stadium. And she does her own shows at Pomona's Fox Theater. Thanks for coming out, Angie!



The Athens Services entry in the Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade looked very festive as always with holiday lights everywhere on the huge truck as it made its way down Second Street this month. Congratulations to Athens on being selected by members of the Pomona City Council to provide trash collection services for the entire city! And a big welcome to Athens from La Nueva Voz as the new sponsor of this holiday pull-out Christmas Parade special section, an annual tradition at La Nueva Voz for the past 12 years. Looking good, Athens!



Pomona Christmas Parade co-master of ceremonies Andy Quinones, at left, interviews Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval during this month's Pomona Christmas Parade.



Another smaller stake bed truck from Athens Services also appeared in the parade, this one loaded with Athens team members and their families, along with Pomona's American Legion Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold and Post 30 First Lady Diana Ordaz Cherrington. And yes, that's Athens' Cristian Herrera riding shotgun in the truck cab. Good job to all!



Members of the So-Cal Stingray Rides, a group of vintage bicycle collectors, rode nearly 40 bikes in the parade. Pictured is one member waving to the La Nueva Voz camera.



Members of Boy Scouts Troop 919 from La Mirada marched in the parade this year.



Pomona Chamber of Commerce Board member Joe Perez of the Credit Union of Southern California drives the lead vehicle of the Credit Union's entry in the parade with team members and their families marching behind.



Pomona Chamber of Commerce Board Chair Annette Limon, at left, all bundled up for the cold weather, smiles for the La Nueva Voz camera in the parade.



Pomona Police Chief Mike Ellis waves to the camera riding in a vintage police car along with an impressive collection of modern police equipment. Keep up the good work, Chief!



La Nueva Voz has been covering the Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade for 13 years and we're pretty sure the child development family from Pomona Unified School District has been there all the way through with their holiday greetings for the community.





Special Athens Services “pull out” section -- The 2022 Pomona Christmas Parade



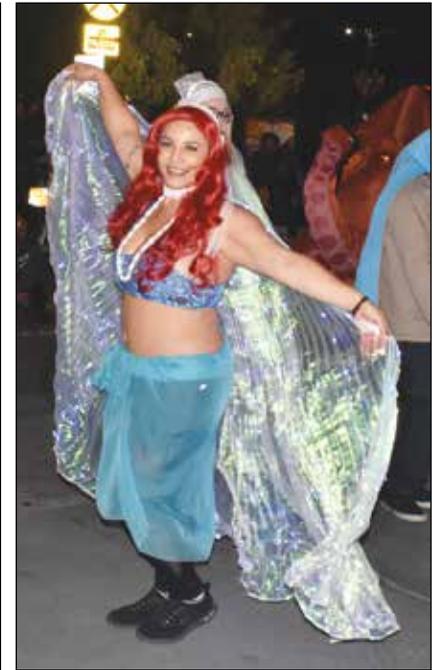
Pomona Unified School District was well represented in the Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade this month. Pictured, at right, is Pomona Unified Interim Supt. Darren Knowles with Deputy Supt. Lilia Fuentes, her nephew, Sebastian Enriquez, and Knowles' dog, Kona, a long-time regular at Pomona events. Sebastian is a second grader at Cortez Math and Science Magnet School in Pomona.



THE JOLLY OLD MAN HIMSELF -- And there he is, high atop a Los Angeles County fire engine from Station 183, the man with the belly that shakes like a bowl full of jelly, is Santa Claus, bringing up the end of the parade as is the tradition (but followed by all of the volunteers who worked so hard to make the entire parade possible). Good job, Santa, and good job volunteers!



Always impressive with their costumes and acrobatics are the performers from Pomona's Stage Global, located in Downtown Pomona. The company offers circus arts, fitness and dance classes for people of all backgrounds and levels of experience. This year's parade entry was "a magical floating circus," featuring the winner of their Aerial Idol competition, Cicely Green.



Andy Quinones, who co-emceed the parade with Pomona Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Monique Manzanares, introduces Pomona Unified School Board members Lorena Gonzalez, center, and Dr. Roberta Perlman to the crowd in front of the reviewing stand.



The Diamond Ranch High School marching band was in excellent form as always in the parade.

It looks like the tuba and saxophone players were some of the hardest working members of the Diamond Ranch High School band.



Members of Pomona's Diamond Ranch High School choir were in traditional costumes for caroling in the parade.



Pomona Unified School District Board member Arturo Jimenez greeted the crowds along the route during the Pomona Christmas Parade.



La Nueva Voz friend Donna Jackson Houston, Chair of the Pomona Community Life Commission, poses for the La Nueva Voz camera as she rides the parade route this month. And with that cell phone in her hand, she looks like she may be shooting a video of the entire event. Looking good, Donna!



A real live balloon man, part of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce entry, poses for the La Nueva Voz camera on Second Street during the parade.



The Youth and Family Club of Pomona Valley had, well, a whole lot of club members marching in the parade and, from the looks of it, enjoying every minute.



Day One, a 30-year-old non-profit in the business of building vibrant communities, again turned out for the Pomona parade to wish all a happy holiday.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

FROM Athens Services





It's been a while since we've seen the folkloric dancers from Pomona's Lincoln Elementary School, Pomona's oldest still-standing school building, but they are back and they are in fine form as always! Great job, dancers!



Ladies and gentlemen, the Ganesha High School marching band! The band always looks -- and sounds -- as professional as any band in any parade. And this year was no exception.



The Pomona girl scouts were in the house at this year's Pomona Christmas Parade and, as announcer Deborah Clifford pointed out, "cookie season" begins on Sunday, Jan. 29.



Kennedy Austin Foundation founder Ethel Gardner, at center, waves to the La Nueva Voz camera as she walks the parade route with her supporters in the non-profit support organization.



Parade co-master of ceremonies Andy Quinones interviews Pomona Cultural Arts Commissioner Joshua Swodeck in front of the viewing stand during this month's Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade.



And here, at the veritable nerve center of the entire parade, doing everything from passing out free cookies to answering questions from parade goers, are volunteers Deborah Clifford, at left, President of the Historical Society of Pomona Valley, and Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz. Clifford once again was the "play by play" announcer describing each entry as it passed by her booth at Second and Main Streets. Barbee was backing her up as needed and broadcasting the entire 90-minute parade in a live streaming Facebook feed. By deadline day a week after the parade, her video had received 520 views and 11 shares.



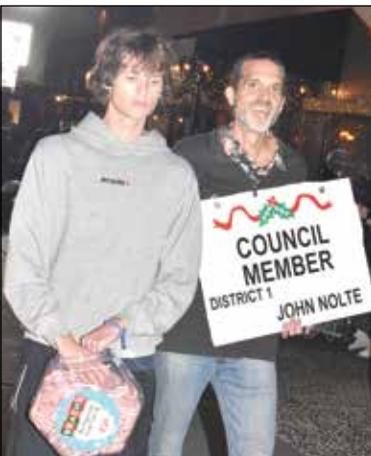
Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado and his wife, Marisol Ramirez, walked the entire parade route this month.



Pomona City Councilmember Robert Torres speaks to the crowds in front of the reviewing stand as his son, Julien, looks on.



Lion Steve King drives the Pomona Lions entry in the Pomona Christmas Parade.



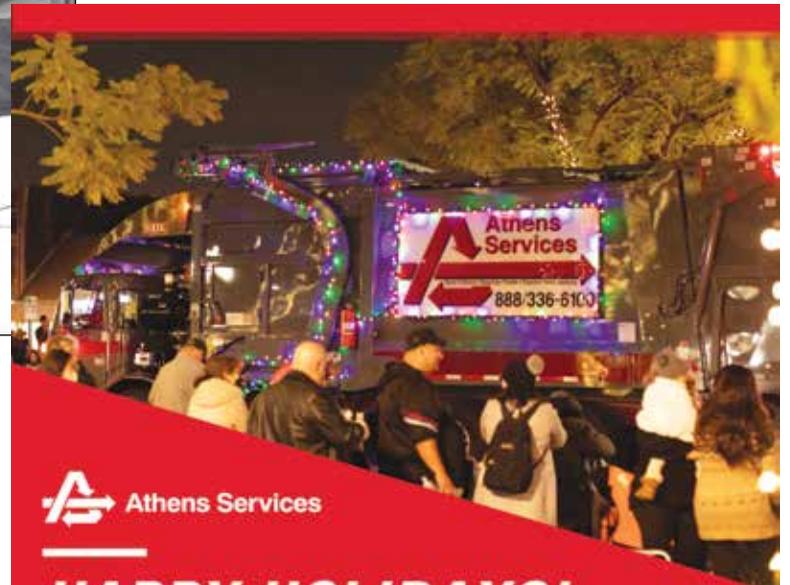
Pomona City Councilmember John Nolte, at right, walks the Downtown Pomona parade route with his son, Charlie Nolte, 19, helping out with the candy canes.



Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole pauses in front of the reviewing stand to wish parade goers happy holidays.



Pomona City Councilmember Nora Garcia poses for the camera as she is being interviewed at the reviewing stand by Pomona Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Moniquer Manzanares.



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It is just hard to top a performance of Pomona's Garey High School marching band. As always, they were in fine form in this year's parade.



Members of the Galan Cultural Center dance studio in Pomona may have had the most colorful outfits in the parade this year. And the crowd loved their performance.



Congresswoman Norma Torres wishes the crowd happy holidays during the Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade.



Members of the Pomona Valley Branch of the NAACP carry their membership campaign banner in the parade.



Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez and his wife Michelle rode the parade this year in a classic Chevrolet convertible. Merry Christmas, Freddie and Michelle!



Members of the Pomona Unified School District choir turned out to march in the parade.



Members of the Pomona High School marching band were professional as always at this month's Pomona Christmas Parade.



Linda Wright Lee, corresponding secretary for the Pomona Valley Section of the National Council of Negro Women, at left, and Janet Betton, financial secretary, at right, and M. Joyce Bakersmith, member, ride in the Pomona Christmas Parade. Not pictured are NCNW President Jamie Lindsay and Second Vice President Sheri Rodgers.



Mount San Antonio College Board members Peter Hidalgo, at left, and Dr. Manuel Baca greet the crowds in the Pomona Christmas Parade.



Members of Pomona's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce marched in the parade to once again remind everyone of all of the outstanding programs provided by the organization for the business community.



Pomona Optimist member Rudy Herrera of Pomona's Casa Herrera, at left, drives the Pomona Optimist entry with a truck load of Pomona Junior Optimist International members behind him.

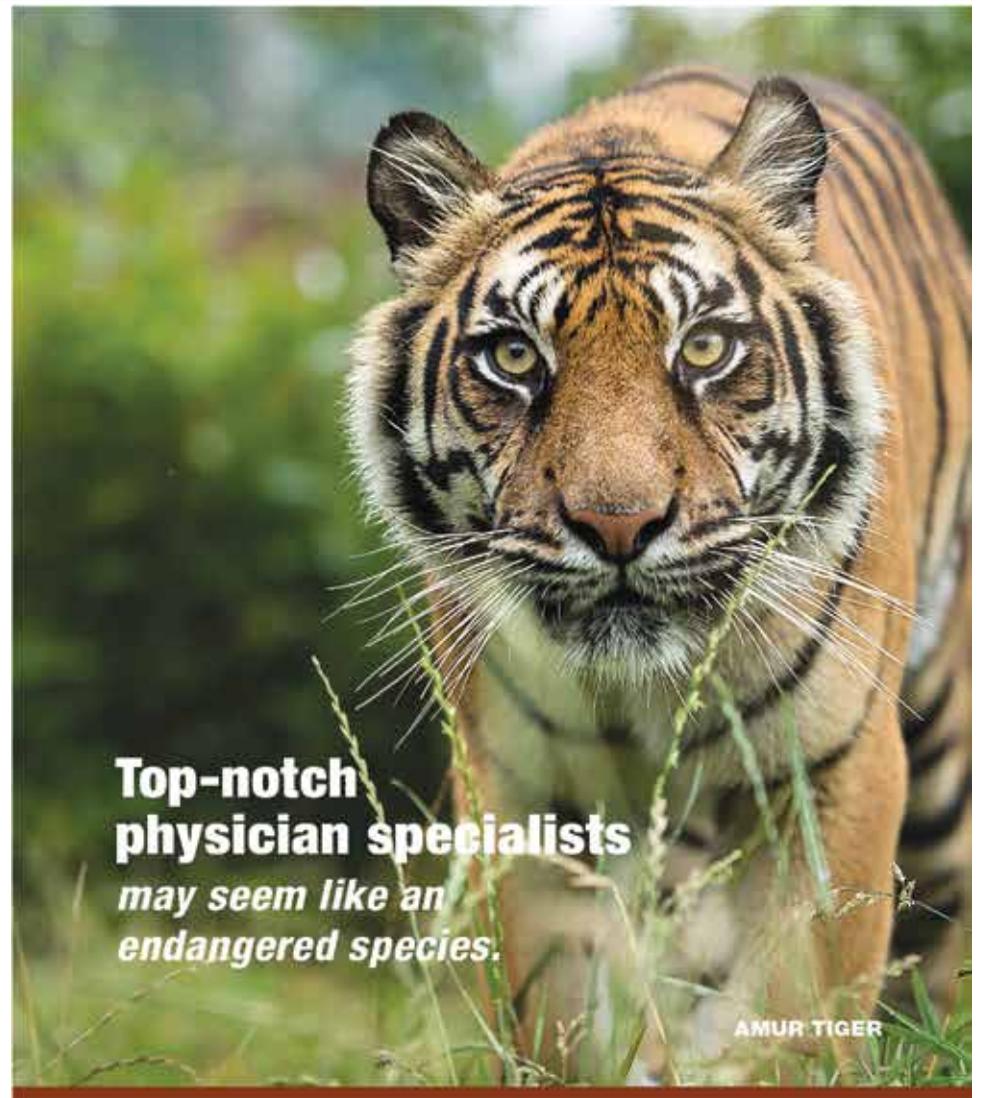


CUTTING THE RIBBON -- Owners Grace Hu, a former mayor of Cerritos, and her husband, Bill Hu, at center, cut the Pomona Chamber of Commerce ribbon to officially open the new Hilton Garden Inn Pomona alongside the 71 Freeway. Pictured, at far left, is hotel marketing director Kimberly Ervin; Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, a Pomona Chamber executive board member; Pomona City Councilmembers Victor Preciado and John Nolte; Aldo Macias Arellano, representing Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang; Grace and Bill Hu; Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole; and, at far right, Joe Perez, of the Credit Union of Southern California and a Pomona Chamber board member. The new hotel has 149 guest rooms and suites, a bar and grill, and a ballroom that seats up to 225 guests. For information, call (909) 686-8000, ext. 605.



Photos by Renee Barbee

Operation 'Santa Cop' -- the Pomona Police Department's gift distribution program in Pomona City Hall -- was bigger and better than ever this year as one customer looks up at his mom in amazement over his wagonload, another walks out of City Hall with a box as big as she is, and one officer moves one of many bicycles given away a little closer to its final destination.



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OUTSTANDING FIREMEN RECOGNIZED -- Los Angeles Fire Capt. Adam Salas of Pomona Fire Station 183 and Capt. Allan Anollin, of the department's east region fire prevention office in Diamond Bar, were honored by the Pomona Chamber of Commerce at this month's annual "Holiday for Heroes" luncheon. Salas, a 23-year member of the department, has served Pomona for the past seven years. Among other duties, he and his crew conduct fire safety presentations for schools, businesses and community groups. Anollin, a 21-year member of the department, has served Pomona for the past four years. His focus today is to ensure safety within the business community, for their employees and for the public. From left are Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares, Assistant Fire Chief Jesse Vela, Salas, Anollin, Chamber Board Vice Chair Nef Cortez, and Battalion Chief Jose Gomez. Nearly 150 people attended the sold-out event.



OUTSTANDING VETERANS HONORED -- Two outstanding military veterans and Pomona Post 30 American Legion members were recognized at this month's Pomona Chamber of Commerce "Holiday for Heroes" luncheon. U.S. Army veteran Corporal Sean Liske and U.S. Marine Corps veteran Sgt. Javier Hinostrroza (both retired) received special commendations at the event. Liske currently serves as sergeant at arms and chaplain for Post 30 and chaplain and road captain for the local American Legion Riders. Hinostrroza currently serves as judge advocate for Pomona. From left are Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold, Hinostrroza and Liske. Members of Pomona's American Legion Post 30 Color Guard officiated at the event.



HOLIDAY FOR HEROES LUNCHEON -- Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce honored two Pomona police officers this month at its annual "Holiday for Heroes" luncheon, this year held at the new Hilton Garden Inn in Pomona. Honored were Officers Joseph Castillo and Kenneth Maiques. Castillo joined the department in 2001, and Maiques joined the department in 2014. Both currently are assigned to the city's Homeless Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) made up of policer officers and public works employees to provide services to the homeless population in Pomona and improve conditions for other members of the community. From left are Pomona City Councilmembers Victor Preciado and Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, Castillo, Maiques and Pomona Chamber Board Vice Chair Nef Cortez.



INSTALLED FOR FINAL TERM -- Pomona's Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, at center, with his wife, Michelle, poses for a photo on the floor of the California Assembly in Sacramento after taking the oath of office for his final term in the legislature this month. Rodriguez was first elected in the 2013 special election to the 52nd District and now will represent the newly drawn 53rd Assembly District, which includes the cities of Chino, Montclair, Ontario, Pomona and Upland. He also has served as a first responder for more than 30 years, and he serves as the first-ever chair of the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management. Pictured with Freddie and Michelle are their four children, three grandchildren and other close family members.



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Released from prison... from pg. 1

“Defendant created fraudulent invoices, which were issued in the name of defendant’s mother, that were purportedly received for work performed on (Cal Poly Foundation’s) behalf,” according to the “sentencing position” of the U.S. Attorney’s office provided at the request of La Nueva Voz. “However, no such work was ever performed.”

Prosecutors argued the defendant approved the invoices in question between 2010 and 2020 that resulted in the foundation making \$925,487 in fraudulent payments to the defendant’s mother, with the defendant receiving the bulk of these funds.

As a part of her March 2021 guilty plea agreement, also released to La Nueva Voz, the defendant agreed to make restitution to the foundation for the entire amount, in addition to restitution to the Internal Revenue Service in the amount of \$180,027, bringing the total for restitution to \$1.1 million.

Sentencing on July 13, 2021 by U.S. District Court Judge John Kronstadt was for 18 months and supervised release for three years on each of two counts, to be served concurrently.

The maximum sentence for all of the offenses would have been 23 years imprisonment in addition to fines and fees.

Paredes surrendered to begin serving her sentence on July 29, 2021.

Paredes’ attorney in the case, Randolph R. Melendez, of Chino, declined to comment on the case when contacted in a telephone conversation by La Nueva Voz. He also did not respond to an e-mail request from La Nueva Voz for comments from his client on the case.

Based on information from a confidential La Nueva Voz source close to the story and on La Nueva Voz’ own research, the entire story curiously was never reported in any news media outlet at any level until initial stories in The Poly Post, Cal Poly’s student newspaper, were published in October and again last month.

It also appears that no news releases were issued at any stage of the case by Cal Poly, the foundation, law enforcement, the U.S. Attorney’s office or the courts.

Cal Poly President Coley ‘deeply disappointed’

La Nueva Voz reached out to Cal Poly President Dr. Soraya Coley by e-mail for her reaction to the developments.

“We have so many people here at the foundation and the university that work hard every day to support our students and their success,” Coley said in her e-mail response. “I am deeply disappointed that someone would undermine those efforts.”

She added that the university supported the foundation’s request for external auditors to review the foundation’s financial processes and internal controls.

“They have fully implemented the recommended changes,” she said.

Jared Ceja, executive director and CEO of the foundation, in an e-mail to La Nueva Voz similarly indicated his “reaction to the embezzlement is one of disappointment and frustration.”

“The criminal actions of Mrs. Paredes have undermined the focus of many great things that are happening at the university and within the CPP Enterprise Foundation,” he added.

La Nueva Voz also asked Coley about the lack of press coverage and news releases or news notifications regarding events related to the embezzlement, but she declined to comment.

A spokesperson for the university, however, said information was not withheld.

“We have at all times operated legally, ethically and transparently,” said Cynthia Peters. “The information was shared with the chancellor’s office, the Cal State University board of Trustees Audit Committee and law enforcement authorities. Publicly, the information was shared with the foundation board of directors and the Associated Student Senate when the law enforcement investigation was complete.”

Ceja added that during the active criminal investigation, the foundation “did not get briefings from law enforcement, and we could not share the details of what we did know.”

He pointed out that the information was included in the 2019/2020 audit report, a public document that has been available

on the foundation’s web site for more than two years.

“Information was not withheld,” he said.

“Tremendous attention has been given to mitigating the chance of anything like this happening again,” Ceja said. “This includes significant work to strengthen internal controls, ensure proper segregation of duties, reevaluate policies/procedures, enhance oversight, incorporate industry best practices, provide additional training, and automate workflow.”

“These efforts began internally in the weeks preceding my tenure with the organization,” he said. Cal Poly announced Ceja’s appointment to the foundation team in February 2020, 10 months before the Paredes indictment.

At the request of La Nueva Voz to put the dollar value of the embezzlement into perspective, Ceja said the foundation brought in approximately \$840 million during the 10-year period the on-going embezzlement was occurring.

In addition, he said all of the embezzled funds were from “enterprise revenues” of the non-profit foundation.

“No student, state, grant or donor funds were impacted,” he said. “And importantly, the losses are covered by a combination of restitution and insurance.”

News coverage breaks only after civil lawsuit filed

Despite all of this, it appears there was no press release generated at any level and as far as actual news media coverage, the

story only came to the attention of any news media when The Poly Post coverage was published after a related civil lawsuit was filed in October in Los Angeles County Superior Court by Cal Poly Police Sgt. Marcus Simpson against Cal Poly Pomona.

(Interestingly, La Nueva Voz picked up a copy of The Poly Post while on the Cal Poly campus in, of all places, the foundation office.)

Simpson said in his filing Cal Poly officials allegedly obstructed police investigations including preventing police in 2017 from reporting another unrelated embezzlement and other matters on campus to the Los Angeles District Attorney’s office.

In that embezzlement case, a Cal Poly professor allegedly used grant funds to pay for a European trip that was unrelated to school activities, in addition to allegations the professor was keeping items that had been purchased with grant funds.

According to the court filing, Cal Poly officials ordered campus police to stop the investigation when they were preparing a search warrant to be served at the professor’s house.

As a result, the filing continued, no documentation regarding the incident was submitted to the district attorney or any other prosecuting agency, and the professor was allowed to retire with no action taken.

The Paredes case also was included in the Simpson court filing,

with allegations Cal Poly officials ordered changes to the criminal report so that “the University would not look bad when and if the report was made public.”

The Simpson filing also alleged Coley ordered campus police “not to do a press release . . . because she wanted to distance herself from the situation.”

According to the Simpson filing, Coley served on the foundation board of directors at the time the embezzlement allegations came to light.

The filing further stated that Simpson along with four other police department employees filed a “whistleblower” complaint against Coley and Cal Poly Vice President Christina Gonzales based on their alleged actions.

According to the filing, Coley e-mailed the entire police department and included a copy of a letter she had sent to the whistleblowers in which she allegedly “attempted to deflect and deny the allegations” but allegedly included the names and ranks of all of the whistleblowers which, the filing claimed, violates California Education Code 89573(c) which states “the identity of the person providing the protected disclosure shall not be disclosed without the written permission of the person unless the disclosure is to a law enforcement agency that is conducting a criminal investigation or to the State Auditor.”

The 25-page lawsuit, which also included a series of addition-

Released from prison... pg. 16

MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

Your Voice Matters

- Experts estimate that 1 in 10 children are sexually abused before their 18th birthday.
- 30% of children are abused by family members.
- As many as 60% are abused by people the family trusts.
- About 35% of victims are 11 years old or younger.
- Nearly 40% are abused by older or larger children.



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WE ARE ONE HEART AND ONE SOUL By Susie Perales

I prayed the Lord would help me find the words of love deep in my heart. I thought of all the years we have been together, you and me. I cried tears of joy that were mingled with sadness – like raindrops they fell as I remembered the past.

Some days were filled with joy and laughter and there were others that pierced like the darkness of night. Through those days I truly thought we would never last. But, with God's mercy and grace, we held on fast and learned to forgive the darkest of days that we lived in the past. We found a love that has proven so true and strong at last . . .

We've been together for so many

years that I can't imagine not having you by my side. For we were chosen to be together for the rest of our lives. For you are my heart and I am your soul . . .

And when this life is finally done it is my prayer that we go on – walking together through heaven's door – walking on streets of pure refined, luminous gold, together once more . . .



Love, patience, respect, forgiveness, prayer and a good sense of humor are the glue that holds us together!

Marriage is a full-time job and ours has been quite a journey. I thank God for all the years He stood by us even when we didn't deserve it! He blessed us with three amazing children, seven grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.



Members of Compassionate Pomona attended a Pomona City Council meeting last month to receive a certificate of gratitude from members of the council. Pictured, from left, is Dick Bunce, Councilmembers Robert Torres, John Nolte and Victor Preciado, Renee Barbee, Dr. Roberta Perlman, Councilmember Steve Lustro, Compassionate Pomona Convenor Rev. Jan Chase, Councilmember Nora Garcia, Don Martens, Mayor Tim Sandoval, and Gustavo Ramirez.



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An 'End of Year' message to the community from the Pomona Eagles

As our Pomona Aerie President, we wish to welcome everyone. Our motto is "People helping People, Helping the Community" and we have several ways we try to do this. Just a few of those ways are:

- Children's Christmas Party
- Trunk or Treat
- Support of Pomona Valley Special Olympics and its athletes.
- Fourth of July Park Party
- Mother's Day Breakfast
- Father's Day Breakfast
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Food Drives
- Horseshoe Tournaments
- Renting out the Banquet Hall at reasonable cost

We have a large membership through the Aerie and the Auxiliary who work hard on committees and maintain the facility.

As these committees continue to work, we bring other members into the fun to train them and pique their interest, keeping them involved in the running and fundraising of the Eagles.

We have also been helping our first responders – Pomona Police with their K9 training funds and

the "Great Campout" and a toy drive for the Pomona Police community support.

We have a great membership who works hard striving to keep these functions going and coming up with new ideas and suggestions.

We have recently had our Banquet Hall floor stripped and waxed and it looks great.

We are working on rebuilding the kitchen which took a hard hit during COVID. We will have an open house when it is finished.

Here at Pomona Eagles, it has been a rough two years, but between our membership and community help we have made it this far. We will strive to keep it moving forward and continue our support of the community.

We lost several members and friends through the pandemic and will truly miss them and pray for their families.

Come join us and keep the light lit for everyone.

Thanks to all!

Dennis Campbell
President, Pomona Aerie 2215

Released from prison... from pg. 15

al unrelated allegations, asks for \$10,000 for each alleged violation of the whistleblower statute along with reasonable attorney fees and punitive damages.

For the other causes of action listed in the filing, it asks for unspecified general and punitive damages and attorneys' fees in addition to an injunction against Cal Poly to prevent similar future conduct.

Coley declined to comment on the Simpson case because of the pending litigation, Peters said.

University believes lawsuit allegations misrepresent facts

Even so, Peters said the university "believes the lawsuit's allegations substantially misrepresent the facts."

"The university will respond more fully to the allegations in court filings," she added.

The case is pending in Pomona Courthouse South.

Regarding the Paredes embezzlement, the independent auditors' report for the year ending June 30, 2020, was provided to the foundation's audit committee by Aldrich

CPAs and Advisors LLP of San Diego and provided to La Nueva Voz this month by the foundation.

"During the fiscal year, a series of events occurred that made the accounting department aware of fiscal impropriety," the report said. "There were significant internal control weaknesses that allowed for this material misappropriation of assets to occur. These (weaknesses) largely related to the ability of an enterprise manager to sign off on (accounts payable) check listings and enter check runs into the system, but also related to the employee's ability to create vendors in the accounting system from when this employee worked in a different department."

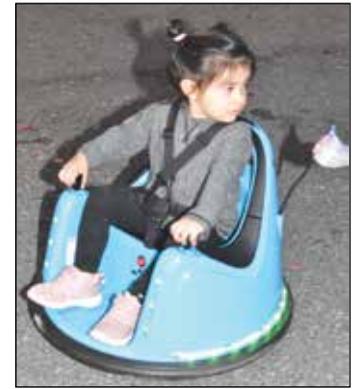
The report recommended that "various controls be implemented across enterprise units to prevent this from occurring again," with controls including such cautions as vendor record forms being created before setting up any new vendor, with forms signed by two individuals from the department as well as the accounting staff who create the vendor.



SEVENTH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS ON COLUMBIA -- Corporal Blair Hornby represented the Pomona Police Department at this year's seventh annual "Christmas on Columbia" holiday lighting event. Pictured (with Pomona City Councilmember John Nolte at far left) on Columbia Avenue (at White Avenue) are Hornby and, second from right, neighborhood watch captain Kimberly Johnson.



State Sen. Susan Rubio, Pomona's new state senator due to redistricting, visited opening night of Christmas on Columbia to recognize the organizers. Pictured, from left, are Kimberly Johnson, Rubio and Veronica and Albert Perez.



Here's the way you get around on Columbia Avenue during Christmas on Columbia -- you just sit down there, get your hands on the controls and go! She had it pretty much under control, too!



Congresswoman Norma Torres stopped by the opening of Christmas on Columbia to say a few words to the audience. She actually could have walked over -- she lives just on the other side of the freeway in Ganesha Hills.



The tamale business was doing pretty well -- and tamales were going for only \$2.50! This year's event was the biggest and best ever with 35 vendors, two DJs, a toy drive and a raffle.



Members of Pomona's Ganesha High School JROTC show what they can do with their ceremonial swords in a special routine on Columbia Avenue. We can count at least four swords still in the air at the time the La Nueva Voz shutter snapped -- and nobody dropped a single sword!



An important opening night tradition is shutting down the entire block on Columbia Avenue to make all of the festivities -- and all of the eating in the street -- possible. And there are plenty of goodies to go around, from home baked pastries (which were very good, in the opinion of La Nueva Voz) to traditional tamales.



See this booth "Sweet Mother Hustler" offering homemade pastries? Those are the amazing pastries we were telling you about in another caption.



Chara Swodeck, at left, and Eunice Russell were at Christmas on Columbia for opening night this month to tell people to save the date for the third annual "Kwanzaa Joy Celebration," to be held on New Year's Day on the farm at Pomona's Fairplex. For ticket information, visit the web site at kwanzaajoy.com.



Again this year, participation by residents of Pomona's Columbia Avenue was 100 percent -- everybody had their lights on, and they will remain on every night through Dec. 31. Hours are 5 to 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 5 p.m. to midnight on Friday and Saturday. So drive through one night after dark and see for yourself! It might just be the best Pomona has to offer, as can be seen in one house, pictured, that is all decked out.



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Parade . . . from pg. 12

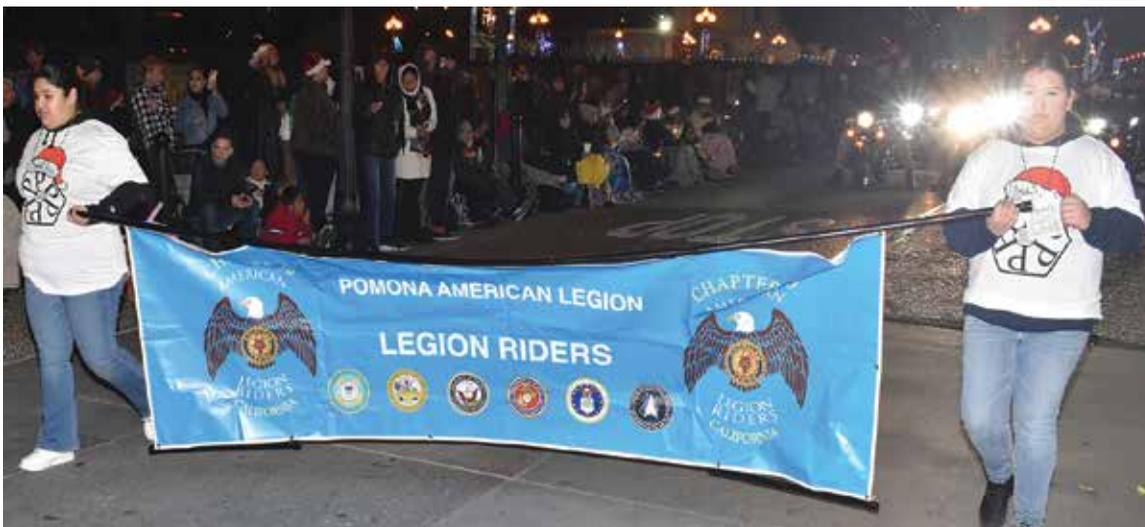


Members of Pomona's Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe carry their banner reminding the crowd to come to the Annual Ohlone "Big Time" Gathering and Pow Wow for three days in the last weekend of April in Pomona's Tony Cerda Park.

Pomona Public Library Board of Trustees members Mike Suarez, second from right, and Tom Rodriguez, at right, ride in the city commissioners section of the parade.



Students from Pomona's School of Arts and Enterprise did a little bit of everything in the parade -- the dancers danced and, well, the artists carried their paintings in a "walking art gallery" with cutouts to get portraits of themselves in the frames.



Volunteers from the Pomona JOI Club (Junior Optimist International) carry the banner for the Post 30 Pomona American Legion "Legion Riders," a group of veterans who ride motorcycles for a variety of ceremonial and informational causes.



Pomona Post 30 American Legion's Bob Radcliff, at front right, leads a very LOUD group of American Legion motorcyclists in the Legion Riders. Radcliff, president of the local Legion Riders group, was instrumental in forming the group two years ago.



Members of Pomona's American Legion Post 30 color guard, under the direction of Post 30 First Vice Commander Sam Cafiero, at left, lead the Downtown Christmas Parade this month down Second Street. The Pomona Christmas Parade, which started on Second Street years ago but then moved to Holt Avenue, returned to Second Street in 2009 -- in the rain -- for the first time in 40 years.

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Photo by Renee Barbee

BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS PARADE – We’ve seen the Holiday in the Plaza with its snow sled mound every year, but this year we’re pretty sure for the first time there was an actual ice-skating rink right there outdoors in Downtown Pomona. And folks were lining up to try it out. What a great idea!

Native Americans ask Pomona Council for recognition

Representatives of Pomona’s Rumsen Ama Turataj Ohlone tribe of Native Americans appeared at a Pomona City Council meeting last month to ask the city to recognize indigenous residents on three occasions throughout the year.

Tribal Chairwoman Dee Manzanares Ybarra said councilmembers celebrate numerous cultures and attend numerous events.

“There is one thing that I notice that’s missing and that is the acknowledgement of the first people, the Native Americans,” she said. “When will the city begin to show kindness and compassion for those people whose stolen lands you worked and live upon?”

“When will we, the first inhabitants, have a seat at the table,” she added. “When will our flag be raised at City Hall? When will we have a voice in city government?”

She said her tribe was forced to apply for a business license because members hold one event a year.

“But we’re still not recognized in this city,” she said.

“Change is coming on a county, state and national level because we have representatives like (Los Angeles County) Supervisor Hilda Solis, Assemblymembers Freddie Rodriguez and James Ramos (D-



Donna Manzanares Otero



Dee Dee Manzanares Ybarra

Highland), and Congresswoman Norma Torres out there fighting for us,” she added.

She called on councilmembers to officially recognize all Native American residents on California Native Day (the last Friday of September), Indigenous People’s Day (the second Monday in October), and the month of November as National Native American Heritage Month.

Her sister Donna Manzanares Otero told councilmembers she was disappointed with a lot of the city’s leaders.

She added that the city introduced a proclamation in October 2017 but asked where it is now and was it good for one year or just one day.

“As native people, we have overcome oppositional obstacles, historical drama, historical atrocities, genocide and a genocide within a

genocide,” she said. “Why is it that as aboriginal people who have been here on this planet since time immemorial continue to be invisible.”

“Remember whose land you walk on,” she said. “This is all Indian land.”

Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval said the city council established an Indigenous People’s Day in the last six years.

The group hosted its fifth annual Gabrieleno Village of Toibingna Indigenous Peoples Day at Pomona’s Ganesha Park in October. Members of the Pomona tribe are descendants of the Gabrieleno Village.



Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz gets a hug from Pomona’s favorite Santa before the parade at Holiday in the Plaza on Second Street.



Pictured are singers from Pomona’s School of Arts and Enterprise entertaining the parade crowd immediately after the parade outside their Downtown Pomona campus at Second and Main Streets. The students were performing songs from their new album “SAE Bells Ring: Volume 2” in a special holiday album release concert.



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Kwanzaa Joy Celebration is an event inspired by African traditions of heritage, new beginnings and cultural unity. Our goal is to educate and empower our children and community by providing an experience in equity and family engagement for the African diaspora living in Pomona Valley, San Gabriel Valley, and Inland Empire.

Our 3rd Annual **Kwanzaa Joy Celebration**, taking place at the Farm at Fairplex, will feature an array of gifted speakers, vendors, food, and art. This year's featured speakers are Dr. Soraya Coley (Cal Poly Pomona Univ), Sedrik Newbern (Western Kentucky University), Emmett Terrell (University of La Verne), Dr. Shandell Maxwell (Byrd & Maxwell), Dr. Marilyn Grell-Brisk (Pitzer College, UC Irvine), Norman Coulter (6IXTH MAN), Tracy Evanson-Norwood (Healed Women Heal), Dr. Khalif & Vikki Rasshan (African American Museum of Beginnings), and more. Similar to a TED Talk, each speaker shares a personal 15 minute reflection regarding one of the 7 Kwanzaa principles.

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and Steve Lustro (D5)



Happy Holidays

On behalf of the First District of Los Angeles County, I would like to wish you a joyous holiday season and a happy New Year! May peace, happiness, and prosperity follow you always.

Los Angeles County Supervisor
Hilda L. Solis

