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La Nueva Voz

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

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Pomona Chamber of Commerce
Member

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AI $3 million grant makes breaking news at Mt. SAC 'State of College' address

Mt. San Antonio College President and CEO Dr. Martha Garcia told more than 500 guests at last month's first-ever "State of the College" address that the school recently received a $3 million five-year grant focused on becoming an artificial intelligence-ready institution.

Garcia said the grant, from the U.S. Department of Education, will help Mt. SAC "expand AI literacy, support our faculty and employees in integrating emerging technologies into teaching, and enable students to develop the skills employers are seeking."

"This grant will help us make emerging technologies accessible to all students, especially those who might otherwise be left behind," she said. "Our goal beyond becoming an AI-ready institution is to equip our students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in a rapidly changing world."



Mt. San Antonio College President and CEO Dr. Martha Garcia, at right, introduces "Rizzly the Grizzly," the new "chief spirit officer" for Mt. SAC, during last month's first-ever "State of the College" address. Rizzly replaced Mt. SAC's historical "Joe Mountie" mascot.

Environmental challenges

Speaking in Mt. SAC's Summit Event Center, Garcia said that the college also is "thinking about the kind of world we want to leave for the next generation."

"Sustainability is an important part of that commitment," she said. "Through initiatives like our planned solar project, we're working to reduce our environmental impact, strengthen energy reliability, and make responsible investments in our campus."

"However, what excites me the most is how we are bringing sustainability into the student experience," she said. "Through our sustainability launchpad and partnership with California Youth Leadership Corps, students are gaining paid hands-on experience addressing environmental challenges in our communities."

She invited students to the podium to comment on their work with that organization's environmental justice program, along with a project using robots to map out the Mt. SAC campus.

Students are partnering with more than 12 organizations in the area, all working on skill sets they will need in the future, Garcia said, adding that two months ago Mt. SAC received the Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability, a national recognition of Mt. SAC's commitment to integrating sustainability into its teaching, campus operations, and engagement with the communities it serves.

"This recognition reflects the collective efforts of our campus community to create a more sustainable future while preparing our students to become leaders and problem solvers in changing this world," Garcia said. "We can accomplish so much more for our students when we work together."

"That is why building strong partnerships with our local K-12 schools, partner universities, local employers and community organizations is so important," she said. "We're happy to share that we offer dual enrollment courses at 34 high schools within the 11 school districts in our service area."

The program allows eligible high

Grant makes breaking news... pg. 5

Elizalde takes early lead to victory over Preciado in Pomona Council race

Former Pomona Parks and Recreation Commissioner Jacky Elizalde defeated incumbent Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado – amid several controversies surrounding the candidates – by a margin of nearly 300 votes in this month's runoff election for the second district city council seat.

It was Elizalde's second attempt – she came close in the 2022 election but lost by only 107 votes.



Jacky Elizalde

While a final vote count will be provided at noon tomorrow by the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office, Elizalde was ahead by roughly the same percentages throughout a nearly four-week election tallying process as her lead continued to increase. The latest results before press time for this issue of La Nueva Voz were 2,434 for Elizalde and 2,173 for Preciado, or 53 percent to 47 percent of the vote.

Pomona Council race... pg. 2



Pomona Council race... from pg. 1

Preciado has served on the council for two terms, spanning the past eight years. He was endorsed by Mayor Tim Sandoval, Councilmember Nora Garcia, Three Valleys Municipal Water District Director Carlos Goytia and State Sen. Susan Rubio.

In an e-mailed response to a La Nueva Voz request for her reaction to the outcome, Elizalde said the win "belongs to our community."

"The call for change was clear in every conversation at the door and every phone call that was made," she said. "Pomona deserves leadership that listens, follows through, and delivers. I am honored by the trust you have placed in me to be the first mom to represent District 2 since 1888."

"As the soon-to-be-elected, it is about 'creating a big tent' – bringing people together, building a team, and working toward a common purpose," she added. "That is the kind of leadership I believe Pomona needs. Regardless of our differences, we must come together as one community, with one shared commitment to moving our city forward."

"I am a working mom who has earned the trust of this community and my only agenda is to build a strong, safe city where families, children, and our youth can thrive," she said. "No training wheels needed. I am ready to get to work on day one. With more than 13 years of experience in local, county, and federal government, I bring the knowledge, relationships, and understanding of government needed to hit the ground running."

She said her first priority is public safety, addressing on-going concerns including human trafficking, and "taking a proactive approach to protecting our neighborhoods."

"I will work to strengthen connections between families, children, youth, and seniors, with resources and programs they need to thrive, while ensuring our most vulnerable residents are not left behind," she said.

Elizalde added that a stronger Pomona also means a stronger local economy and workforce.

"Building meaningful partnerships between our local businesses, labor workforce, and organized labor is essential to creating opportunities, supporting our working families and strengthening our workforce," she said. "By bringing businesses, workers, and labor organizations to the table, we can encourage economic growth and create good-paying jobs."



STEADY VOTER TURNOUT IN POMONA -- Voter turnout appeared to be higher than usual at the Palomares Park voting center.

"This is about more than an election – it is about the work ahead, the partnerships we build, and creating a big tent, where everyone has a place, a voice, and an opportunity to contribute," she said.

"We're obviously disappointed with the outcome," Preciado said in an e-mailed response to a La Nueva Voz request for comment. "Though our mindset is that we are blessed and grateful for the time we were able to serve, never did I imagine that I would be in this position."

"We worked hard to create a groundwork that will benefit the City of Pomona forever," he added. "Again, we are grateful for the opportunity to leave a mark in my hometown. We don't believe a title is needed to make a difference, so you'll still see us in the community as neighbors."

Sandoval, asked by La Nueva Voz for his reaction to the election outcome, was philosophical.

"You know, one of the beautiful things about this country is we live in a democracy where people get to vote," he said. "And . . . everyone knows that I've been supportive of Victor."

'But by the looks of it, it looks like Jacky's going to win, and it's my job to work with all the council," he added. "And you know, the goal is to continue to move the city forward, and we're a lot stronger when we work together, so I hope that we can continue to do that."

Elizalde's campaign materials called her "a mom who has earned the trust of the community."

Her priorities are senior centers, pharmacies and safe routes to school. She also started the first grassroots awareness coalition on human trafficking on Holt Avenue.

And she called for "a strong and safe city where families, children and youth can thrive."

Her Facebook page said her campaign is "about the families, workers, and neighbors who have too often been misrepresented and deserve to have a real voice at City Hall."

Preciado was known for helping feed hundreds of families each week by working with volunteers to deliver groceries, and for founding the monthly "community pull up" resource fairs.

He also was a founder of the Pomona 5k and 10k run through Downtown Pomona, originally to raise funds for Pomona's youth.

His vision for 2026 and beyond was to keep District 2 affordable, connected and safe.

He claimed District 2 during his term in office received the service and attention it deserves, along with the resources and systems to make the district and its residents "thrive into the future."

And his campaign materials claimed he would work for equitable transportation, leveraging his seat on the Foothill Transit board (actually the Foothill Transit Joint Powers Authority board, which reports to the larger governing board of directors) to expand reliable, affordable routes that connect District 2 to jobs, schools and services. He was appointed to that post by Sandoval.

However, his work on that joint powers authority became controversial in 2024 when Foothill Transit – on short notice – shut down its Pomona Transit Center in Downtown Pomona in December 2023 after 25 years of service, forcing riders – including senior citizens with limited resources and no other means of transportation – to travel to Foothill's headquarters office in West Covina 11.8 miles away to purchase a bus pass or receive "live" support on planning bus scheduling and routes.

La Nueva Voz wrote four stories and two editorials in 2024 on the controversy, including an editorial calling for reopening the facility due to non-compliance

Pomona Council race... pg. 14

Pomona to Claremont A Line Extension
Community Open House



Join Us! Attend to learn the latest on the 2.3-mile Pomona to Claremont A Line Extension currently in final design and pre-construction. Construction is expected to begin in late 2027 and take approximately four years.

Tuesday, December 1, 2026, 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Alexander Hughes Community Center, 1700 Danbury Rd., Claremont, CA 91711

Stop by anytime, there is no formal presentation

Pomona to Claremont A Line Extension

Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority

Sign up for updates and construction alerts: foothillgoldline.org

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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The holidays remind us of the importance of community, connection, and caring for one another. PUSD Community Schools are here to support our students and families all year long.

Las fiestas nos recuerdan la importancia de la comunidad, la unión y el cuidado mutuo. Las Escuelas Comunitarias de PUSD están aquí para apoyar a nuestros estudiantes y familias durante todo el año.

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CREANDO CONEXIONES

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS
APOYANDO EL ÉXITO ESTUDIANTIL

SUPPORTING THE WHOLE FAMILY
APOYANDO A TODA LA FAMILIA

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¿DÓNDE SE ENCUENTRAN LAS ESCUELAS COMUNITARIAS?

Harrison Elementary • Philadelphia Elementary • Vejar Elementary • Washington Elementary • Emerson Middle School • Simons Middle School • Ganesha High School • Garey High School • Park West High School • Pomona High School

A celebration of service

By Emily Shim

Dr. King Realize the Dream Campaign Volunteer

As the 2026 school year came to a close, Pomona Unified School District honored the incredible service performed in our communities through the efforts of students, staff, and parents. Over 34,500 hours of service were completed in collaboration with the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Realize the Dream campaign.

On May 28 an awards ceremony was held for the students and parents who served their communities the most. The celebration was led by Claudia Ruelas with appearances by Supt. Darren Knowles, Assistant Supt. Fernando Meza and board members Dr. Roberta Perlman, Patricia Tye, and Arturo Jimenez. They made opening remarks acknowledging the massive amount of work and efforts these students had in their community. Dr. Perlman shined a light on how important service learning is as it teaches our students compassion.

"You have to be compassionate to yourself to be compassionate to others," she said.

They also acknowledged the support behind the students, teachers Claudia Ruelas and Joseph Shim, who help guide and mentor the students. Pomona Unified School District was one of the first school districts in the country to partner with the Realize the Dream campaign.

The event's goal was to acknowledge the hard work and commitment that the students made through the year. While there were too many students to invite due to ever increasing participation throughout the district, the top five service hour earners were invited to the event. All participants received awards based upon their service. The awards ranged from bronze, silver, and gold in which the students were awarded either a national certificate or medal based upon hours of service.

The true highlight of the evening was the students themselves being given the opportunity to speak at the event. The speeches included

A celebration of service... pg. 7









Photos by Renee Barbee

'SPOOKTACULAR' CELEBRATION -- The Pomona Police Department presented its "Spooktacular Celebration" last month outside police headquarters with everything from costume contests, a petting zoo, pony rides, SWAT team equipment decorated for Halloween, resource organizations and community groups and, of course, treats. Also pictured are Kim Johnson and her son, Russell Johnson, organizers of the annual "Christmas on Columbia" celebration, believed to be Pomona's biggest and best holiday lighting festival, in the 400 block of Columbia Avenue (at White Avenue). The festival continues throughout the month of December with kick-off ceremonies for the 11th annual event on Dec. 5.





Grant makes breaking news... from pg. 1

school students to take college-level courses directly on their high school campuses for free, earning both high school and transferable college credit simultaneously.

Focusing on another unique experience for high school students, she cited Mt. SAC's collaboration with Pomona Unified School District's aviation program.

"We are helping young people discover exciting careers and possibilities in the next steps within higher education," she said. "And through our 'Bridge to Success' partnership with Cal Poly Pomona, we are creating stronger pathways for students to continue their education and achieve their dreams of earning a bachelor's degree."

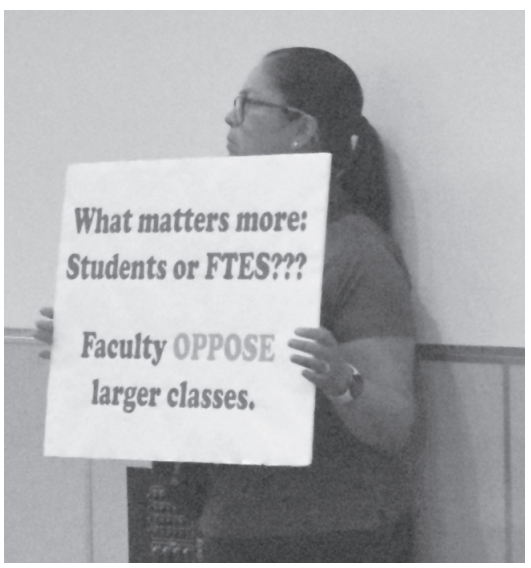
Garcia said Mt. SAC is the "number one transfer institution to Cal Poly Pomona."

And she thanked the Mt. SAC Foundation and Alumni Association, their donors and supporters who help provide scholarships, strengthen academic programs and remove financial barriers that might otherwise prevent students from reaching their goals.



Dr. Martha Garcia





Members of the Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association lined the back wall at the school's first "State of the College" address to make their concerns known in on-going contract negotiations. Teachers have been working without a contract for the past 17 months.

Garcia also acknowledged Mt. SAC's continuing success in athletics, referring to the Learfield Directors' Cup, an annual award presented by the National Association of Collegiate Directors to recognize colleges and universities nationwide with the most overall success in collegiate athletics.

She said for the past two years, Mt. SAC has been named the top two-year college athletics program in the country.

"This past year alone, our student athletes brought home six state championships," she said among other accomplishments.

The entire presentation was timed to mark Mt. SAC's 80th anniversary.

"As we begin our next chapter, I want to leave you with a few thoughts," Garcia said. "To our students, continue to dream boldly, explore new possibilities, challenge yourself and know that you have an entire Mt. SAC community that believes in you and are committed to your success."

"To our faculty, classified professionals and managers, thank you for the care, creativity and dedication you bring to our students every day," she added. "You are the heart of this college and you make our mission come alive through your work."

"Eighty years ago, a community believed in the promise of a new college and what it could mean for the next generations," she said. "Today, we're living that promise, and now it is our responsibility and our privilege to carry it forward."

"Together, we will continue to break barriers, open doors, and change lives, because the next chapter of Mt. SAC is something we will write together," she said. "Mt. SAC is 80 years strong and the best is yet to come."

Garcia told guests she is the proud daughter of immigrant farm workers from Mexico and the first in her family to pursue higher education. Her own journey began at a community college while she was raising her son.

"There were moments when the path ahead felt uncertain, but I had people in my life who believed in me, encouraged me and saw the possibilities that I had not yet imagined," she said. "That is the transformative power of a community college, and that is why this work is personal to me."

Garcia joined Mt. SAC as its 10th president in July 2023. She became Mt. SAC's first female president in 50 years and its first president of color.

Faculty negotiations

In what became a highly visible unscripted part of the event, more than 50 faculty demonstrators, represented by the Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association and most carrying placards, lined the back wall of the conference hall.

La Nueva Voz reached out to the union after the meeting for comment regarding what is at issue in on-going negotiations and received a prepared statement from Faculty Association President Emily Woolery.

"At this point in negotiations, the Faculty Association is still waiting for the district to uphold the contract it negotiated just one year ago, awarding ALL state funded Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) to faculty salary schedules," she said. "In 2026-27, the state funded 4.31 percent COLA. Rather than uphold its agreement, the district continues to offer only partial COLA, with the latest offer being 3 percent. The district has communicated no plan for the remaining COLA funds."

Woolery added that the Faculty Association has several other priorities for this year's contract, including recognizing and rewarding faculty longevity, increasing part-time faculty access to healthcare benefits, and ensuring that all faculty earn equal pay for equal work, or "pay parity."

She said the association "understands that the district maintains a large budget and massive fiduciary responsibility."

"Despite this responsibility, the district provided an historic raise to the college president, awarded in October 2025, and increased executive management positions by 100 percent at the college," she added. "For these reasons and more, the association believes Mt. San Antonio College can meet its fiduciary responsibilities without exploiting the labor of faculty, who are serving more students now than any time in the 80 years that Mt. SAC has been open."

The group's latest "Negotiations Update No. 18" dated Sept. 25 on its web site adds that teachers are concerned about faculty positions allegedly on the "chopping block" and about what they claim are "huge class size increases and eliminating the class size committee" that they believe could jeopardize student learning.

According to the update, Mt. San Antonio Community College District negotiators, as an example, are holding the line in their proposal requiring lecture classes to handle 46 students.

Faculty negotiators are working on a three-year 2025-2028 contract. The 2022-2025 contract expired on June 30, 2025.

La Nueva Voz also reached out to college administration officials for comment and received the following from a spokesperson:

"Mt. San Antonio College values the dedication and contributions of its faculty and recognizes its essential role in providing a high-quality educational experience for our students," the statement said. "Negotiations are ongoing, and the district remains focused on reaching a fair and responsible agreement. Out of respect for the collective bargaining process, the college will not comment on specific proposals or matters currently under negotiation."

Mt. SAC, approved by voters from four local high school districts in 1945, enrolled 700 students in its first year. Today it serves more than 83,000 credit and non-credit students annually across 20 communities, providing 416 academic programs.

More than 1.2 million people have attended Mt. SAC over the past 80 years. In addition, based on a recent economic impact survey, Mt. SAC generates an estimated $1.9 billion in added income for the regional economy – the equivalent of supporting nearly 19,600 jobs throughout the region.

Mt. SAC is the largest single-campus community college in California. The college on its 420-acre campus serves students from 20 communities.

It has one of the most diverse student populations in California. Classes are only $46 a unit and extensive financial aid options are available, providing affordable education that empowers students of all ages and backgrounds.

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County supervisors approve planning study to balance ad spending between daily newspapers, ethnic and community media

Members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors this month voted unanimously to approve a motion directing the county to develop a coordinated strategy ultimately for placing a greater share of county agency advertising with local, ethnic, community and "hyperlocal" media organizations.

The motion called for a 120-day strategy development process, followed by an implementation phase in which an equitable plan will be created to balance newspaper advertising spending between major metropolitan and suburban dailies and the more niche market ethnic and community papers in an era of struggling newspapers everywhere.

Introduced by Supervisors Hilda Solis and Janice Hahn, the motion cited a similar program implemented in New York City where a 2013 City University of New York study revealed that 82 percent of city advertising funds went to mainstream outlets while only 18 percent went to community outlets.

"Despite Latinos representing nearly 30 percent of the city's population, only 4 percent of funds went to Spanish language publications in a one-year period," the motion said.

The city mandated at least 50 percent of advertising funds go to community and ethnic media and established a "Mayor's Office of Ethnic and Community Media" to serve as a central point of coordination between city agencies and the many news media outlets serving the city.

In that example, advertising allocations to community media outlets outperformed expectations reaching 84 percent of total advertising budgets and, in its first five years, redirected $72 million into the local media ecosystem.

Solis, speaking to two dozen reporters, editors and publishers in a news conference before the board meeting, said "we're always looking for ways of making sure that our community gets the news and they get information and the only way to do that is by having secure outlets, local outlets, that really care and know about our communities and know the voices and have the trust."

She said the importance of local newspapers was particularly demonstrated during COVID when "we needed people to report what was happening, where to get help and where to find resources, and reach those niches that sometimes regular newspapers or others don't, and sometimes it becomes cost prohibitive because people can't afford always to get the big paper."



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY MEDIA -- Latino Media Collaborative President Arturo Carmona, at the podium, speaks at a news conference in Los Angeles this month before members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted to set in motion a plan to place a greater share of county advertising revenue with local, ethnic and community news media outlets. A motion by Supervisors Hilda Solis and Janice Hahn was unanimously approved. Pictured, from left, are Regina Brown Wilson, Executive Director of California Black Media; Brandon Brooks, Project Director of California Black Media; Hahn; Carmona; Solis; and Matt Tinoco, founder and CEO of LA Public Press, an independent non-profit newsroom.

Solis said the need for local papers includes everything from the importance of information on local federal immigration raids to, most recently, describing ballot initiatives and backgrounds on candidates in this month's election.

She said it is important for county agencies to work with ethnic news media outlets "in this very diverse county of ours in Los Angeles where . . . close to 300 different languages are spoken."

"Our communities, our neighborhoods deserve better, and what better way to do this than by beginning to say we're going to make sure that L.A. County is responsive to all of our communities through whatever mediums and outlets and particularly the small local newspapers," Solis said.

"Over the years, we've lost so many of our local papers," Hahn said. "You're stretched very thin – sometimes our hyperlocal and ethnic outlets have just one employee trying to cover an entire community."

"And I think we've all noticed that there's less local press covering our county and what we're doing, and that should bother everybody because local reporting is how our residents stay informed about the issues that impact them the most," she added.

Hahn said it is the local reporters "who hold us, the people in power and government, accountable – you're the backbone of our local democracy."

She added that the county is a major purchaser of advertising, but most of those advertising dollars don't go to local outlets.

"These outlets are the most trusted source of the news information, and this is especially true for our ethnic and non-English language outlets," Hahn said. "When we're trying to get the word out about our county programs, our services, why wouldn't we use the local outlets our residents already read and trust?"

She said getting more advertising revenue into local and ethnic newsrooms "would be a lifeline for small outlets in our county that are struggling."

"It would give you more resources to invest in your reporting and giving our residents the information they need and they depend on, and it would help our county departments better reach out to our residents," Hahn said. "So, this would be a win for local journalism, a win for our communities, and definitely a win for the county."

"We need our local reporters, we need these community newspapers, and we should be doing everything we can to make sure they're still here for the next generation," she said.

Arturo Carmona, president of the Downtown Los Angeles-based Latino Media Collaborative, told the group that half of the county's 10 million residents speak another language at home and depend on local media.

"Effective communication requires reaching residents through the voices they already know," he said, "and that's ethnic community media, local papers, local outlets."

"The most local reporting is facing an existential crisis," he added. "In fact, our sector is under unprecedented threat by the federal government, but also by the very business model that has sustained us for decades."

He said across California, 12,000 journalists have vanished since 2002. And according to the U.S. Census and labor metrics, Latinos comprise more than 50 percent of the population but only 11 percent of local journalists.

In addition, Carmona said, a recent growth in local journalists followed by recent waves of layoffs "has actually paused or even walked us back on the diversification of the sector."

"When public advertising dollars are siphoned into massive agency overhead and Silicon Valley ad networks, which is the trend, it is our neighborhood beat reporters that get squeezed out," he said.

"We're not asking for the county to spend a single new penny of

Balance ad spending... pg. 16

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A celebration of service... from pg. 4

inspiring tales of how their service had not just impacted others' lives but their own as well.

Altair Alvarez and Sofia Munoz from Arroyo Elementary School spoke of the impact that service has had on them at such a young age and how this will shape who they are as they move into middle school next year. Alvarez discussed their personal taking away on service stating, "assisting the community helps us grow as individuals . . . we will carry what we have learned and how we have grown with us for the rest of our lives."

Munoz spoke on how service formed the way she moves through life stating, "the true purpose of life is found in selfless service and looking beyond your needs to help others."

Both middle school speakers, Caleb Lee from Lorbeer Middle School and Miya Renfro from Lexington Elementary School, spoke on how service can be used to unify one another and create understanding. In Renfro's speech she shared this sentiment – "diversity is what makes our schools and communities stronger. When we respect and support one another, we create a community where everyone feels valued and included. Service is another important part of realizing the dream . . ."

Lee explained how through service we are all connected stating, "Service learning is more than just an activity. It is becoming a fundamental principle, a culture that all of us students should take part in. It is a way for students from every background, every group, every story, to come together and work towards one goal, to help one another."

Students Amara Beatty and Sinthia Salcedo of Diamond Ranch High School talked about

A celebration of service... pg. 10



NEW CHAMBER MEMBER -- Lili's Pet Grooming and Spa Boutique, serving customers in Pomona for the past 14 years, became the newest member of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce this month with an official ribbon-cutting. Pictured cutting the ribbon, at center, are owners Edward and Lili Kennedy (with the scissors). From left are Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles, Chamber Ambassadors Kobe, Frank and Domenica Carrillo of Pomona's On Time Photo Booth Rentals, Ambassador Victor Khair of OnSite Expert Computers, Edward and Lili Kennedy, Pomona City Councilmember Debra Martin, and, at far right, Chamber Ambassador Isabel Valdovinos, of Get Insurance Quick, Pomona Chamber Executive Board members Ron Garner, Jr. and Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz, and Chamber Board Chair Daniel Thomas. Lili's is located at 105 W. Willow St., Pomona.



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$249/Mo

For 36 Months New 2026 Acura ADX base [1]$249 per month on a 36 month lease. [1]$4,995 total amount due at signing. Does not include tax, tag, & title fees.



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America's top heart and stroke organizations recently honored Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center (PVHMC) with two national recognitions - one for heart care, by awarding us the Heart Failure Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award and one for stroke care with the Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Awards. For both heart and stroke, PVHMC earned additional honor roll recognitions, as well as an Advanced Therapy honor for stroke care. We accomplished these by implementing a high standard of care that prioritizes evidence-based practices and positive outcomes for our patients.

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American Heart Association. HEART FAILURE 2026 GOLD PLUS TARGET: HEART FAILURE OPTIMAL TARGET: TYPE 2 DIABETES HONOR ROLL GET WITH THE GUIDELINES.

American Heart Association. STROKE 2026 GOLD PLUS TARGET: STROKE HONOR ROLL ELITE PLUS ADVANCED THERAPY TARGET: TYPE 2 DIABETES HONOR ROLL GET WITH THE GUIDELINES.

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Ontario 'Tower Buzzers' baseball, Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez go to bat for holiday turkey giveaway



Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez, at right, poses for the La Nueva Voz camera with major supporters Ontario Mayor-elect Daisy Macias and Allan Benavides, general manager of the Ontario Tower Buzzers baseball team, this year's official event partner.



Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez chats with a volunteer in front of tables loaded with frozen turkeys all ready to go.

The Ontario Tower Buzzers baseball team partnered with Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez this month to distribute 800 turkeys and more than 150 gift certificates to area residents who lined up for as far as the eye could see outside Ontario's new ONT Field in the Ontario Sports Empire complex.

Dozens of volunteers and members of "Team Rodriguez" made sure the second annual "drive through" turkey giveaway went off without a hitch, distributing frozen turkeys, traditional Thanksgiving food items in a fast-moving three-hour event to help celebrate the holiday season, and information on state and local resources.

Ontario Mayor-elect Daisy Macias and Allan Benavides, general manager of the seven-month-old Ontario Tower Buzzers, this year's official event partner, both were on hand to help.

Rodriguez said next year she plans to partner with the baseball team again.

"I'd say we'll probably do 2,000 turkeys easy next year because (Mayor Macias) is going to partner with me as well next year," she added. The event last year, held at Ontario Elks Lodge, distributed 500 turkeys, she said.

"Next year this is going to be a huge event," Rodriguez said. "This is going to be one of my signature events."

She explained her team raises funds for the event and arranges sponsors during the year.

"I think just in general with how it's so expensive now (with) groceries . . . I think this is a way to give back to the community . . . so that way they have food on the table for Thanksgiving," she said.

"Thanksgiving is a time for gratitude, generosity and coming together as a community," Rodriguez said, adding that the event would not have been possible without the generosity of the Ontario Tower Buzzers, sponsors, community organizations "and the hundreds of volunteers who dedicated their time to making this day a success."

"I'm super stoked and excited," Macias said. "As I was driving up, I saw so many cars it was impossible to get in, but you really get to see here . . . the real need and the necessity here in our community."

"So, it's creating an impact to those individuals that are in need – there's a food insecurity, so I'm happy that Michelle decided to host it here in our big city of Ontario," she added. "And we are looking forward to working alongside with her (next year) and making it even transpire to something bigger. It's about working together."

Benavides told La Nueva Voz Rodriguez has been supporting the baseball project "from day one."

"She's a sponsor, a season ticket (holder), she's a supporter of our team, she's a supporter of this community, I think she's amazing," he said. "When she reached out (and) wanted to do this, it was like a no-brainer for us. And just look at this turnout."

"You know, in this stadium, we always say that we're more than just baseball," Benavides said, adding that they are "available year-round, whether it's Halloween and whether it's Thanksgiving or Christmas and all the parades and Toys for Tots and all the trunk or treats we did and helping Assemblymember Rodriguez."

He said they've done breast cancer and American Heart Association walks there.

"It's all about community," he said.

The new $140 million ONT Field complex, owned by the City of Ontario and home stadium for the Ontario Tower Buzzers, opened April 2 at 9375 E. Riverside Drive, Ontario. It is located in the $850 million Ontario Sports Empire complex, California's largest sports complex, with 190 acres of fields for baseball, football, rugby and championship tournaments.

The 6,500-capacity baseball stadium was named "ballpark of the year" by USA Today and minor league baseball's "organization of the year" in Class A baseball.

It includes a 360-degree wraparound concourse designed with an aviation theme that connects the main seating bowl to interactive outfield attractions and dining areas. It offers seating for families that want to come into the ballpark for $6 in addition to an "elevated experience" with tickets costing $28.



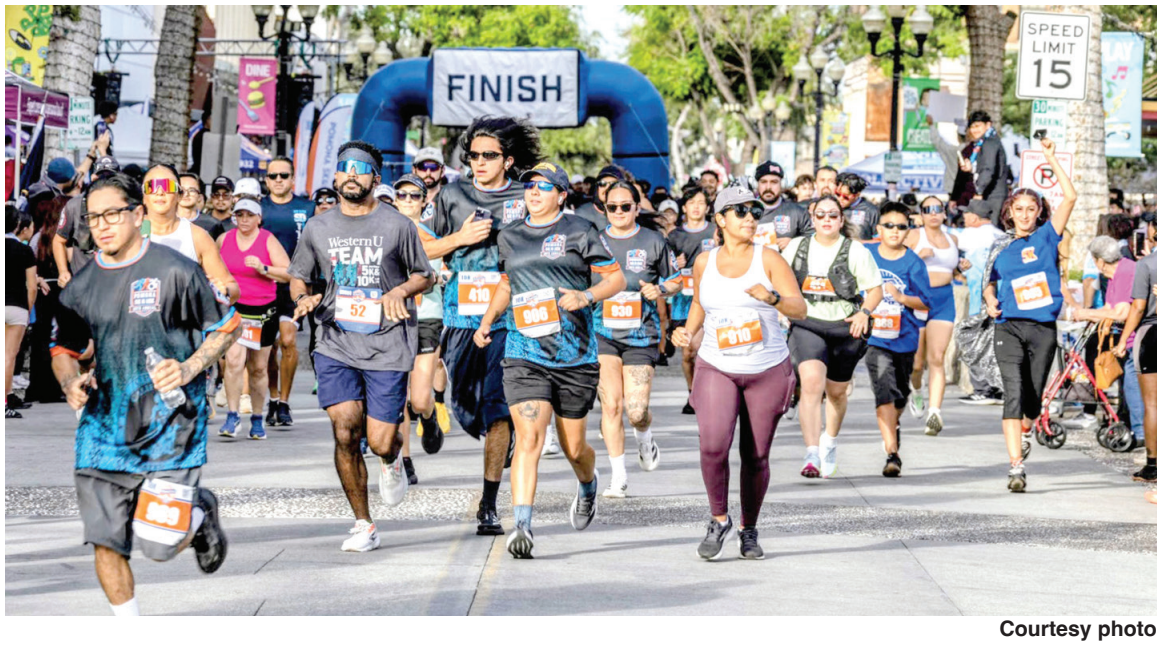
Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez loads a frozen turkey into the back of a van at this month's free turkey distribution event outside Ontario's new ONT Field, home field of the Ontario Tower Buzzers baseball team.

"We have something for everybody," Benavides said, calling it "a beautiful facility for concerts, baseball, charity walks."

He said visitors can even come early before game time so kids can get players' autographs and watch players doing batting practice in batting cages behind glass windows visible from the outside sidewalk.

The Ontario Tower Buzzers, already hard at work making preparations for year two, are a Minor League Baseball team Single-A affiliate of the Los Angeles Dodgers, playing in the California League.

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



Courtesy photo

OFF AND RUNNING! -- Runners in the 10th annual Pomona 5k and 10k run were off and running last month at the start/finish line in front of Shaun Diamond Plaza on Second Street. The run each year attracts an average of 1,000 running participants and more than 800 spectators in Downtown Pomona to cheer on the runners. It is a partnership between Pomona Valley Runners and a variety of community-based non-profit organizations incliuding God's Pantry. It was organized to raise funds for Pomona's youth.

Assemblymember Rodriguez to host holiday open house, toy drive in Chino

Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez will hold a holiday open house and toy drive for community members and families to celebrate the holiday season on Tuesday, Dec. 1, at her district office in Chino.

The event is scheduled for 4 to 7 p.m. and will provide an opportunity for residents to connect with Rodriguez and her staff while enjoying festive holiday refreshments.

"The holiday season is a special time to come together, celebrate our community and give back to those around us," Rodriguez said. "I look forward to welcoming residents to our district office, sharing some holiday cheer, and helping make this season a little brighter for families throughout our community."

Her district office is located at 13160 7th St., Chino. For information, call (909) 902-9606.

A celebration of service... from pg. 7

their experience in how service helped them learn and grow, understanding that legacy is not about being perfect but making a difference stating, "We grew in ways we did not expect. In patience. In humility. In the ability to listen before we speak and to trust that small actions accumulate into something real. That is the legacy we want to leave for the students who come after us. Not a finished product, but a living example."

Their advice to upcoming students looking to get involved but unsure where to start is that, "You do not have to wait until you feel ready. You do not have to have all the answers. You just have to care enough to begin . . . Dr. King did not realize his dream alone. He realized it alongside ordinary people who decided that their presence mattered. That their voice mattered. That their community was worth fighting for."

Being a part of the Realize the Dream campaign has gotten these students engaged with their communities and created through experience the understanding that we can create change through small actions. Beatty and Salcedo were invited to inspire others across the country by sharing their story through Realize the Dream's YouTube channel at https://tinyurl.com/amaraandsinthia .

The goal of the Realize the Dream campaign is to reach 100 million hours by 2029 to honor what will be Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 100th birthday. This campaign is something everyone can join. To learn more visit https://www.realizethedream.org/get-involved.

Editor's Note: *Dr. King Realize the Dream Campaign Volunteer Emily Shim is a community volunteer and a substitute teacher for Pomona Unified School District. The Realize the Dream campaign is a national movement by Martin Luther King III, Arndrea Waters King, and their daughter Yolsanda Renee King. Its mission is to unite communities across the country through acts of service, love, compassion and goodwill to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*





GLAM NAIL BAR RIBBON-CUTTING -- Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce held an official ribbon-cutting ceremony this month to welcome Glam Nail Bar as a new Chamber member. Pictured cutting the ribbon are owners Rose Le and Jennifer Vo. From left are Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles, Chamber Ambassador Isabel Valdovinos, Rose Le and Jennifer Vo, and, at far right, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz and Chamber Board member Daniela Franco of Metro Event Center. Glam Nail Bar is located at 101 W. Mission Blvd., Suite 103, Pomona.



SALSA DANCE STUDIO JOINS CHAMBER -- Yesenia Ferrari, owner of Ferrari Dance Academy, holding the scissors, cuts the ribbon to officially become the newest member of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce in ceremonies last month. Pictured, from left, are Chamber Ambassadors Domenica and Kobe Carrillo of Pomona's On Time Photo Booth Rentals, Chamber Executive Board member Ron Garner, Jr., Board member Daniela Franco, of Metro Event Center, Pomona City Councilmember Debra Martin, Ferrari, Councilmembers Lorraine Canales and Victor Preciado, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, Ambassador Frank Carrillo of On Time Photo Booth Rentals, and Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles. Ferrari Dance Academy is located at 215 E. 2nd St., Pomona.



City officially opens two 'Quick Build' projects to slow traffic, improve safety on Orange Grove Avenue

Officials in Pomona cut the ribbon this month to open a "Quick Build" street improvement designed to make a busy intersection safer for cars, pedestrians and bicycles.

The design change – at the intersection of Orange Grove and Park Avenues – simply stated – incorporated a series of white plastic barrier posts or "bollards" and changes to markings along the curb and in the crosswalks to help separate cyclists, pedestrians and cars into their own safer space.

"If you're on a bike . . . you don't have to go into the left turn lane just like a car would," said Max Pastore, the city's associate planner and urban designer who was project manager for the upgrade. "(Previously) you'd have to merge a couple lanes over no matter how you're entering the intersection and turn like a car would – that's really, really dangerous."

"Instead, (the new design) pulls you out to the outer end of the intersection . . . separating out cyclists, pedestrians and cars," he added. "And the amount of space where people are exposed has gotten a lot shorter on those crosswalks, making it easier by having them start from behind the white line on the bicycles instead of from the curb."

"These neighborhoods weren't always built with bike riders in mind or better walkability, they were built for cars," Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval said. "And we are having to undo a history where the emphasis in our society was on cars."

"This project represents for us Pomona's goals for safer, healthier, and more connected streets," he added.

He said the project was completed without relying on general funds.

Pastore, who is manager of the "Pomona Complete Streets" project, also served as project manager for another related "Quick Build" project along Orange Grove between White and Garey Avenues. He called the two projects "design interventions."

The original project involved redesigning Orange Grove to include only one lane in each direction rather than two and add dedicated bicycle lanes to reduce speeds and change traffic patterns.



Pomona City Councilmember Debra Martin



Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval



Associate Planner Max Pastore

"When vehicles travel faster, drivers have much less time to react, and crashes are much more likely to be severe and end in injuries or death," Pastore said.

He pointed out that at the intersection of Park Avenue and Orange Grove alone, between 2021 and last month Pomona police recorded 15 related or intersection related collisions and one resulted in a fatality.

"So, these numbers are real people and have real impacts on our community," he said.

Construction on the two projects took a little over a month to complete. Work on both stages was under way simultaneously, according to a city spokesperson, beginning in early September and ending in mid-October.

The budget for the two projects was $652,359 with $459,052 from the Cannabis Community Benefit Fund and $193,307 from a grant from the Southern California Association of Governments. Final invoices are pending and any budgeted funds not spent on the project will be returned to the Cannabis Community Benefit Fund.

The city over the next six months will continue to evaluate traffic speeds, patterns, walking and biking activity along with safety data and community feedback.

Pomona City Councilmember Debra Martin, whose district includes the new project, told the group they are celebrating "what the voices of the people have asked our staff to look into."

"We've had many community meetings and the same voice is saying we cannot continue to live on Orange Grove in peace with people going 60 miles an hour," she said, adding that city staff has done a good job through community meetings listening to concerns of the public.

Quick Build projects, often funded by the Southern California Association of Governments, have become popular because they use low- to medium-cost materials to rapidly enhance traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety without heavy excavation or concrete obstruction.

They can be installed in a matter of days to a month after planning and design phases and, because they do not require permanent digging or structural rebuilding, the layouts can be easily adjusted, modified or removed based on real-time data and community feedback.

Volunteers demonstrated how the upgraded intersection works for both bicycles and pedestrians, and guests had an opportunity at the event to borrow a bicycle to give the new design a try. And city officials said they welcome input from the public on how it's all working out. Comments can be sent through February to completestreets@pomonaca.gov.



MAKING STREETS SAFER FOR CARS, PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLES -- City officials in Pomona held a ribbon-cutting this month for a new "Quick Build" street improvement project expected to make a busy intersection safer for cars, pedestrians and bicycles. Pictured, from left, are City of Pomona Development Services Director Betty Donavanik, Planning Manager Vinny Tam, Pomona City Councilmember Debra Martin, Associate Planner Max Pastore, City Councilmembers Steve Lustro and Lorraine Canales, Mayor Tim Sandoval and City Manager Anita Scott.



Volunteers on bicycles Graciela Conchas, a community engagement coordinator for Pomona ACTS, and City of Pomona Planning intern Davidson J. Drake demonstrate how a new "Quick Build" project in Pomona can make the street safer for cars, bikes and pedestrians.



NEW COFFEE SHOP AT THE UNION -- Take UR Seat Cafe hosted an official Pomona Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting ceremony this month in the lobby of The Union, at 350 N. Garey Ave., Pomona, offering specialty coffees, breakfast, lunch and extra-special treats. Pictured, from left are Pomona Chamber Past President Dr. Enrique Medina, Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles, Chamber Executive Board members Ron Garner, of W.C. Construction and Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, Take UR Seat Cafe owners Mike, Sandy and Andreas Obadja, and Chamber member Ray Adamyk, owner of both The Union and Spectra Historic Construction.



Photo by Kamille Hemsworth

CAR WASH RIBBON CUTTING -- Pomona Chamber of Commerce and city officials helped cut the ribbon this month for new Pomona Chamber member Pomona Hand Car Wash. Features include Ma Lupe's Cafe offering matcha (tea), lattes, coffee and more, and a monthly unlimited car wash club for $29.95. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Chamber Board Chair Daniel Thomas, Chamber Vice Chair Jeff Johannsen of Pomona Hope, Chamber Ambassador Isabel Valdovinos, Chamber Executive Board member Ron Garner, of W.C. Construction, owners Asher Sedlin and Shawn Silverman, Pomona City Councilmember Lorraine Canales, Chamber Board member Marcus Jackson of Fairplex, Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, Chamber Ambassador Frank Carrillo of On Time Photo Booth Rentals, and Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles. The new owners took over the car wash on June 27. Pomona Hand Car Wash is located at 1869 N. Garey Ave., Pomona.

Purple Heart awards

By Rev. Jan Chase, Convenor, Compassionate Pomona

"It's a miracle," I said to myself, Wednesday morning Nov. 4 as I awoke to more election news!

"The nightmare is over." I pinched myself to see if I was really awake, as I listened to the incredible results of the election.

As I watched the Blue winners in the Red states, I felt relief in my mind and my body.

Not only was the horrific ordeal of Power over people over . . .

Not only was the Rich stealing from the poor going to be over . . .

Not only was the shredding of our democratic system going to be over . . .

But in some places the shift was won with grace and spiritual wisdom, not with more poisonous arrows spreading fear and deepening hate.

When I heard the religious left won by reminding people of the Golden Rule (found in all religious traditions): "Do to others, as you would like them to do to you," and "Love your neighbor as yourself," I opened to hope. I suddenly understood that the way out of the "hell" that we have been living in is through honoring our "oneness."

We have felt divided by the political colors of Red and Blue. And we have been taught that one is good and the other is bad. This is a very damaging and limited point of view, one that cannot sustain a family, a community, a nation

Purple Heart awards... pg. 17

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Local incumbents win on school board, in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

Pomona Unified School District Board members Dr. Roberta Perlman and Lisha Nashua, State Sen. Susan Rubio, Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez and Congresswoman Norma Torres all handily held on to their seats for another term in this month's general election, according to semi-final results available at press time for this issue of La Nueva Voz.

Perlman, representing the school district's Trustee Area No. 4, received 79 percent of the vote compared to challenger Pawn Kongkosonkichkan, who received 21 percent.

In Trustee Area No. 1, Lisa Nashua received 46 percent of the vote with challengers Christine Raquel Cruz-Arvayo receiving 29 percent and John Mendoza receiving 25 percent.

Democratic State Sen. Susan

Local incumbents win... pg. 16

Pomona Council race... from pg. 2

with federal guidelines on access to underserved communities.

In an interview with La Nueva Voz in May of that year, Preciado said he supported a reopening of the transit store and would work something out to restore services, although he said it may not look exactly the same as before. Months later he said he was attempting to schedule a meeting with Foothill Transit CEO Doran Barnes, but apparently that meeting never happened and the center remained closed.

Some 22,000 people visited the Pomona transit center during the year before it was closed.

Preciado received $150 for each Foothill Transit joint powers authority meeting he attended.

In another area, Preciado ran into significant opposition from Pomona's rental housing providers over his position favoring rent control through the city's rent stabilization ordinance.

An even bigger issue was the proposed rental "registry," something that property owners believed would not prevent illegal rent increases, could not provide verifiable data on housing and, in fact, would serve no useful purpose.

Two California cities reportedly repealed their registries for that reason.

More recently, eyebrows were raised 90 days before the election when Pomona City Councilmembers voted to remove Elizalde from the city's Parks and Recreation Commission for missing three meetings this year.

Preciado recused himself from the discussion and waited out of the room during deliberations, but Elizalde called the move "selective enforcement and political motivation."

The action resulted in Elizalde being required to remove her ballot designation as "Parks and Recreation Commissioner."

Elizalde said her absences had already been reviewed by her fellow commissioners and were "tied to the realities of childcare as a working single mother."

"When political retaliation is used to push people like me out, it raises a bigger question – who gets the opportunity to serve?" she said in a news release at the time, adding that one of Preciado's appointees to the Cultural Arts Commission had accumulated 16 absences since 2019 "and remains in office."

Preciado declined at the time to comment on the development citing "obvious conflict issues."

In other city council races on the June primary election ballot, City Councilmember Nora Garcia (Council District 3) and political newcomer Yvonne Cobarrubias (Council District 5) both were elected "outright" – with more than 50 percent of the vote, they did not have to compete in this month's general election.



Photo by Renee Barbee

One Mt. San Antonio College student who shall remain unidentified (hey, we protect our sources around here) was in full costume at a resource event on campus just before Halloween last month.

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Roundtable holds 'Dia de Muertos' celebration in Downtown Pomona

It was Dia de Muertos this month at Downtown Pomona's Shaun Diamond Plaza where celebrants from throughout Pomona and beyond came to honor deceased loved ones on the "Day of the Dead," the 12th annual Dia de Muertos celebration presented by the Latino and Latina Roundtable.



A visitor to the community ofrenda at this month's "Dia de Muertos" event in Shaun Diamond Plaza in Downtown Pomona takes a photo with his cell phone. The event was presented by the Latino and Latina Roundtable.

The "Cultivating Community Fest" included everything from a community "ofrenda" or altar, activities, music, Aztec dancing, dancers from the Galan Cultural Center's "No Te Rajes Jalisco" folklorico group, resource booths and food.

"Thank you for joining us today as we come together to celebrate our community, culture and the traditions that bring us together," said Lina Mira, Roundtable executive director. "Today is more than just about celebrating – it's about honoring our loved ones, remembering our ancestors, sharing our stories and recognizing the strength of our communities.

She invited guests to stop by the community ofrenda to write people's names.

"Take a moment to remember and honor your loved ones and those who continue to live on through our memories," she said.



Marisol Torres

A "land acknowledgement" and solemn reading of the names of those who have passed, each with the remembrance "that they will always be" in Spanish, was presented by Marisol Torres, affiliated with the collective non-profit "Mujeres de Maiz," or "Women of the Corn," an organization devoted to creating space for women to heal, lead and thrive.

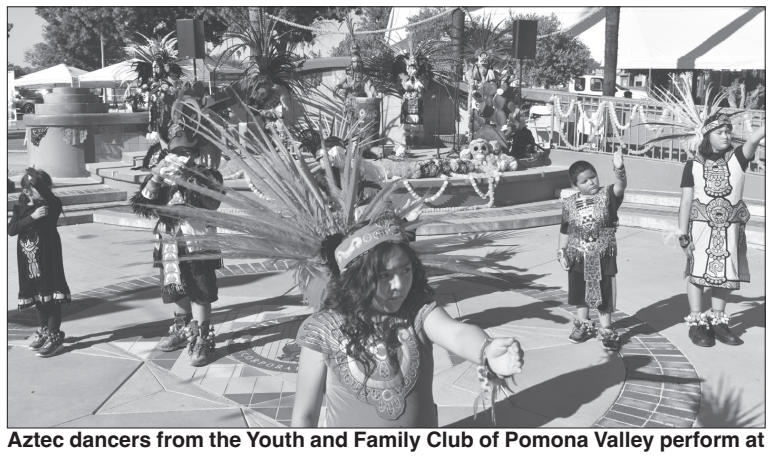
For information, contact lmira@latinolatinaroundtable.org.



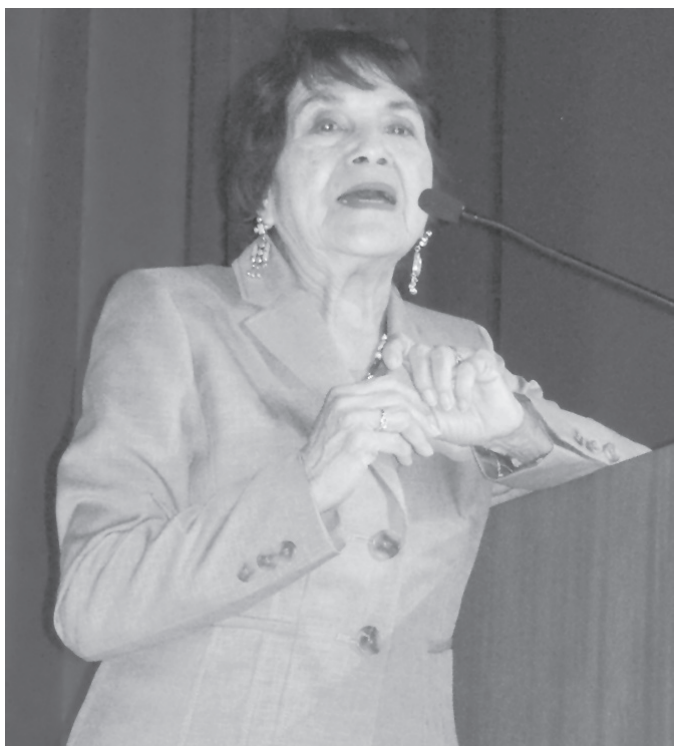
Latino and Latina Roundtable Executive Director Lina Mira, at left, welcomes guests to this month's "Dia de Muertos" event in Downtown Pomona as Goretty Ornelas, president of Galan Cultural Center, translates into Spanish.



Two young visitors to this month's "Dia de Muertos" event in Downtown Pomona pause for a photo to show off their face painting.



Aztec dancers from the Youth and Family Club of Pomona Valley perform at the "Dia de Muertos" event in Downtown Pomona.



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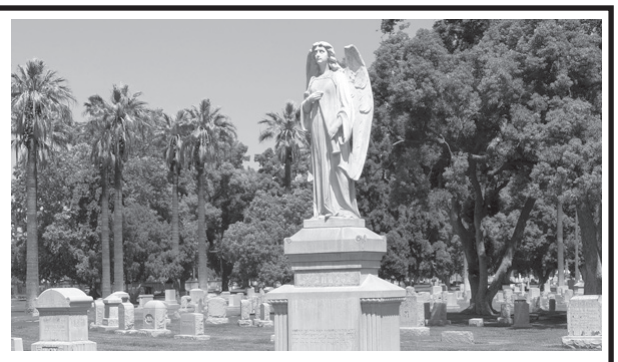

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Pomona Valley Memorial Park is a nonprofit corporation.

Balance ad spending... from pg. 6

taxpayer money – this is existing resources that are already being spent," he said, pointing out that similar programs are being developed in cities like Chicago, Seattle and San Francisco in addition to New York.

Solis and Hahn, responding to a question from La Nueva Voz, estimated the program could take roughly six months to become operational.

The plan is expected to allow the county to improve news media engagement, increase advertising expenditure transparency and expand access to public ad contracts.

A 2020 directive from the Board of Supervisors found that although most county departments use ethnic and community newspapers for outreach, the county lacked comprehensive data on advertising expenditures and utilization. A program requiring consistent reporting and coordination is expected to enable the county to fully assess where its advertising dollars go or how effectively its communications reach diverse communities.

The motion requires the county's chief executive officer over the next 120 days to focus on four areas – the feasibility of establishing an ad budget framework, identifying philanthropic and academic partners to support an independent assessment of county ad expenditures, upgrading county assessment tools for ad expenditures, and engaging local and ethnic news media organizations to provide input into the county's recommendations.

Ten editors and publishers – including La Nueva Voz publisher Jeff Schenkel – and even a journalism professor from Cal State Los Angeles, among others, told supervisors it is not only a matter of where their ad dollars are going but where the information is going, that the proposed program is really about "information equity," and that newspapers benefit the public by serving, educating and informing people.

Schenkel, who told supervisors he has worked in news and public relations for the past 56 years, said he applauded the board for what they were doing with this motion.

"It allows papers that get the word out to the local community to benefit from the added advertising revenue and allows residents and businesses to benefit from the information that advertising provides – just the way it is supposed to be and the way it used to be before this era of shrinking and disappearing newspapers," he said in prepared comments.

Pomona Valley Hospital receives second 'Magnet' recognition for nursing excellence

Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center this month received its second prestigious "Magnet" recognition for nursing excellence, placing the hospital among the top 10 percent of hospitals in the U.S. to receive nursing's highest national honor.

The award from the American Nurses Credentialing Center distinguishes organizations that set rigorous standards for nursing excellence.

Only four hospitals in the greater Inland Empire region received the award.

"It is with great honor and pride that we receive our second designation as a Magnet hospital," said hospital President and CEO Rich Yochum. "This achievement is a direct reflection of our culture of nursing excellence and amplifies our commitment to delivering safe, high-quality patient care."

The hospital first received the designation in December 2021.

During a virtual site survey in September, appraisers applauded the hospital for its extraordinary culture, professionalism and the level of commitment they observed throughout the organization.

"Nursing at PVHMC is guided by our passion to advocate, educate, heal and serve our patients, families and community with compassion," said Lolla Mitchell, vice president of nursing and patient care services. "What makes nursing here special is that excellence is not just a goal, it is embedded in how we practice. Our nurses work every day to provide equitable, safe, person-centered care."

Magnet recognition is considered the "gold standard" for nursing excellence and is included each year in U.S. News & World Report's ranking criteria for its showcase of "America's Best Hospitals."

Local incumbents win... from pg. 14

Rubio received 70 percent of the votes in the 22nd District race, while Republican challenger Mike Netter received 30 percent.

Also in Sacramento, Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez (D-53rd District) received 69 percent, while challenger Rafaela Romero, a Republican, received 31 percent.

Incumbent Congresswoman Norma Torres (D-35th District) received 67 percent and Republican challenger Mike Cargile received 33 percent.

More than 3.2 million ballots were processed and counted in Los Angeles County in the election, representing a 53.9 percent voter turnout.

Updates continued throughout the month with final tabulations expected to be released at noon tomorrow, Nov. 27.

Pomona Unified receives $200,000 family hardship grant from Supervisor Solis

Pomona Unified School District has received a $200,000 grant from Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis to support the "Superintendent's Student Support Fund," providing critical assistance to students and families experiencing financial hardship while expanding opportunities for student leadership and educational engagement.

The district's school board at its Nov. 18 meeting adopted a resolution formally accepting the funding and honoring Solis for her 12 years of service on the county Board of Supervisors and for her longstanding commitment to the communities of Pomona and Diamond Bar.

Half of the grant will help provide assistance to students and families in need of emergency lodging, groceries and other needs that may interfere with a student's ability to attend school and remain engaged in learning.

The other half will support student leadership development, educational activities, transportation and initiatives such as the "Superintendent's Student Advisory Council," creating opportunities for students to develop leadership skills.

Solis, who is "terming out" at the end of the year, will return to the U.S. House of Representatives where she is Congresswoman-Elect for California's 38th District.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Purple Heart award... from pg. 13

or a world. Our different perspectives are meant to serve us both.

Before I was a minister, I was a biologist. As an interfaith minister of a Unity Church, I know that it is the wisdom of the heart that ties us all together, for when we put our awareness into our hearts, we are guided to empathy, loving kindness and compassion.

Now I see that even our biology teaches us that we have both Red blood and Blue blood within our bodies and within our hearts. Remember how your heart contains four chambers? Your blue blood, missing the Oxygen it has delivered to every cell in your body to promote life, and filled with carbon dioxide, a waste product of each cell's metabolism, returns to the right upper chamber, the atrium of the heart. From there it is pumped down into the right ventricle, which pumps it to the life-giving lungs where it exchanges carbon dioxide for oxygen and the blood turns Red once more. This red blood then returns to the left atrium of the heart when it is sent to the strong left ventricle below to be pumped back out to the entire body to deliver the life-giving oxygen to each and every cell, tissue and organ. And so the Red blood and Blue blood cycles go on, over and over again to bring life to the body.

The Red cycle and the Blue cycle work together. Both are critical. Put these colors together and you have a purple heart that wins awards for saving life itself.

And so it is with our government. We have two chambers at the national level, each containing Red and Blue members. If those members do not work together to do the nation-saving work they were elected to do, the life of our country will die!

The Blue tsunami has come. What is next? If the blues use their power to punish the reds for their mistakes, the divide widens and nothing gets done. The body dies.

However, if both the Blues and the Reds realize that life is about "Power with," not "Power over," then they work together to heal the body of the nation, to fix that which has been damaged, and to lift our country into profound health for all people as well as for the life of the land, air and water as well as its flora and fauna.

One might ask about accountability and justice. That is where we learn from our restorative justice friends! It is important to hold people accountable, without throwing them under the bus. Reparations need to be paid to the victims by the offenders. Healing of systems and healing of relationships need to happen, so that faith in government can be restored.

Each of us has a PURPLE HEART! Let us use our "Spiritual Wisdom of Oneness" to grow a life-giving Purple Heart in our families, our communities, and our nation. Together as one we know that our differences are unique gifts that we need! Let us award each other with the highest award the U.S. Government bestows on its heroes: The Purple Heart, as we work together to heal the division that has been killing our country!

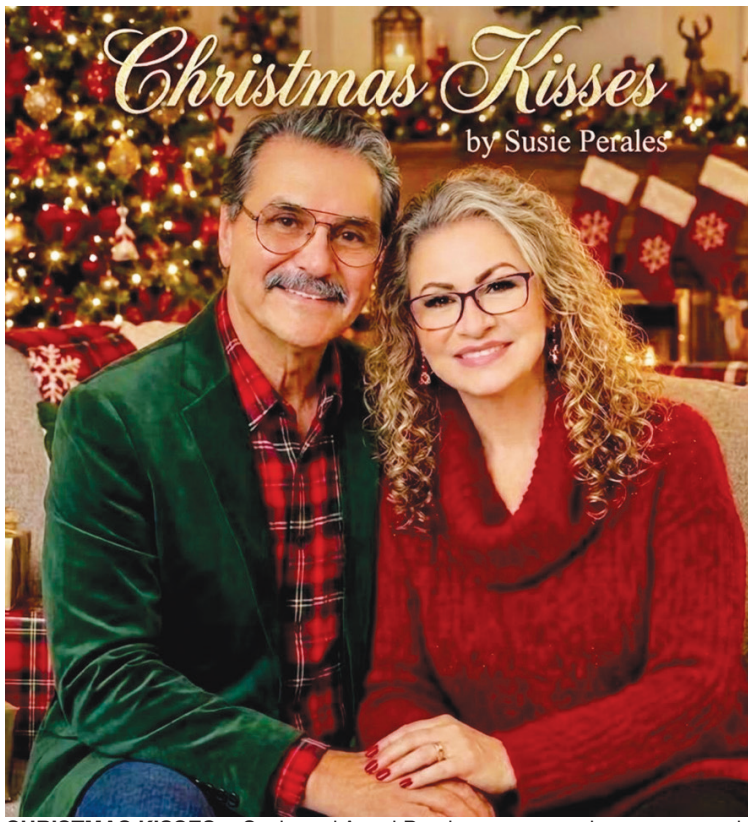


Photo by Renee Barbee

OPTIMISTS 'STUDENTS OF THE MONTH' -- Students of the Month from Pomona's Allison Elementary School for August and September were awarded certificates last month by members of the Pomona Optimist Club. Pictured, from left, are Optimist Secretary M. Joyce Bakersmith, Arabella Garcia, second grade, Student of the Month for September; Allison Principal Dr. Melvin Cortez; August winners Andrey Preciado, fourth grade, and Andres Pelayo, sixth grade; September winner Patrick Rodriguez, sixth grade; and Optimist President Sonia Molina. Award presentations were held at Cachanilla Chinese Restaurant in Pomona.



The entrance to the Child Development Center at Pomona's Fairplex was fully decorated for Halloween last month.



CHRISTMAS KISSES -- Susie and Angel Perales appear on the cover artwork for Susie's just-released Christmas song, "Christmas Kisses." A second release, also just in time for the holidays, was "Christmases Long Past." Both are available on Spotify, Amazon Music and other streaming platforms. Perales, who retired from the Pomona Unified School District after 30 years of service, is an author, award-winning poet and columnist for La Nueva Voz, where she has been contributing since 2016. Her published poetry includes "No One Can Breathe," featured in the June 2022 issue of Fresh Words magazine and La Nueva Voz. She and her husband Angel will celebrate their 62nd wedding anniversary next month.

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Photos by Renee Barbee

HAUNTED HOUSE AT PALOMARES -- Hundreds of kids and adults -- many of them in costume -- turned out last month for the annual City of Pomona Community Services "Haunted House at Palomares," a two-day pre-Halloween event at Pomona's Palomares Park. Included was a "family friendly" area, a "treat trail" featuring free treats from Pomona's non-profit organizations, an inflatable slide, an inflatable soccer field under the lights, and photo ops and more photo ops. Costume contests were held for groups and individuals in categories by age for originality, "superhero," look-a-like, and cutest. Pomona City Councilmember Lorraine Canales and her team of experts were on hand at a special face painting table. Palomares Park is located at 499 E. Arrow Highway, Pomona.

La Nueva Voz... Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky, TikTok and Yelp!





SAN GABRIEL VALLEY CONSERVATION CORPS GOLF TOURNEY -- Supporters of the San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps hit the links this month at Glendora Country Club for the fourth annual golf tournament, luncheon and awards ceremony. Pictured at the podium is San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps Executive Director Norma Quinones. Also pictured is the helicopter taking off from a fairway for the helicopter golf ball drop with hundreds of golf balls dropped onto the course. The San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps provides education, paid job training and hands-on experience in environmental conservation to help young people build confidence, develop valuable skills and create pathways toward brighter futures.



Photo by Renee Barbee

EAST VALLEY COMMUNITY HEALTH OPENS SATELLITE CLINIC -- East Valley Community Health Center opened a new satellite clinic this month in Chris Hartmire Plaza, at 1301 E. Holt Ave., Suite 100, Pomona. Pictured, from left, cutting the ribbon are East Valley Board members Doran Barnes and Robert Beam, Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval, East Valley CEO Lelenia Ramirez, East Valley former CEO Alicia Mardini, Pomona City Councilmembers Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, Lorraine Canales and Debra Martin, and East Valley Board member Steonee Laskey. East Valley provides access to health care while engaging and empowering its patients, employees and partners to improve their well-being. Hartmire Plaza is a 90-unit affordable housing and mixed-use community developed by the Cesar Chavez Foundation. It opened in October 2025.



Photo by Renee Barbee

LITTLE WILLIE G. APPEARS IN POMONA -- Pomona's dA Center for the Arts produced a free community concert featuring musician Little Willie G., "known as the "godfather of brown-eyed soul," last month at the Fox Theater in a collaboration with the City of Pomona's Office of Economic and Business Affairs and the Fox. Born Willie Garcia, he became the lead vocalist for the legendary East Los Angeles Chicano rock and R&B band Thee Midnighters in 1964. Other acts included "Sounds of Pomona" with selections from the golden era of music 1955 - 1975 and the 'dA Mini Mariachis."

Public service ad courtesy of La Nueva Voz

Save the date!

Join us at our 45th Annual
Pomona Inland Valley Martin Luther King Jr. Project
Sunday, January 17, 2027
Pilgrim Congregational Church
600 N. Garey Ave., Pomona, CA 91767

Honoring our Youth Social Justice Awardees, our Zennie Cummings Award recipient, supporting our local vendors and celebrating the legacy and life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Event is free and open to the public!

Sponsorship and vendor space opportunities available!

Vendor MLK Marketplace: 4 p.m.
Ceremony: 6 p.m.

Information: piv.mlkjrproject@gmail.com

Public service ad courtesy of La Nueva Voz

Save the Date!

A Holiday Gathering at the Pomona Ebell

Dear Friends of History and Community,

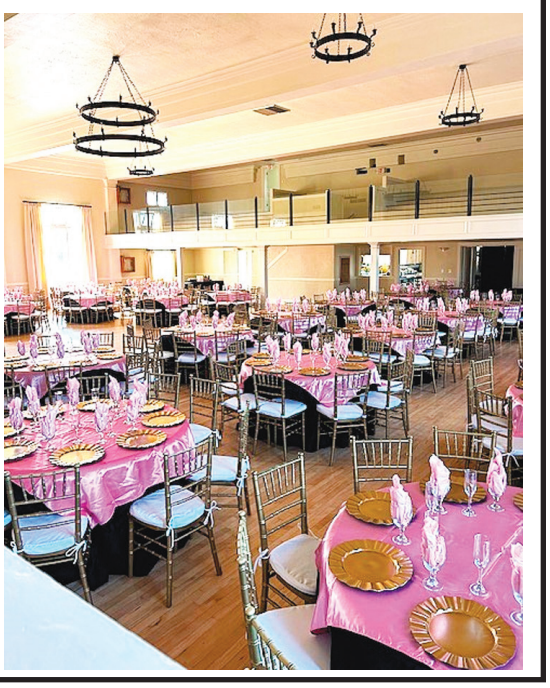
The Historical Society of Pomona Valley warmly invites you to join us for a special holiday gathering at the historic Pomona Ebell. Come celebrate the season with us as we share updates on our work over the past year, with a special focus on Spadra Cemetery and our efforts to preserve its history.

Thursday, December 17, 2026 | 6 p.m.
Location: Pomona Ebell, 585 E. Holt Ave., Pomona

We look forward to celebrating with old friends and welcoming new ones!

The event in the newly-renovated Ebell auditorium is free and open to the public. For more information, email pomonahistorical@verizon.net or follow us on social media.

www.pomonahistorical.org



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