



# San Gabriel Valley Examiner

To reach us:

Phone: (626) 852-3374

Fax: (626) 852-1904

E-mail: [sgexaminer@aol.com](mailto:sgexaminer@aol.com)

Web: [www.sgvexaminer.com](http://www.sgvexaminer.com)

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STRIVING FOR JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL NEWS

Dec 30, 2021 - Jan 5, 2022

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# Foothill Unity Center Brings Christmas Joy to 1,500 Grateful San Gabriel Valley Families



Simply Help Foundation volunteers help hand out gift bags at the distribution site.

By Joan Schmidt

**MONROVIA** - Once again, Foothill Unity Center has outdone themselves serving local communities. This time it was 1500 San Gabriel Valley families who were recipients of Holiday Gift food boxes and toy/gift bags to make Christmas 2021 their best one ever!

On Monday, Dec. 20 and Wed. Dec 22, there was a drive through distribution at both the

Monrovia and Pasadena sites with volunteers and community partners working together to help local families. It was amazing and so well organized. The A.M. event targeted pre-registered families. Their car stopped at the first "station", turning in their pre-registration. There were specially chosen toys for these families! Not one or two toys, but several items packed into large trash bags! At the first pick-up point, they received their bag.

The car proceeded forward and stopped. A volunteer brought a box of food items-nonperishable; then someone came out with a shopping cart full of fresh food items. Lastly another wonderful non-profit, Simply Help Foundation brought a bag. It contained many awesome items including a blanket, two packages of multiple face masks. (One was for small children) and a portable charger for phones and more!



Angie, Warehouse Manager, makes lunches. (Foothill Unity Center)

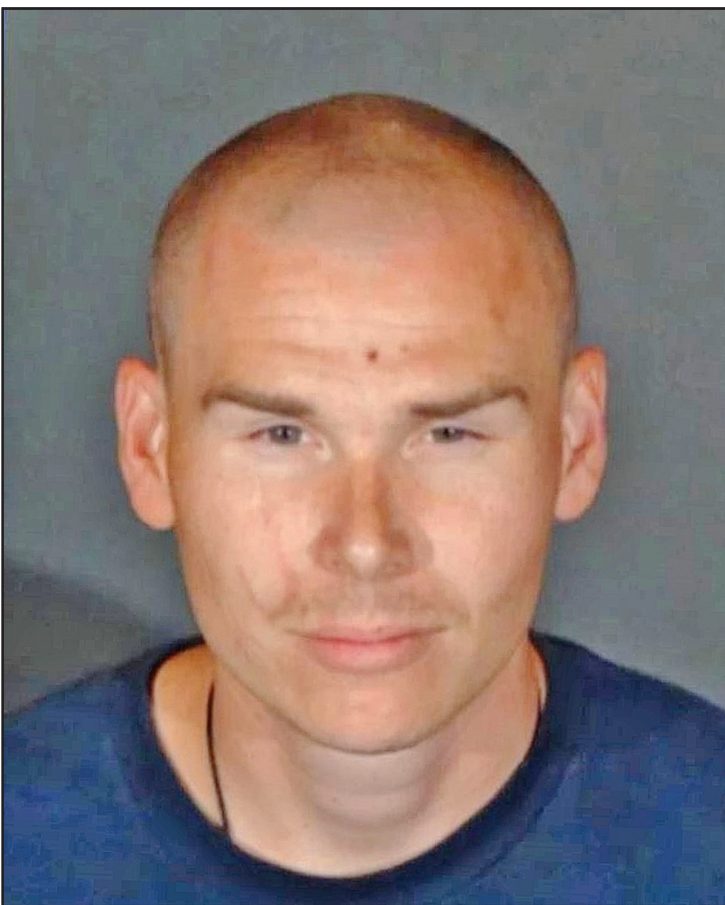
I walked into the warehouse and saw a few volunteers, loading the shopping carts. One would bring the cart to a car, and load the recipient's trunk.

I met Angie, the warehouse manager, who was making nutritious lunches, which included sandwiches, two fruit and healthy snack items.

There are SO MANY WONDERFUL PEOPLE I want to give a "Shout Out" to! Tashera Taylor, CEO of the Center; Mike Antenesse; Raina Martinez; Helen, the Office Manager, who gave me the tour and showed how the distribution was carried out; Angie, Warehouse Manager and the MANY volunteers who

made this awesome event possible. Duarte City Council members Jody Schulz and Cesar Garcia even came to help. I cannot imagine how grateful all the families were! Thank you Foothill Unity Center! I also need to point out that MANY VOLUNTEERS help the Foothill Unity Center on a daily, even weekly basis. PLEASE visit their website. The Center does SO MUCH FOR OUR COMMUNITIES serving seven local cities and surrounding unincorporated areas. To learn more about this wonderful non-profit and the MANY services it provides, please visit their website: [www.foothillunitycenter.org](http://www.foothillunitycenter.org).

## Glendora Man Charged with Murder of Good Samaritan/Father of Three



Trevor Howard Thompson.

**COVINA** - Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón announced that on December 27, a man was charged for the killing of a man who attempted with others to detain him after an attempted carjacking and burglary.

"This is an especially heart-breaking incident since Mr. Casias was simply acting as a good Samaritan. As we seek to ensure accountability, we also will make every possible service available to the victims and their families," District Attorney Gascón said.

Trevor Howard Thompson (dob 3/25/87) of Glendora faces one felony count each of murder, attempted murder, assault with a semiautomatic firearm – a Colt 45, attempted carjacking, second-degree burglary of vehicle, resisting executive officer, vandalism and possession of a firearm by a felon.

Arraignment for case

KA129224 was scheduled December 27 but continued to December 28th in Department F of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Pomona Branch.

On December 21, Thompson was confronted in a Covina neighborhood by citizens for reportedly breaking into a parked BMW. Thompson is charged with then attempting to carjack one of the citizen's vehicles and then attacking another man.

Joey Manuel Casias, 38, intervened to try to stop the attack when Thompson allegedly shot at the man he struggled with and fatally shot Casias.

Thompson was arrested the following day after an hours-long standoff with police in which he allegedly disabled a police camera bot.

The case remains under investigation by the Covina Police Department.

**LA VERNE/SAN DIMAS** – Bonita High School advanced auto shop students are getting a glimpse of La Verne's past as they learn skills for the future, working in partnership with the La Verne Historical Society to restore a 1938 International D-35 pickup truck in time for the city's 2022 Fourth of July parade.

The vintage truck has a long and colorful history, representing a time when La Verne served as a hub for southern California's booming citrus industry, and future three-time All-American halfback Glenn Davis led Bonita High to an undefeated season and its first football championship in 1942.

Under the guidance of Bonita High auto shop teacher Rob Zamboni, students are working toward a full restoration of the truck throughout the school year, rebuilding the engine and transmission, adding new tires and brakes, and refurbishing the interior and flatbed.

The truck's rustic exterior will be preserved to retain its authenticity. The restoration is a full one-year project.

"The students have done restorations before, but nothing quite like this," Zamboni said. "For 50 minutes a day, Monday through Friday, our kids are focused and engaged on their project, making a little bit of progress every day. This is a true community collaboration. Many of our students have families that go back several generations in La Verne, and everyone is excited to see the truck get back on the road."

At the beginning of the year, students from each of Zamboni's two advanced Auto 102 classes were divided into three teams, with each team responsible for restoring one part of the truck: the rear, which includes the axle; the middle, which includes the



Sparks fly as Bonita High School auto shop students work toward restoring a 1938 International pickup truck. Working in partnership with the La Verne Historical Society, students will spend the school year completing a makeover of the vehicle, with the goal of featuring the truck in the 2022 La Verne Fourth of July parade.

transmission; and the front, which includes the engine and suspension. During the year, Zamboni will bring industry restoration professionals to the classroom to mentor the students.

For Bonita High sophomore Rylan Blancett, the restoration serves as an opportunity to collaborate with his classmates and strengthen his problem-solving skills, all of which is necessary to investigate the inner workings of a vehicle that was constructed in a different era of transportation.

"One of the biggest challenges has been to remove the cab. It was welded in place by the owner. We use grinders and saws to get the old bolts off," Blancett said. "This class has already taught me a lot. Mr. Zamboni is a great teacher. We are all motivated to see what the truck will look like when it is fully restored."

In past years, Bonita Auto 102 students have worked to restore a 1965 Mustang and a 1946 Cushman scooter. Overall, nearly 150 Bonita students are part of the auto shop program.

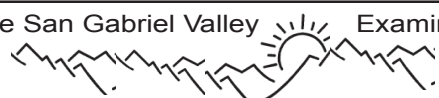
Zamboni brings a wealth of experience to his position; prior to coming to Bonita in 2019, Zamboni worked at the Peterson Auto Museum in Los Angeles and for Icon 4x4 auto restorers in Chatsworth, as well as teaching a community auto shop class at the Pomona Fairplex.

"Bonita began its auto shop class in 1963. Things have changed quite a bit since then," Zamboni said. "We blend old and new technologies and use a variety of current and retro tools. We have sample vehicles, and the students also bring in their own cars to work on. Kids today are interesting in the technology. They see the connection between their

smart phone and touch screens and how it plays into modern auto manufacturing."

When the truck is fully restored and the wooden flatbed stakes installed, the names of all the students who worked on the project will be engraved onto the stakes. The students will also be invited to participate in La Verne's 2022 Fourth of July parade, sitting in the back of the pickup.

"Thank you to the La Verne Historical Society for your partnership in providing our students with the opportunity to restore a piece of La Verne history and gain a valuable, hands-on learning experience," Superintendent Carl J. Coles said. "We are excited to see our students developing technical skills that will help them live their purpose, and look forward to the day when the International is back on the road."



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## LA County Parks And Recreation Awarded 15.5 Million In Grant Funds

**ALHAMBRA** – On December 8, 2021, the LA County Department of Parks and Recreation's Grants Division was awarded 15.5 million dollars in funding as part of Governor Newsom's "Outdoors for All" Initiative, a project that aims to allocate \$548.3 million in grant funding to deliver new parks and revitalize older parks all across California.

Of the 15.5 million, 6.9 million will be assigned to the modernization of Ruben Salazar Park, which will help address public health disparities by providing enhanced spaces for physical activity and ways to foster community connections. The other 8.5 million will be assigned to the creation of the San Gabriel Valley Aquatic Center Park.

"Many thanks to Governor Gavin Newsom for his recent announcement of Statewide Proposition 68 funding that the County of Los Angeles' Department of Parks and Recreation will receive to provide a new park (Aquatic Center) to an

area of very high park need, and also transforming Salazar Park, a well-loved and well-used park, serving a densely populated high need community within the First Supervisorial District," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, First District. "The new San Gabriel Valley Aquatics Center will provide families across the region with access to lifesaving aquatics programs. In addition, the improvements planned for Salazar Park in East Los Angeles will help provide critical cultural activities and spaces for recreation that will build community social cohesion and introduce new programming opportunities around physical and mental-well-being to ensure our communities thrive."

In a press release issued by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, "People from all over the world come to visit our state's natural wonders, but too many Californians today lack access to parks and open space in their own neighborhoods," said Governor Gavin Newsom. "This historic investment will revitalize and create new parks in more than 100 local communities, dramatically expanding access to the outdoors across the state and ensuring more Californians from all walks of life can reap the benefits for our hearts, minds and bodies for generations to come."

Salazar Park is over 80 years old — the land was purchased in 1938 and developed into a park by 1940 — yet has undergone only minor updates over the past few years. The community of unincorporated East Los Angeles has very high park need, with only 1.0 park acre per 1,000 residents, so this investment to improve an aging and well-loved facility to meet the demands of the community is essential. The aquatic center will provide learn to swim lessons, drop-in swim, water fitness classes, lap swim and more. The new aquatic facility will feature a playground and picnic shelters.

"We are thrilled to have been awarded over \$15 million from Proposition 68 as part of Governor Newsom's Outdoors For All Initiative that will provide significant funding to two critical projects located in our highest need communities as identified by the Los Angeles Countywide Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment," stated County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation Director, Norma E. Garcia-González. "Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation partnered with Community-Based organization and community members to design these projects that will bring significant recreational programs serving our most vulnerable communities."

## Los Angeles County Expands COVID-19 Testing Capacity to Meet Holiday Surge Demand

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY** - Los Angeles County Department of Health Services moves to deliver urgent expansion of the County's free COVID-19 testing services amidst Holiday demand. Demand for COVID-19 testing is steadily increasing as County residents rush to get tested before gathering with loved ones and as a direct result of LA County's surge in new cases. The expansion of access to COVID-19 testing includes the relaunching of the Holiday Home Test Collection Program with new guidelines to reach more people and make it easier to get tested.

"LA County residents are doing right by getting tested as a precaution before gathering, if they have been exposed and at the first sign of symptoms," said Dr.

Christina Ghaly, Director of Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. "Getting tested and isolating as needed plays a vital role in our collective fight against the current Holiday surge, we encourage anyone - including those who are vaccinated - to get tested if they believe they have been exposed or are experiencing symptoms. We will continue to closely monitor testing needs and adjust capacity as needed in the coming weeks."

Expansion of LA County COVID-19 Testing Services is effective Friday, December 24, 2021. All services are free and can be accessed at <https://covid19.lacounty.gov/testing/>

Capacity expansion includes:

- Extended hours of operation at sites across Los Angeles

County

- Additional week and week-end dates

- Additional mobile testing units in hard-hit areas

- Relaunch of Holiday Home Test Collection Program with new guidelines to reach more people and make it easier to get tested. The link is here: <https://covid19.lacounty.gov/hometest>

Any LA County resident who is symptomatic or believes they were exposed to COVID-19 can order a home testing kit. Home testing kits require swab collection to be mailed back for PCR test result.

LA County COVID-19 testing services are available at no out-of-pocket cost and can be accessed by anyone regardless of insurance or immigration status.

## The CHP Highlights Changes To State's Traffic Safety Laws

**SACRAMENTO** – As we head into the new year, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) is educating the public on traffic safety laws that were passed during this year's legislative season and signed by Governor Gavin Newsom. The laws take effect January 1, 2022, unless otherwise noted.

Sideshow Definition and Penalties (Assembly Bill (AB) 3,

Fong): This new law strengthens penalties for those convicted of exhibition of speed if the violation occurred as part of a sideshow.

Beginning July 1, 2025, a court will be permitted to suspend a person's driver's license between 90 days and six months if the person is convicted of exhibition of speed and if the violation occurred as part of a "sideshow." Section 23109(c) of the California Vehicle Code (CVC) (exhibition of speed) will define sideshow as an event in which two or more persons block or impede traffic on a highway for the purpose of performing motor vehicle stunts, motor vehicle speed contests, motor vehicle exhibitions of speed, or reckless driving for spectators.

The courts will be required to consider a defendant's medical, personal, or family hardship that requires a person to have a driver's license before determining whether to suspend a person's driver's license.

Equestrian Safety Gear (AB 974, L. Rivas): Requires a person under the age of 18 to wear a properly fitted and fastened helmet when riding an equestrian animal, such as a horse, mule, or donkey on a paved highway. This bill also requires all riders or their equines to wear reflective

gear or a lamp when riding after sundown.

A person riding an equestrian animal in a parade or festival, or crossing a paved highway from an unpaved highway, is exempt from all helmet, lighting, or reflective gear requirements.

Tribal Emergency Vehicles (AB 798, Ramos): This bill provides that any vehicle owned or operated by a federally recognized Indian tribe is considered an authorized emergency vehicle as defined by Section 165 CVC when responding to an emergency, fire, ambulance, or lifesaving calls.

Class C Drivers Allowed to Tow Trailer (Senate Bill 287, Grove): Effective January 1, 2027, drivers with a class C driver's license may operate a vehicle towing a trailer between 10,001 pounds and 15,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, or gross vehicle weight with a fifth-wheel and kingpin or bed mounted gooseneck connection, provided that the trailer is used exclusively for recreational purposes for the transportation of property, living space, or both.

The driver will be required to pass a specialized written examination demonstrating the knowledge of the CVC and other safety aspects relating to the towing of recreational vehicles on the highway and possess an endorsement on their class C driver's license.

Currently, this exemption is in place for drivers towing a fifth-wheel travel trailer provided the driver passes a specialized written exam and obtains a recreational trailer endorsement.

As a reminder, the following law took effect on July 1, 2021:

License Points for Distracted Driving (AB 47, Daly; 2019): Using a handheld cell phone while driving is currently punishable by a fine. As of July 1, 2021, violating the hands-free law for a second time within 36 months of a prior conviction for the same offense will result in a point being added to a driver's record. This applies to the violations of talking or texting while driving (except for hands-free use) and to any use of these devices while driving by a person under 18 years of age.

**San Gabriel Valley Examiner**  
INFORMATION GUIDE

1160 Englewild Dr.  
Glendora, California 91741  
Phone (626) 852-3374  
Fax (626) 852-1904  
E-mail: [sg Examiner@aol.com](mailto:sg Examiner@aol.com)

**EUGENE F. MOSES**  
Publisher/Editor

**Jayam Rutnam**  
Contracted Reporter

**George Ogden**  
Contracted Reporter

**Glenn Purbaugh**  
**Jun Tolibao**  
Photographer

**Contributing Writers**  
**Joan Hallidy**  
**Ken Herman**  
**Farah Hassen**  
**Lois M. Shade**  
**Julia Yoder**  
**Gene Morrill**  
**Joe Castillo**  
**Charles Lopresto**  
**Ed Torres**

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- We believe in growth. Therefore, complaints or mistakes erroneously committed will be entertained and investigated diligently and corrected accordingly.
- We believe in performing our journalistic work to the best of our ability and will continue to present the facts clearly and fairly.

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The San Gabriel Valley Examiner is grateful for the articles submitted by our unpaid writers who have contributed to the success of our newspaper. Our only request is that articles submitted be of minimal length in order to accommodate each and every writer. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Threat of Wildfire Decreases While Fire Use Restrictions Remain in Place

**ARCADIA** – Effective Friday, Dec. 24, the fire danger rating on the Angeles National Forest will decrease from "Very High" to "High."

Recent rain and snowfall have increased moisture levels in grasses and shrubs across the Southland. With more rain and snow anticipated, fire management officials lowered the fire danger level to reflect the change in conditions.

Even though the threat of wildfire has been mitigated to "High," the potential for a large fire remains. It is due to this; fire management officials have opted to keep the fire use restrictions in place.

The current restrictions allow forest visitors to use campfires and stove fires within designated campgrounds and picnic areas, where steel fire rings and stoves

are provided.

Furthermore, persons with a valid California Campfire Permit may use a portable lantern or stove using jellied petroleum, or pressurized liquid fuel outside developed areas.

Additionally, with the New Year holiday approaching, we are reminding visitors that discharging or lighting fireworks of any kind is prohibited on the Angeles National Forest. Even though there has been rain and snowfall recently, fireworks can create enough spark to ignite a wildfire.

With the public's help, we can start 2022 free of unwanted wildfires and focus our efforts on rehabilitating areas in the forest that have experienced wildfires in past years. We're eager to welcome back visitors to these treasured landscapes but want to make sure it's safe for the public

and the national forest.

Fire Restrictions include:

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire. 36 CFR 26 1.52(a).
2. Smoking. 36 CFR 261.52(c).
3. Welding, operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame. 36 CFR 261.52(i).
4. Discharging a firearm, air rifle, or gas gun, except in authorized public shooting ranges. 36 CFR 261.58(m) Welding, grinding, and cutting are allowed only with a permit.

For more information about fire danger levels and fire use restrictions, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/angeles>.

## Holiday Tree & Trash Collection

Athens Services will collect holiday trees on normal pickup days from December 26, 2021 through January 14, 2022. Please remove stands, ornaments, lights and tinsel. Trees with flocking or fire retardants are acceptable. Cut trees in half if longer than 6 feet in length. If you miss the date for recycling, cut up tree and

place next to yard waste container.

Since the Christmas and New Year holidays fall on weekends, there will be no changes to Monday-Friday trash collection services the week of December 20 & 27. December 24 and December 31 are both a regular trash pickup days.

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# High Risk Juvenile Criminals Headed for Youth Camps

Now known, Gov. Newsom signed SB 823 last year transferring juvenile justice responsibility to county governments and Camps Paige and Afflerbaugh in the hills above La Verne, near Marshall Canyon Golf Course, are targets for a big hit. Rumor on the street tells me those two minimum security camps are to receive high-risk youth offenders who have committed murder, rape, sex offenses, drug violations, robbery and more.



**Shade's Perspective**  
**Lois M. Shade**  
**Former Mayor of Glendora**

Problem-solving of youth offenders has been considered several times at the ballot box. Prop 21 in 2000, gave district attorneys the power to charge and file in adult court on any child as young as 14 years old. Prop 57 in 2016, revised Prop 21 and said all youth under the age of 18 must receive a judicial transfer hearing in juvenile court to determine appropriateness to be prosecuted as an adult. That process included training for judges, prosecutors and others in the juvenile justice system to review and understand the "youth's life circumstances," which in all reports is the financial status of the family and areas of abuse inflicted on that child.

SB 823, as in Prop 57, set a requirement for location of these young offenders to be close to families and their own communities to receive needed support with age-appropriate treatment.

Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Annual Plan tells us 114 of L.A. County's youth committed to Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in 2019-2020, were offenses you and I might not consider youth camp or probation eligible offenses.

- 25% of those 114, or 29, committed murder.
- 24% or 27 committed attempted murder.
- 23% or 26 committed robbery.
- 14% or 16 committed assault.
- 13% or 14 committed rape or sex offenses.

Supervisors, except Kathryn

Barger, seemed ready to drop youth offenders into low-security youth camps with no public input, no county plan to deal with these offenders or a coordinated operations response plan to deal with emergencies.

In 2014, L.A. County invested \$52.5 million in Camp Kilpatrick to make it therapeutic hoping to reduce recidivism by increasing access to education and providing health and mental health services. In 2017, the camp began operations with the barracks style quarters replaced with cottages, each housing 12 offenders with laundry, recreational areas and counseling rooms.

That became known as the "L.A. Model" and in 2017 was proposed for Camps Scott and Scudder in Santa Clarita but failed to move forward. At the July 28th Board meeting, Supervisors Kuehl and Mitchell proposed again the "L.A. Model" with small cottages and therapy for those two camps. That motion failed 3-2. Camp Scott, for girls only, was closed due to the COVID pandemic causing the release of 131 youth, 75 recommended for probation.

April 2021, Supervisors approved a \$35 million plan remaking the Challenger Detention Camp in Lancaster a live-in job training site for young adults who've been homeless, incarcerated or raised by the foster care system. This is a voluntary check in program for young women ages 18 to 30 and young men ages 18 to 25, with the children of those who are parents. A 6 to 18-month program would provide educational opportunities from high school through four-year college or vocational training and career counseling; and, comprehensive mental health services, life-skills instruction and child care, to provide those participating with a living-wage job and secure housing.

Challenger Camp program is what counties in California should be doing not wrestling with a Governor's agenda to eliminate the criminal justice system.

# Writing Your Own Story in 2022

As I write this final column of 2021, I look back at this endeavor with a sense of accomplishment. I started the year with the goal of returning to writing regularly after what seemed like a long hiatus and am now well on my way. Thank you to all of the readers who have shared this journey with me. For those of you who may be struggling with your own projects, I can attest that even though it is often painful, it is never too late to get started.



**Farrah Hassen**

At first, it felt as jarring as ripping off a Band-Aid and exposing an old wound. In the past, it was common for me to publish several times a year. However, a series of life events took me away from the practice of writing for so long that returning to it seemed all the more daunting.

Yet that itch to put pen to paper would return every time the news media would report on global events of profound interest.

"Well, that's not entirely true," or "That's not the whole story," I would think to myself while reading the latest headlines on the Middle East, climate change, and human rights. I found myself more frequently ranting at my poor television screen, laptop, and smartphone instead of leaning on my years of education and experience to get my thoughts on paper.

That was the moment when I realized I had to get back on the writing horse, so to speak.

Having a mentor, friend, or loved one to remind you of your skills and talents can also help tremendously when self-doubt starts to creep in and set up barriers to success. I am fortunate enough to have benefited from these sources of inspiration and credit them with helping to tear down my walls of doubt and second-guessing so that I may write

proach to writing has evolved over the years, however, and I have since gained a greater appreciation for the discipline of writing itself. As Saul understood, it requires endless revisions, meeting deadlines and word counts, receiving the inevitable criticisms, and the central challenge of keeping at it week after week, whether feeling inspired or not.

I now end the year having written 21 columns for the SGV Examiner. Throughout these columns, I have sought to convey recurring themes - most prominently, the climate crisis. I first explored the issue on a local level back in August based on my experiences in the Mojave Desert. On Thanksgiving, I highlighted the Native American-led fight against fossil fuel expansion. In 2022, I intend to continue with this theme and further peel back layers of the climate emergency's larger connections to human rights and sustainable living.

The new year will undoubtedly bring more stories that have not yet been contemplated, along with the continuously unfolding Covid-19 pandemic, of which Omicron is only the latest iteration, as well as the ongoing threats to our planet, human rights, and the rule of law. To dissect, comprehend, and contextualize these events, I rediscovered this year that writing remains my preferred tool for understanding the world.

May you find your calling and the strength to pursue it in the new year. But keep in mind, it may require breaking down some internal barriers first.

*Farrah Hassen, J.D., is a writer, policy analyst, and adjunct professor in the Department of Political Science at Cal Poly Pomona.*

One source confirms a steady decline in youth offender prosecutions over the last six years has closed minimum security youth camps. The 10,000 teens and young adults, once incarcerated in youth prisons is now just 750. That decline appears to make it easier to transfer them out to local youth camps. The Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council / Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Subcommittee will meet virtually on January 5th. For more information, contact Jessica Gama: [Jessica.gama@probation.LAcounty.gov](mailto:Jessica.gama@probation.LAcounty.gov).

Assemblyman Chris Holden (D-Pasadena) who voted for SB 823, represents the 41st Assembly District based in Pasadena and hops over Assembly Districts 48 and 49 to represent San Dimas and La Verne. Opposite sides of the San Gabriel Valley, but none the less his responsibility and should be part of the community discussion while the Supervisors review plans on this Sacramento decision.

Sen. Anthony Portantino (D-San Dimas) representing District 25 from Burbank/Glendale/Upland including San Dimas and La Verne, voted "Aye" on SB 823 so questions to him include: Is La Verne foothills the best place to put 700 youth criminals, some of whom we are told are age 25?

So far, 5th District L.A. County Supervisor, Kathryn Barger, has been the only rational voice on that board, and support for the San Gabriel Valley and other community residents, demanding people impacted by SB 823 be advised and have an opportunity to voice their concerns.

# Well, Welcome to the New Year! Hmmm...

For those that celebrate the Christmas Holidays, I hope all went well for you and your family. Now we move into the New Year. Most of us are thankful for this and being able to get away from 2021. However, what is in store for us for the coming year? In my opinion, I think it's gonna look pretty bleak. The only good thing we have coming up is maybe the Super Bowl.



**George Ogden**  
**That's just the way it is!**

With the government acting the way they are towards the people, I don't think there's going to be much in the way of improvements. They will continue to release criminals back into our society to commit more crimes and they will not even give it any 2nd thoughts. In fact, here in Los Angeles the DA will not prosecute any crimes that would be felonies even if it's done in broad daylight and there are 200 witnesses. Example, they made it clear that they will not prosecute anyone for shoplifting if it's under \$1000. As a result, and as you see on television, the gangs out of Los Angeles do mob invasions into stores and steal as much crap as they can carry. Who's going to stop them? Nobody. This is why there's been a run on handguns because the good citizens want to protect themselves because the police are handicapped, in as much that they want to help out, they can't. Mom-and-pop

storeowners are being destroyed by this. It was bad enough that they were looted by gangs from the Black Lives Matter Race Riots. Now they get mobbed and ripped off again. Welcome to 2022.

I wouldn't doubt that the government will try to control us again in the future by limiting our freedom again. You watch, when election starts approaching, and people start getting together about who they may want to have in their government through an election, they will clampdown again make it impossible for people to get together to discuss this issue. This is what I honestly believe will happen. It did happen in that last big election.

Injection mandates, that's in our future. We don't know if this is doing us any good or not. However, there have been complications where people got sick or died after these injections. I still

say it's your choice, or should be your choice. If you don't get the government mandated injections, you get various privileges taken away from you. Again, a welcome to 2022.

We'll get the Super Bowl to look forward to as I said earlier, but I would bet that the government will try to throw a wrench in this as well. Again I will say it's our choice if we want to gather in a home or stadium. Let's see what will happen come February.

Sorry to sound negative, but to be honest, I don't see a whole lot of good coming from last year to next year.

We have restrictions on ammunition for the weapons we have at home or in our business for protection from these criminals that are now running loose.

So as you navigate through the year 2022, just be aware and select the direction you may want to go. Pick up the better things that you can do and I would jump on it and do it before it gets restricted. There are still a lot of good things out there that you and your family and friends can do to make 2022 better than last year. I would hope the best for you your family and your friends for next year to be a positive one. I would like to see many of my predictions fail and for all of us to have a very good New Year.

We need to get past the memories of last year and we have to hope for a better New Year.

*"That's Just the Way It Is!"*

# MY TURN: Let's End Hyphenated America

I wrote something two years ago when Donald Trump was still President and it seems things have changed very little since then. I see in the news this past year of 2021, many folks who share my Italian heritage have done some pretty stupid things. There was the "slip and fall" lawyer Michel Avenatti, the "slip and fall" doctor Anthony Fauci, and of course some of the usual suspects, like Chris and Andrew Cuomo, Nancy Pelosi, Robert De Niro and others who are either still around or new to the scene recently. This is what I wrote in December of 2019:

"I received a little dose of depression after the high of the holiday spirit yesterday. A little lump of coal in my Christmas stocking. I was listening to our local Phoenix radio host Seth Leibsohn, and he gave a report about New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who wants to legislate a law that prohibits Trump appointed judges from being allowed to preside over weddings in New York. Really? Are they kidding? I am not sure how accurate my interpretation of what he said was, but sadly it wouldn't



**Charles Lopresto**

surprise me.

A couple of years ago, I posted some results from an Ancestry/DNA test I took and I was a little bit taken aback by the results revealing a lower percentage of Italian blood than I thought I had. (Three of my grandparents were born in Italy-go figure. It said I was 35 percent Italian).

I have seen dopey Democrats of Italian descent trash our country, and actively practice discrimination and intolerance towards 60 million or so Trump voters and Trump supporters as well as Trump himself and his family. Everyone from Robert De Niro, to Madonna, to Alyssa Milano, to

the Cuomos, Nancy Pelosi, and so many others of my shared Italian heritage, that I can't believe how widespread it is. For every Rudy Giuliani, Dan Bongino, Dana Perino, or Emily Campagno I see, it seems the opposites are three fold. My disappointment I guess will have to be offset with the fact that maybe Ancestry/DNA was doing me a favor. Maybe I don't belong to an ethnic group that is encouraged to be Democrat A\*\*H\*\*s. The lesson in all of this is simple. Forget the obsession with being a 'hyphen,' and go with a better idea. I will just be what I am supposed to be, and always was...an American."

Yes, it would appear that the division in this country is helped along by all the hyphens. It might well be my New Year's desire to see them de-emphasized or gotten rid of all together. I know, polling, politics, marketing and any other form of survey that one comes across depends on demographic identity designations that make all of us different. But maybe it is time we try to find out what makes all of us alike.



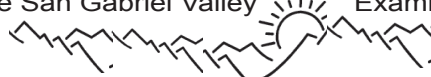
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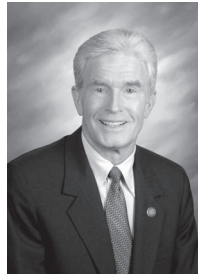
# Doves to Hawks

Wall Streets most anticipated FOMC meeting in years occurred two weeks ago. Chairman Powell did not let Wall Street down in his testimony concerning the state of the economy and what plans the Fed has regarding Monetary Policy in the years to come. The generally positive movement we have seen in stocks came despite the central bank's most hawkish policy pivot in years (as it looks to help put a lid on inflation). The pace of tapering will be doubled to \$30B a month - with further reductions coming next year - while interest rate projections were updated to show a median forecast of three hikes during 2022. Expectations are for each tightening move to be a minimum of .25 basis points.

So why exactly are stocks still doing so well? First of all, the market loves certainty. Knowing what to expect on the macroeconomic level next year goes a long way for investors that are closely watching their portfolios. A statement from the Fed that it is taking inflation seriously is also reassuring. Powell also balanced his interest rate outlook with a strong dose of optimism about demand and incomes, and confirmed that "we're making rapid progress toward maximum employment."

What exactly sparked this change in Monetary Direction? Recently I mentioned the surprising strength in the CPI inflation data. Since then, Producer prices rose much faster than expectations. The PPI rose 0.8% in November, above the 0.5% con-

**In A Nutshell**  
What's up in the Economy?



**KEN HERMAN**  
Economic Analyst  
& Former Glendora Mayor

sensus, after a 0.6% increase in October. Core inflation (excludes food and energy) rose 0.7%, well above the 0.4% consensus. Inflation excluding food, energy, and trade services also rose 0.7%. The year-on-year increase (not seasonally adjusted) for this headline index was 9.6% - the largest gain since the current series was first calculated in 2010. Wholesale prices also rose at their fastest pace on record during November!

This update may be just noise after Powell's November's testimony showing a pivot on inflation, but it underscores the price momentum supporting accelerating consumer prices. Producer price increases continued to show momentum, with no sign that input prices will lead to cooling in consumer prices anytime soon. The Fed has already pivoted to prioritizing inflation, so rather than causing any new inflation panic, this report is just another nail in the coffin for the "wait it out" Biden mindset seen as recently as a month ago. Supply chain pressures may somewhat ease in the next few months as holiday shopping lets up and producers as well as shippers

have more time to adjust capacity, but any impact on potentially even higher inflation and consumer prices will not be immediate. In the meantime, expect year-on-year changes in producer prices to remain unusually high.

Two Wall Street well watched economists summed up the general Wall Street atmosphere: "We believe the initial positive equity market reaction is due to investors gaining confidence in the Fed's willingness and ability to fight inflation. As a result, they are decreasing the odds of stagflation and policy error," said Chris Harvey, equity strategy head at Wells Fargo. "It seemed like there was some hedging demand into the event, perhaps relief that the event has happened, regardless of outcome," added Danny Kirsch, head of options at Cornerstone Macro.

Will the November employment report (with a big drop in the unemployment rate), plus CPI updates, and then the PPI data change everything? The wild card may still be more excessive government spending, primarily being held back recently by just one or two less liberal Democrat Senators. May God give them the strength to continue to block the proposed build back better socialist dream spending spree which would certainly make inflation worse in the USA!

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I welcome your questions and comments :  
kenherman46@hotmail.com

# Your Money - Ask Julia

## Make it a Happy New Year!

Celebrate, enjoy the fireworks, and watch television to see the ball drop in New York. Enjoy! Please plan ahead to welcome in 2022 by being safe. Don't wreck it with a DUI.

*My number 1 New Year's resolution is "Get control of my finances." I don't even know how to make a budget let alone stick to it. Can you help?*

Start by getting a better idea of how much you are already spending. Make a list of EVERYTHING you spent money on during the last 2 or 3 months. You might think that's unrealistic because you spent more in October for Halloween, in November for Thanksgiving, and in December for Christmas. It is realistic, because there are many holidays, birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, car and home repairs, insurance, and tax bills throughout the year. Add to get a total for each month. Divide that total by the number of months. That's your average spending. Next, make a budget. List, by category (rent/mortgage, gas, electric, water, trash, sewer, life insurance, medical/dental/vision insurance, car insurance, property taxes, property/renter's insurance, groceries, clothing, entertainment (including Prime, Netflix, Disney), internet, vehicle (payment, gas, maintenance), student loans, credit cards, gifts and donations, savings, etc. Finally, go over your budget and see what areas you can change to pay off debt and save more money. Stick to it! Sharing your goals with a trusted friend can greatly increase success.

*We bought our first home in*



**Julia Yoder**

**2021. What are our tax deductions?**

If you choose to itemize, you have the opportunity to deduct mortgage interest paid, any points connected with the loan, and property taxes paid. The mortgage interest deduction for 2021 to present is applicable to a mortgage debt of \$750,000 or less.

**Last week you said that we should diversify the types of products we put our money into. Could you explain?**

There's an old saying: Don't put all your eggs in one basket. (If you drop that basket, all your eggs get broken.) Some financial professionals use the term "bucket." If all your investment dollars are in the stock market, and the stock market crashes, chances are, you've lost a big chunk of your money. (You still own the shares of stock, so if you have time before using that money, you just wait until the stock market rallies again.) Stock market charts will appear more dramatic in their ups and down when you look at a time period (1 week, 1 month, 6 months, 1

year). In order to get a bigger-picture look at the behavior of the stock market, it's best to view a chart showing a 2 - 5 years (or more) to present. As I've said many times, put your retirement investment funds into different types of products (aka different baskets or buckets): 401(k), IRA, Roth IRA, Annuity, Life Insurance, etc. I recommend Fixed-Index Annuities and Fixed-Index Universal Life Insurance. Now, take action to look into different baskets or buckets for your savings.

**My annuity is past its surrender fee period. Can I cash it out and put that money into a new annuity without paying taxes and penalties?**

A 1035 exchange can be used to exchange an existing annuity contract for a newer contract without creating a taxable event or resulting in a pre-59 1/2 early-withdrawal penalty. Initially, it's important to ensure that an exchange is in your best interest. Annuities and life insurance aren't what they used to be! The industry listened to the consumer and made great changes.

**Ask Julia by email:**  
juliyoder@yahoo.com

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# Emanate Health Inter-Community Hospital in Covina Receives National Recognition for Meritorious Outcomes from the American College of Surgeons

*Inter-Community Hospital was one of only 90 facilities in the country to receive this recognition*

**COVINA**- The American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (ACS NSQIP®) has recognized Emanate Health Inter-Community Hospital in Covina as one of 90 ACS NSQIP participating hospitals that have achieved meritorious outcomes for surgical patient care in 2020.

"With more than 6,000 hospitals in the United States, I'm very proud to announce that Inter-Community Hospital is one of a select group of facilities in the nation to receive such praise for surgical patient care," said Emanate Health Chief Executive Officer Robert H. Curry. "It truly points to the high level of collaboration and communication between the inpatient nursing and surgical teams to promote safety and zero harm at every turn to maximize outstanding patient outcomes."

As a participant in ACS NSQIP, Inter-Community Hospital is required to track the outcomes of inpatient and outpatient surgical procedures and collect data that assesses patient safety and can be used to direct improvement in the quality of surgical care.

The ACS NSQIP recognition program commends a select group of hospitals for achieving a meritorious composite score in either an "All Cases" category or a category that includes only "High Risk" cases. Risk-adjusted data from the July 2021 ACS NSQIP Semiannual Report, which presents data from the 2020 calendar year, were used to determine which hospitals demonstrated meritorious outcomes. Inter-Community Hospital has been recognized on the "High Risk" Meritorious list.

Each composite score was determined through a different weighted formula combining eight outcomes. The outcome performances related to patient management were in the following eight clinical areas: mortality, unplanned intubation, ventila-

tor > 48 hours, renal failure, cardiac incidents (cardiac arrest and myocardial infarction); respiratory (pneumonia); SSI (surgical site infections-superficial and deep incisional and organ-space SSIs); or urinary tract infection.

ACS NSQIP is the only nationally validated quality improvement program that measures and enhances the care of surgical patients. This program measures the actual surgical results 30 days postoperatively as well as risk adjusts patient characteristics to compensate for differences among patient populations and acuity levels.

The goal of ACS NSQIP is to reduce surgical morbidity (infection or illness related to a surgical procedure) and surgical mortality (death related to a surgical procedure) and to provide a firm foundation for surgeons to apply what is known as the "best scientific evidence" to the practice of

surgery. Furthermore, when adverse effects from surgical procedures are reduced and/or eliminated, a reduction in health care costs follows. ACS NSQIP is a major program of the American College of Surgeons and is currently used in nearly 850 adult and pediatric hospitals.

The American College of Surgeons is a scientific and educational organization of surgeons that was founded in 1913 to raise the standards of surgical practice and to improve the care of surgical patients. The College is dedicated to the ethical and competent practice of surgery. Its achievements have significantly influenced the course of scientific surgery in America and have established it as an important advocate for all surgical patients. The College has more than 82,000 members and it is the largest organization of surgeons in the world.



## Car Talk by THE CAR DOC

**What You "AUTO" Know**

**By Gene Morrill - Certified Automotive Specialists**

# Keeping Your Vehicle Physically Fit!

After the holidays, our television sets and other devices seem to be taken over by ads brought to us by diet and exercise gurus. They tell us that the New Year is the right time to restart our bodies to be at peak efficiency! I suppose during the busy holiday season we can overdo on the food and at the same time have less time to exercise.

The same can be said of our cars. We often get so busy running here and there (in our cars) during the holidays that we neglect old faithful! Here are a few resolutions to keeping your car

fit! We can inspect it and make sure to remind you when it is time to bring it to us in order to:

- Keep your car's fluids clean and don't let them run low.
- Keep your car's filters clean.
- Keep your car's tires properly inflated.
- Keep your car's wipers in good working order.
- Keep your car's lights lit.
- Keep your car's brakes stopping when they need too.
- Keep your car's charging system ready to go.
- Keep your car's exhaust system healthy.

tem healthy.

Your car has many components, and it is our pleasure to keep them physically fit for your driving pleasure. If your car has been a little neglected over the holidays, give us a call and we'll get it back in tip-top shape!

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# 4 Ways to Go Green If You're Not Ready for an Electric Vehicle

Countless headlines suggest you have to drive a battery-powered electric vehicle (EV) if you care about the planet. Yet consumers, including many who want to be "green," are still opting for gasoline-powered vehicles 98 percent of the time. What's standing in their way?

--Cost. It may cost as much as \$10,000 or \$15,000 more up-front for a battery-electric car compared with a similar gas-powered car.

--Charging. Installing a home charger that's required to run a EV can cost an additional \$1,000 to \$3,000. Additionally, a home charger may not be possible for those who park on the street or live in an apartment building.

--Road trips. The number of public charging spots is grow-

ing, but it's not like the nationwide network of gas stations. Even with a relatively robust 200-mile range, EV owners must plan carefully for charging breaks every few hours of driving. It may take 30 to 60 minutes to add enough battery power for another couple hours of driving. Bigger battery packs can give longer range, but also longer charging times.

If any of these realities are the deal-breakers preventing you from going green behind the wheel -- relax! There are still at least four good alternatives to EVs that will still help the environment without breaking the bank.

## Hybrids

Hybrid technology has been around since the late 1990s. Hybrids combine a smaller gas engine with battery-powered

electric motors for better fuel economy. Hybrid sedans like the Toyota Camry, Honda Accord or Hyundai Sonata now average more than 50 miles per gallon. The Toyota Prius Eco gets 56 mpg in combined city-highway driving, according to fueleconomy.gov. A 50-mpg hybrid replacing a 30-mpg vehicle will save \$625 a year in fuel costs, or \$3,100 over five years. You'll save even more if your trade-in gets less than 30 mpg!

## Plug-in Hybrids

A plug-in hybrid is a hybrid you can plug-in to charge a separate battery and then drive for 30-50 miles on pure electric power. After that, a gasoline engine kicks in, operating like a hybrid. For commuting, a plug-in like a Toyota RAV4 Prime or Prius Prime is a great

choice. The average U.S. commute is 16 miles. With just 32 miles of electric-only range, that commuter wouldn't need gasoline to get to work.

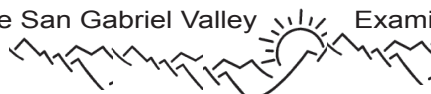
## Fuel-Cell Electric Vehicles

Fuel-cell electric vehicles (FCEVs) are electric vehicles powered by a reaction from hydrogen fuel and oxygen, making water vapor the only emission. The 2021 Toyota Mirai, for example, has a range of more than 400 miles, compared to 200-300 for most newer EVs. FCEVs are refilled at a station, like the gas stations you're used to. The main challenge is a lack of hydrogen infrastructure. California is the only state with a robust network of fueling stations -- but more are on the way.

**More Efficient Gasoline-Powered Cars**

While not as dramatic in helping the environment as the other options mentioned, conventional gas engine cars still have a lot to offer. Automakers have been improving them continuously to meet tougher federal fuel economy regulations. Some gas-powered SUVs you see around town, like the 2021 Honda CR-V or the Toyota RAV4, might get 30 percent better mileage than the 10-year-old car or SUV they're replacing. That would cost about \$400 less per year to operate than their 2011 counterparts, or an extra \$2,000 in your pocket after just five years! (State-Point)

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# West Covina Unified Names New Superintendent

WEST COVINA - Dr. Emy Flores, a longtime educator with deep experience as a collaborative leader with a focus on student success, has been selected as West Covina Unified School District's (WCUSD) next superintendent. The appointment is contingent on final Board approval at their meeting on Dec. 7.

Dr. Flores currently serves as superintendent of Evergreen School District in San Jose, where she has guided the district through the pandemic and led extensive fiscal re-stabilization efforts. Dr. Flores' career in education spans nearly three decades as a teacher, principal, executive director, assistant superintendent and superintendent.

In 2019, she was named STEAM Educator of the Year by the California State Senate and was honored in 2017 by the California Assembly as a Woman of Distinction. She received an Educator Excellence Award in 2014 and was recognized as an Apple Distinguished Educator in 2013. Most recently, Evergreen received an Excellence in Communication Award from the California School Public Relations Association for the district's work in community engagement.

"Dr. Flores' ability to foster relationships, connect schools and communities, and support success for diverse learners will



Dr. Emy Flores - WCUSD next superintendent

ensure all our children continue to thrive in a student-centered instructional program," President of the WCUSD Board of Education Eileen Miranda Jimenez said. "She values the fact we are a district of choice, serving students across the San Gabriel Valley, with diverse needs and high expectations. She is a proven leader who will continue to grow our district's reputation for academic rigor and its college-going culture."

Born in Guatemala, Dr. Flores came to the United States at age nine to attend public schools in

Los Angeles, where she says education played a key role in her path to self-sufficiency and success. Dr. Flores brings this personal experience to her work as a responsive leader who strives to ensure every student has the access and support they need to succeed.

Dr. Gary Rutherford and Mr. Juan Lopez will continue to serve as co-interim superintendents until Dr. Flores begins her tenure in January 2022 and will work closely with her to ensure a seamless transition.

Looking ahead, Dr. Flores shared: "The West Covina Unified school community has a reputation for excellence and collaboration, supporting creative partnerships to engage students and help them flourish. I look forward to working alongside West Covina's tremendous teachers, parents, staff and Board to support an instructional program that advances our reputation as a district of excellence that ensures every student has the opportunity to be inspired and find success in their future."

# Best Opening Day Ever! Santa Anita 2021



Apprentice Diego Herrera (age 17) wins on Notre Dam.

By Joan Schmidt

ARCADIA - December 26 is "Boxing Day" in the United Kingdom. It has nothing to do with the sport, but it's when people give bonuses to their staff. It's also the official Opening Day of the Winter/Spring Meet at Santa Anita Park, Arcadia and 2021 surely was the best ever!

Johnny Velazquez has joined the SO CA jockey colony and won the first race of the day. He's 51 and it was the first time he ever won the first race of a day, on Blackadder (Trainer, Bob Baffert). I have a "before" and "after" photo and although he was covered in mud, graciously stopped and autographed a calendar for an admiring fan. Bob and I met Johnny at Del Mar; he was so gracious, chatting with us about his beginnings-trained in Venezuela, and coming to the US. Johnny won FOUR races on Sunday. Besides the first race win, he won Race 3 on California Kook (Trainer, Ruben Alvarado); Race 4 on Shazz (Trainer, Bob Baffert); and the "La Brea Stakes" on Kalypso (Trainer, Bob Baffert).

Other winners on Opening Day included Race 2: Diego Herrera (Only 17 years old!) won Notre Dam (Trainer Doug O'Neill), Jose Valdivia, Jr., on Bob and



Johnny Velazquez won 4 races on opening day. He graciously autographs a calendar presented to him by a fan.

Jackie (Trainer, Richard Baltas) in the "San Gabriel Stakes"; Victor Espinosa on Express Train (Trainer John Shirreffs) in the "San Antonio Stakes"; Jose Ortiz on Law Professor (Trainer Michael Mc McCarthy) in the "Santa Anita Mathis Mile"; Race 9: Kent Desormeaux on Super Game (Trainer, Brian Koriner); Flavian Pratt won on Flighttime (Trainer John Sadler) in the "RUNHAPPY Malibu Stakes"; and Juan Hernandez won on Queen Goddess (Trainer Michael McCarthy) in the "American Oaks Stakes".

The "San Antonio Stakes" was really exciting. Express Train had not done so well in his last two races, coming off 3rd and 6th place finishes in the "Pacific Classic" at Del Mar and the "Awesome Again" at Santa Anita. In this race, he had Eight Rings (John Velazquez riding) and Hot Rod Charlie (Flavian Pratt aboard) so

close to him, but he won!

"The Mathis Mile" was won by Law Professor (Jose Ortiz aboard) by a half length over Beyond Brilliant (Kent Desormeaux). (but it was a brilliant ride by Kent!)

Several horses were scratched. There were NO TURF races. Kudos to whoever made the decision. It was for the horses' safety. The grass was drenched from all the rain.

It was great to say "hi" to Jay Cohen, best TRUMPTEER, funniest, nicest guy at Santa Anita. EVERYONE LOVES JAY! James Coral who designs great halters, plaques, key chains, and more was there and retired jockey Aaron Gryder is now an ambassador!

CONGRATS TO ALL THE WINNERS! This meet lasts till June. Please visit the website for details of some great upcoming events!

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