



San Gabriel Valley Examiner

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STRIVING FOR JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL NEWS

Jan 27 - Feb 2, 2022

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Barger, Sheriff Detail Illegal Cannabis Fight

LOS ANGELES COUNTY - Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger and Sheriff Alex Villanueva, along with Congressman Mike Garcia, Assemblyman Tom Lackey, an FBI special agent and a group of subject matter experts from the public and private sector spoke to Antelope Valley residents on January 22, 2022 at a special Leona Valley community forum about stepped-up efforts to combat illegal cannabis production.

"I want illegal growers to know this: You are not welcome here," said Barger, whose district covers northern Los Angeles County, including the Antelope Valley. "I will do all that is within my power to stop illegal cannabis growth operations."

"Our department will continue to work in collaboration with other agencies in making a dent on illegal cannabis grows," Sheriff Villanueva said. "We look forward to this year and the continued partnerships."

Following California voters' 2016 vote to legalize recreational marijuana use by adults, hundreds of illegal marijuana farms have appeared. In the Antelope Valley, most have appeared since 2020, both in clearings bulldozed among desert vegetation and in houses that were purchased or rented by growers and gutted to hold marijuana crops. Marijuana



Los Angeles County Fifth District Supervisor Kathryn Barger and Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva hosted a community forum regarding illegal marijuana cultivation operations.

growers steal water, spread trash, cause air and noise pollution with industrial-sized electrical generators, poison wildlife with pesticides, destroy Joshua trees and other native plants, and intimidate neighbors.

In October 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved \$4.9 million for the Sheriff's Department to combat illegal grows in the Antelope Valley and illegal dispensaries in unincorporated areas countywide. Two months later, in January 2022, Supervisors

Sheila Kuehl and Barger introduced a county nuisance abatement ordinance that would levy fines of up to \$30,000 per day against illegal marijuana dispensaries and illegal marijuana farms.

The community forum took place inside the Westside Christian Fellowship and was aired live on the Supervisor's Facebook page.

Congressman Garcia addressed the community mem-

bers in attendance.

"I'm grateful to partner with L.A. County Supervisor Kathryn Barger and Sheriff Alex Villanueva on the effort to combat the illegal marijuana grows. Since I first brought national attention to this crisis sweeping across our community, we have made significant progress," Garcia said. "However, more work remains, and we can't take our foot off the gas pedal. Eradicating these grows remains a top priority for

me and I will continue to do all I can to ensure that we fully combat this problem and keep our community safe."

Assemblyman Lackey stressed the urgency of combating cannabis. "Unlike other states, California has had a sophisticated illicit cannabis market far before its legalization. To make matters worse, we now have an open-door policy when it comes to illegal cultivation. It's a felony to grow cannabis illegally in every western state except California. Whether you're in favor of protecting the environment, protecting public health, or protecting public safety, we must do whatever we can to shut these operations down. Now is the time to act."

State Senator Scott Wilk, whose district covers northern Los Angeles County, thanked Supervisor Barger for organizing today's forum.

"If we are to be successful in tackling these illegal operations, it is going to take a concerted and coordinated effort by federal, local and state agencies," said Wilk. "I look forward to continuing our work to combat this threat to our region's safety and peace of mind."

(Information via news release from the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger)

(Image via Supervisor Barger's Facebook page)

"Coffee Wth A Cop" At Azusa Metro Station

By Joan Schmidt

AZUSA - Last Wednesday morning, fellow Monrovia Arcadia Duarte Town Council Member Linda Sells and I traveled to Azusa Metro Goldline's Station near Azusa Pacific and Citrus Colleges. What an interesting, informative excursion!

These "Coffee with a Cop" at the Metro Stations are held by the LA County Sheriff's Department. Their Transit Services Bureau or TSB serves more than 1400 square feet of the L.A. County Metro. Their Captain Shawn Kehoe and Law Enforcement Technician Ramon Montenegro and several deputies attended.

The Transit Bureau expanded its programs and has a Transit Mental Evaluation Team. A sworn-in deputy and mental health professional make up a team that is tasked with responding to people in mental health crisis and helping the homeless receive services. This year the program expanded; there are 10 teams at TSB.

While we were at the "Coffee", a belligerent person came from the train tracks and was yelling profanities. It was obvious he was in dire need of help, and the situation was taken care of in a professional manner. Linda and I thought, "What if it were 2 AM, we were traveling alone from work and encountered this person?" Very scary! People have NO IDEA how fortunate we are to have TSB.

Rachel Commacho, from LASD's Community Advisory



LASD's TSB (Transit Services Bureau) Captain Shawn Kehoe and Azusa Police Chief Mike Bertelsen

Committee was there as they host these events, and provide the delicious coffee.

Azusa Mayor Robert Gonzales and Mayor Pro Tem Jesse Avila spoke with residents from nearby Roseglen Homes about safety and Metro's Security using a building for offices. The residents were happy and asked other questions also.

Azusa Police Chief Mike Bertelsen, Captain Robert Landeros, Officers M. Munoz and L. Ferrari and other officers greeted residents and answered questions. Mike Bertelsen has been Azusa's Police Chief for 2 1/2 years; with the Department, 28 years; advancing through the ranks. He began as a jailer. He spoke of working with Pasadena, Arcadia, Monrovia, Glendora and Covina Police Departments as well as LASD, which includes both Temple Station and San Dimas Station. Azusa's unincorporated areas are in San Dimas Station's jurisdiction. They also have worked with CHP. There is a sharing of resources and information which is very beneficial. Chief Bertelsen also told me his city

is divided into three districts and a Lieutenant oversees each district.

There is a problem along the Gold Line Stations because many homeless get off at the stations and hang out in the area. I noticed dialogue between Captain Kehoe and Chief Bertelsen; I am sure they had much to discuss.

I met Carlos Rios, Transit Security Community Liaison, System Security of Law Enforcement at METRO (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority). He told me Metro includes all the buses and train system.

I heard someone say, "Joan, it's Judy Gerhardt, remember me?" Judy retired as a Commander at LASD a couple years ago; now she is the Chief of Metro's System Security of Law Enforcement! (I met her long ago when she was a Sergeant at LASD!)

We are so fortunate to have all these agencies working together to keep us safe, and reaching out to those who are homeless and/or with mental issues. God bless them and keep them safe.

Walnut Valley USD Pays Tribute to Teachers of the Year

WALNUT - Walnut Valley Unified School District celebrated an extraordinary group of educators during the 24th annual Salute to Teachers virtual awards on January 19.

The 2020-2021 Teachers of the Year serve with courage and commitment and share a passion for making a positive difference in the lives of their students.

Congratulations to the following honorees: Julie Urbaniec - Castle Rock Elementary, Angelica Infante - Chaparral Middle School, Rachel Harrington - C.J. Morris Elementary, Stephanie Johnson - Collegewood Elementary, Melody Fernandez - Evergreen Elementary, Barbara Vanderheyden - Diamond Bar High, Samantha Trejo - Maple Hill Elementary, Geri Smith - Quail Summit Elementary, Marla Rickard - Ron Hockwalt Academies, Debra Brady - South Pointe Middle School, Kim Flick - Suzanne Middle School, Laura Saenz - Vejar Elementary, Sylvia Chen - Walnut Elementary, Kellee Lyons - Walnut High School, and Vicki Kim - Westhoff Elementary.

Deputy Superintendent of Educational Services Dr. Matt Witmer and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Dr. Diane Perez hosted the recorded event with congratulatory messages from Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor, Board of Trustees President Dr. Tony Torng, and WVEA President Lisa Peterson. "These fifteen Teachers of the Year represent of over 700 teachers in Walnut Valley," said Superintendent Taylor. "Today is your special day where we recognize you and we say thank you!"

At the culmination of the presentation, Sylvia Chen was announced as the 2021 District Teacher of the Year.

Sylvia has taught fourth grade Mandarin Dual Language Immersion at Walnut Elementary for the past five years. Being an English Learner after moving here



Top Teacher! Sylvia Chen from Walnut Elementary School is the 2021 WVUSD District Teacher of the Year.

from Taiwan in the sixth grade ignited Sylvia's passion to support her own dual-language students who face similar obstacles in speaking a non-native language. Her mission is ensuring each student feels seen and all curriculums relevant to their personal lives to make learning meaningful. "I invite you to reflect on the past two years with me with a grateful heart - because a lot has happened," Sylvia shared about the fast-paced education pivots due to the pandemic. "I'm grateful for the simple fact that we all get to be around each other again!"

Prior to the program, District leaders delivered gift baskets to honorees filled with generous donations from community supporters. Each Teacher of the Year

received an engraved apple award courtesy of the Walnut Valley Educational Foundation.

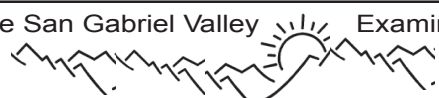
A special thanks to the following Salute to Teachers sponsors: Massage Envy, Schools First Federal Credit Union, Chaffey Federal Credit Union, Sandy Best - McGriff Insurance, Complete Business Solutions, Walnut Valley Administrator's Association, Yogurtland, and School Portraits by Adams Photography.

In addition, the top teachers received certificates of recognition from Congresswoman Young Kim, Senator Josh Newman, Assemblyman Phillip Chen, City of Diamond Bar, and City of Walnut.

The 2021 Salute to Teachers program may be viewed at www.wvUSD.org.

KNOW YOUR COVID-19 TESTING OPTIONS

- 1 If you have insurance, start by contacting your doctor or visiting your local pharmacy.
- 2 If your employer or school requires a test, go through your job or educational facility.
- 3 If you don't fall into those categories, free County-sponsored tests are available. Visit covid19.lacounty.gov/testing to find a location near you.



WVUSD Trustees Celebrate Super Star Students, Parents

WALNUT - In keeping with tradition, the Walnut Valley USD Board of Trustees honored exemplary students and parent volunteers during the January 19 meeting. This month, Castle Rock Elementary and Suzanne Middle School stars were spotlighted along with the winner of the Superintendent's Holiday Card Contest.

Castle Rock Elementary Super Star Student Aimee Van Colenbergh is 100% committed to her academics and loves learning. The third grader is "principled, a critical thinker, and reflective," shared Principal Jason Eldridge during the presentation. Aimee is incredibly helpful to both her teacher and peers. Teacher Michelle Boots believes Aimee's greatest quality is her positive outlook. "Aimee is never, never, never, not smiling!" she said.

Castle Rock Community Club President Katia Alsayed was lauded with the Partner in Education Award. The dedicated parent volunteer works



Quail Summit Elementary fifth grader Arielle Hsieh recognized as winner in the annual Superintendent's Art Contest.

tirelessly to support students and staff. Katia has creatively navigated through COVID safety protocols to find unique ways to fundraise, connect students and community, and keep school spirit high. Through Katia and her husband's company, they gra-

ciously donated 25 Chromebooks and two charging carts for student use. In addition, Katia serves the Castle Rock students and community with positivity and enthusiasm. "Katia, we thank you for your commitment to our school!" Principal Eldridge said.

Suzanne Middle School eighth grader Ava Waggoner received the Super Star Student Award. "Ava strives to excel at everything she does!" shared Principal Dr. Amy Smith. She is the Orchestra President and a great public speaker - giving Weekly Words of Wisdom and providing morning announcements. She's dedicated to leadership through service as a Moosic Council member and Girl Scout. Ava's a top-notch bass player that helps anchor the orchestra. Her teachers all speak to her outstanding character, willingness to help others, and drive to always do her best. They describe her as positive, encouraging, responsible, funny, respectful, and compassionate. "I'm really excited to honor Ava as an outstanding Challenger!" Dr. Smith said.

Longtime Suzanne Middle School parent volunteer Joy Hsu was honored with the Partner in Education Award.



Suzanne Middle School eighth grader Ava Waggoner receives the Super Star Student Award.



Castle Rock Elementary third grader Aimee Van Colenbergh receives Super Star Student Award.

Joy helps with Community Club and has taken on the role as Coordinating Council representative. As a Mandarin speaker, she attends meetings to assist with translation and is beyond helpful during August registration days. "Joy makes valuable connections and helps families understand the culture at our school," Dr. Smith shared. As a member of Walnut CAPA, Joy has shared traditions with staff members, including Lunar New Year. Joy also helps organizes events such as Teacher Appreciation Luncheons and other celebrations. "We really appreciate all that you do for Suzanne Middle School!" said Dr. Smith.

Quail Summit Elementary fifth grader Arielle Hsieh was recognized as winner in the annual Superintendent's Art Contest. Her original winter wonderland-themed artwork was featured in a special holiday card for over 2,000 Walnut Valley USD staff members. She received a certificate of recognition, framed copy of her artwork, and Yogurtland gift card.

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Distribution of Athens Services Carts

AZUSA - Athens Services will be delivering to Single-Family customers in Azusa their new waste, recycling and organics carts the week of January 24th through February 11th. Carts will be delivered on their current service day and placed curbside. Beginning the week of February 14th Athens will fully transition to automated collection services.

Got bulky waste? Please contact Athens Services 24 hours before your collection day at 888-336-6100 or [https://athensservices.com/bulky-](https://athensservices.com/bulky-item-pickup/)



item-pickup/ to avoid a missed pickup. Contact Athens Services at 888-336-6100 or email cs@athensservices.com if you have any questions.



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When it Comes to Stroke, Every Second Counts.

Stroke patients who receive treatment quickly achieve better outcomes and faster recovery. Queen of the Valley Hospital is now a designated Comprehensive Stroke Center, where our medical experts treat even the most complex stroke cases. Learn more about our state-of-the-art technology and award-winning stroke care team here: emanatehealth.org/stroke



Napolitano's Provision to Combat Drought & Boost Water Supplies Included in Bureau of Reclamation's Blueprint

WASHINGTON, DC - Rep. Grace F. Napolitano (D-El Monte) praised the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's blueprint for implementation of the recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which includes \$245 million for WaterSMART Title XVI's Water Reclamation and Reuse Projects, bill language Napolitano inserted into the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to better prepare communities in Southern California and the west for ongoing drought cycles.

"We are thrilled to welcome \$245 million in new funding to combat drought, boost water supplies, and better meet the unique water needs of Southern Californians and millions of other Americans in the west," Napolitano said. "The Bureau

of Reclamation's Title XVI water recycling programs have proven to be some of the most cost-effective federal programs in improving water supply and will continue to provide long-term savings, while boosting job growth and lessening our reliance on imported water. I have been fighting for more than two decades to increase funding levels for Title XVI, and I applaud the Biden administration for recognizing this critical need with robust funding to back it up."

The language Napolitano submitted was based on her bill, H.R. 1015, the Water Recycling Investment and Improvement Act, which aims to assist water agencies with the expansion, planning, design, and building of water recycling plants and modernizing water infrastructure in California and other western states.

"With a backlog of existing projects awaiting federal dollars, these funds will help bring more recycling projects online faster, adding jobs, moderniz-

ing our water infrastructure, and expanding our regional water portfolio in the process," Napolitano added. "The drought is not over—not here in Southern California, nor many other parts of the west. With climate change, population growth, and a global pandemic threatening vital water supplies, we must act urgently to safeguard our communities from water shortages and drought."

As Chairwoman of the Transportation Committee's Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee and a senior member of the House Natural Resources Committee, Napolitano successfully included in the law this and several other key provisions to deliver federal assistance to clean water projects, water supply projects, and environmental improvements and recreation.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was signed into law by President Biden on November 15, 2021.

Fast-Food Sector Strives for Equity

SACRAMENTO - In light of Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez's resignation, Assemblymember Chris Holden has taken over authorship of AB-257 Food Facilities and Employment and announced several clarifying and substantive amendments to the measure that address stakeholder concerns. California's fast food industry employs over 557,000 Californians.

"As a former franchisee, I know that a one size fits all approach is not the correct step forward," said Assemblymember Chris Holden. "We have a chance to lift up small business owners and essential workers with AB 257, and I look forward to working with franchisors, franchisees, employee representatives, and stakeholders to create an inclusive solution to move this bill through the Legislature."

AB 257 would resolve longstanding issues in the fast-food restaurant sector by creating a Fast-Food Sector Council that would promote industry wide collaboration and focus efforts on improving worker protections and standard operating procedures. The Council would include state agencies, employers and worker representatives to ensure an all-inclusive approach. The bill would enhance numerous local, state, and federal laws and regulations that

have been instituted to require operational changes on the part of businesses to protect employees from infection since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council must conduct research and submit a report to the Legislature outlining their recommendations.

"Fast food cooks and cashiers and local franchisees are often at the mercy of global corporations like McDonald's. AB 257, the FAST Recovery Act, addresses this imbalance of power by bringing workers and franchisees together to raise standards and protections across the California fast food industry," said Bob Schoonover, SEIU California President and SEIU 721 Executive Director. "Assemblymember Chris Holden is uniquely qualified to champion this bill. He knows that frontline fast food workers are best-positioned to help propose and implement solutions to the issues they face on the job. And, as a former franchisee, he knows that local fast food operators need more power to make improvements for their workers and their businesses. We are confident that Assemblyman Holden, with the support of Assembly Members Wendy Carrillo, Evan Low and Luz Rivas will get this bill over the finish line."

Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths Significantly Higher Among Unvaccinated Residents

LOS ANGELES COUNTY - With Omicron continuing to drive case counts, hospitalizations, and deaths to levels not seen since last year, Public Health is reminding residents that vaccines are still the best source of protection, especially against hospitalization and death.

From January 2nd through January 8th, unvaccinated people were twice as likely to contract the virus compared to those fully vaccinated without boosters. Residents who were vaccinated and boosted were even more pro-

tection with four times the protection from infection compared to those unvaccinated.

Additionally, vaccinated and boosted residents are also at significantly less risk of ending up in the hospital. When comparing unvaccinated residents to those fully vaccinated without boosters, unvaccinated residents were five times more likely to be hospitalized. Residents who were both vaccinated and boosted had even higher levels of protection and were 20 times less likely to be hospitalized compared to

those unvaccinated. As cases and hospitalizations remain high, of most concern is the increase in deaths. On Thursday, January 20, Public Health reported 102 new deaths, the highest daily number of deaths since March 2021. And for the seven days leading up to January 1st, Public Health data also showed that unvaccinated individuals were 23 times more likely to succumb and die from COVID compared to those fully vaccinated.

Duarte City Council To Hold Third Redistricting Public Hearing

DUARTE - The Duarte City Council is holding its third redistricting public hearing on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. All hearings will be held in the Duarte City Council Chambers (1600 Huntington Drive) starting at 7:15 PM.

Every ten years, cities with by-district election systems, like Duarte, must use new census data to review, and if needed, redraw district lines to reflect population shifts. This process, called "redistricting," ensures all districts have nearly equal populations, and therefore, representation in local elections.

Public input is an important aspect of the process, with residents being encouraged to participate in a series of public hearings during which they can share

their thoughts on how Council district boundaries should be drawn.

Duarte's third public hearing on Tuesday, February 8, will focus on reviewing draft maps submitted by residents, gathering community feedback, identifying focus maps, and receiving feedback from the City Council on how they would like to revise the maps. If Duarte's City Council does not present revisions at this hearing, it may select a map and conduct a first reading of an ordinance adopting it with the second reading and map adoption taking place at the fourth public hearing on Tuesday, March 8.

Should the Duarte City Council make amendments to the preferred map, the first reading of the ordinance adopting the Coun-

cil's new district map will take place at the City's fourth redistricting public hearing on Tuesday, March 8 with the final map adoption occurring at a fifth public hearing.

Residents can submit their own map by using the paper and digital mapping tools available on the City's redistricting website, DrawDuarte.org. All draft maps should be submitted to Redistricting@AccessDuarte.com by Thursday, January 27, for consideration at the February 8 public hearing.

Learn more about the City's redistricting process, how to submit public comments, and how to draw a map by visiting Duarte's redistricting website: DrawDuarte.org.

Arcadia Announces February 1 Public Hearing On City Council Redistricting

ARCADIA - The Arcadia City Council is seeking public input on draft maps for the redistricting of City Council districts. Every 10 years, the United States issues a census to count the City's population. Upon the completion of the Census, the City Council District Map is realigned to reflect Arcadia's current population and demographics. The next

public hearing to review draft maps is scheduled for Tuesday, February 1, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers located at 240 W. Huntington Drive.

The draft maps will be available for public review at least 7 days prior to the scheduled public hearing on the City's website at ArcadiaCA.gov/redistricting. For more informa-

tion regarding the City's redistricting process, please visit the City's redistricting page on the website.

If you have any questions regarding the redistricting process or wish to submit comments prior to the public hearing about draft maps, please email us at CityClerk@ArcadiaCA.gov.

Woman Arrested for Running Over Man and a Deputy, Man Dies.

By George Ogden

EL MONTE - On Wednesday evening, Jan. 19, deputies were driving by a shopping center in the 9600 block of Garvey Avenue and observed a man and a woman in a heated argument. When all was said and done, the man was dead, a deputy injured, patrol unit smashed, a pursuit and the arrest of a woman.

It all started when deputies

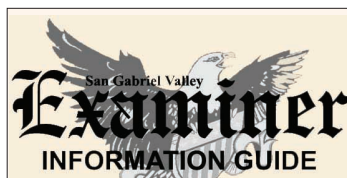
saw a man in his 50s and a woman in her 30s fighting in the parking lot of a business, Garvey Center shopping mall. The deputies pulled in and detained the man... he was not arrested, just detained. When deputies went to detain (not arrest) the woman, she jumped into a vehicle and started to leave the parking lot. Deputies may have felt that half of the problem just removed itself.

They were wrong. She made a U-turn and drove toward the deputies and the detained male, hitting the man as well as one of the deputies and smashing into the sheriff's patrol unit. She then fled the parking lot and took off down Garvey Avenue. Deputies gave chase and initiated a pursuit. Because of the damage to her vehicle, it became disabled and the pursuit ended a few miles from the scene. She was arrested and taken into custody.

The man she ran down died from his injuries. The deputy was taken to the hospital for his leg injuries.

How these two people are connected is unknown. Their identities were not released.

The woman was arrested on suspicion of intentionally hitting the man and the deputy with her vehicle. She will most likely be charged with murder and attempted murder of the deputy. Bail was set at \$1,000,000 with pending court appearances.



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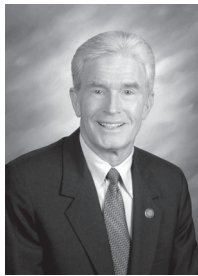
During recent weeks we've witnessed more Americans speaking out against a wide array of nonsense and finally seeking more "common sense". Maybe that's one reason the stock market has been so robust - foreseeing a long overdue return to sanity.

Many Americans have also retreated to their Covid cabins rethinking the value of vaccinations, lockdowns and the newest more transmissible strain, Omicron. One result might be the beginning of the end of legalized madness. It appears that more Americans realize that if we let the crazies preside over us recent insanity could continue for the rest of our lives. Unfortunately, some extremists still think they hold the high ground, but recent signs of sanity hopefully will show them they do not.

How and when will this China originated pandemic be over? As the less deadly Omicron variant sweeps across the U.S. infection numbers are surging and hospitals stress due to a shortage of healthcare workers. New Jersey reinstated a public health emergency due to this situation, while California has even ordered COVID-positive medical staff (that are asymptomatic) to stay on the job. Hospitalizations are climbing higher than last winter's peak - before the widespread distribution of vaccines - due to Omicron's extraordinary case number spread.

Despite the toll on the healthcare system and other essential services, Omicron patients are 74% less likely to end up in ICUs and 91% less likely to die than

In A Nutshell
What's up in the Economy?



KEN HERMAN
Economic Analyst
& Former Glendora Mayor

Delta strain patients (according to the Kaiser Permanente in Southern California). Other studies indicate that Omicron is less severe but will likely herald in a new era of weaker forms of COVID becoming an endemic illness, comparable to the flu.

White House policy makers, trying to salvage this incompetent Presidency, are focused on stimulus, voting rights, and inflation. However, the President's misunderstanding of where inflation comes from is hindering that response. Two solutions he has pursued so far - giving people more money so they can afford more expensive stuff, and treating a macro problem as if it is a micro problem (blaming corporate greed) - are more likely to make inflation worse by fueling demand and exacerbating shortages. We need solutions which will increase supply and unblock supply chains. But Congressional Democrats instead see the constant threat of Covid as the top issue. Let's see how the Biden promise to deliver 500 million Covid test kits to households throughout the US works out.

Inflation is all over the news, whether it is in business, con-

sumer, or political news. We simply cannot escape it and will continue to suffer from it. Even though economic growth remains strong, the University of Michigan's consumer sentiment index recently fell to a 10-year low as both inflation and product shortages are making Americans angry. When President Biden cites robust economic growth for the surge in inflation and shortages, few believe him. It is very odd for a President's popularity to be plunging when economic growth is reported to be "resurging", but that is exactly what is happening. Biden's credibility is near zero.

In this inflationary environment, despite the lack of trusted Washington leadership, millions of Americans are pouring more money into the stock market, seeking higher yields and protection from inflation. Gold is also at five-month highs. Internationally the Chinese economy is in disarray and the globe is struggling with the ongoing Omicron outbreak. As you look around the world the U.S. still looks like an oasis, with higher interest rates, a capitalistic culture, and 50 states that compete with each other for business and workers. Hopefully two sane Democrat Senators will continue to block the current leftist insanity being pushed by most Washington Democrats!

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Your Money - Ask Julia

I did an estimate of my tax amount due for 2021. Is there still any way to reduce it?

You have until April 15, 2022, to take action. If you qualify, (mostly based on income limits), you might consider putting around \$5,000 (around \$6,000 if you are 50 or older) into an IRA (Individual Retirement Account). (Roth IRA's don't give you an up-front tax break.) Some lower-income taxpayers might qualify for a Retirement Savers Tax Credit. Note that a tax credit has a lot more impact on your tax bill than a tax deduction.

Is there a penalty for not having health insurance?

The biggest "penalty" would be the financial impact if you or a family member required expensive medical care and you don't have insurance. The Feds did away with the penalty, but California is among a few states that still have a penalty for not having health insurance. If you did not have health insurance in 2021, the California state penalty is at least \$800/adult and \$400/dependent under 18 years old. President Biden is trying to reinstate the Federal penalty and the Affordable Care Act healthcare plan (aka ObamaCare). It's wise to have a policy in place so that you are covered, just in case. Check with a licensed health insurance agent who will shop the different plans for you, explain the differences, and give you options to choose from for your family.

After 15 years, my house is paid off. Now, my CPA says I should get a mortgage so I can write off the interest. Sounds wrong! Is there another way to



Julia Yoder
lower my tax bracket?

Financing a paid-off home in order to get the mortgage-interest write-off is throwing your money away. You would be paying roughly \$2 - \$3 in mortgage payments per \$1 of mortgage-interest deduction. It also takes time to recover the costs involved in getting a mortgage. Since you do not need the investment earnings at this time, you could look into repositioning your investment dollars into a Roth, or into a tax-deferred product. That way, you'll only pay taxes on the earnings when you decide to use the money. Note: RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) is not required on a Roth IRA. RMD will be required at age 72 for other tax-deferred investments.

What are the different retirement accounts, and which one is best?

There are traditional IRAs, Roth IRAs, 401(k)s, Simple IRAs, SEP IRAs, Solo 401(k)s, and Roth 401(k)s. With some, you contribute as a deduction from your wages through a financial company your employer has selected. With others, you con-

tribute directly through an institution, usually a bank or insurance company. There are advantages and disadvantages with each type of account, so determining which one(s) you qualify to utilize, and which of those are best for you, comes down to an individual, educated choice. Learn what you can online, and consult with a good financial professional.

On our tax return, can we deduct the mortgage interest we pay on our home mortgage and our line of credit?

Taxpayers are no longer allowed to deduct mortgage interest paid on a home equity line-of-credit or on a 2nd mortgage loan. You can only deduct mortgage interest on a mortgage loan up to \$750,000. If your total (main mortgage plus home-equity line of credit) is less than \$750,000, you might want to consider refinancing both loans into one main mortgage so that you have the choice to take the mortgage interest deduction. Often, the Standard Deduction is higher than Itemizing. Check with your CPA before making any changes.

Ask Julia by email:
juliayoder@yahoo.com

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Car Talk by THE CAR DOC

What You "AUTO" Know

By Gene Morrill - Certified Automotive Specialists

Teens Safety On The Road

Keeping teens safe on the road is a subject dear to my heart. I'm often asked what parents should look for in a car for their teen driver. Of course, a lot of teens dream of a fancy sports car but that certainly isn't the safe choice for young, inexperienced drivers. Teen drivers, between the ages of 16 to 19 are far more likely to have a crash than any other group. They tend to underestimate dangerous situations and they don't always react to them appropriately. It is hard for a mature, experienced driver to always make the right snap judgment when behind the wheel to avoid an accident. Everything happens way too fast. When you are brand new at driving it gets worse.

I always advise that before

you pick a car based on price or looks think reliable and safety first, then choose the safest car you can afford to buy. Air bags, stability control and excellent tires are a good start. Large to mid-size cars are safer than small cars because they are heavier. 16 models with the highest crash rates included 11 small cars. I know it is natural to assume that a smaller car is easier to handle and many times the teens like them because they appear sportier, however they are not the safest choice.

You also don't want to buy a car that has a lot of horsepower or one that has too little. Too much speed and power are, of course, dangerous but lack of power can be equally dangerous as they are too slow

during lane changes. You might also share with your teen that California traffic tickets are mighty expensive these days.

When you narrow down your choice of vehicle, check out the crash test scores on Safercar.gov. If you are buying a used car, please have it inspected carefully by us at CertifiedAutomotive Specialists and let us know it is for a teen driver as we may be able to give you more insight into the safety of the vehicle.

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How To Dispose Of Your Bulky Waste

Athens Services provides Single-Family residences and Multi-Family customers with FREE bulky item collection, but items for pickup must be scheduled in advance. To arrange a pickup, please contact Athens Services at least 24-hours before your collection day via <https://athensservices.com/bulky-item-pickup/> or by calling (888) 336-6100. To avoid a missed pickup of your bulky items, you must contact Athens to schedule the pickup.

Not all items that do not fit in your trash carts are considered bulky waste!

Bulky Items include: furniture (including chairs, sofas, mattresses, and rugs); appliances (including refrigerators with and without freon, ranges, washers, dryers, water heaters, dishwashers, plumbing fixtures, small household appliances, trees, shrubs, brush trimmings or other materials that are tied together forming an easily handled package not exceeding four (4) feet in length or thirty-five (35) pounds in weight, and other similar items, commonly

known as "White Goods").

Bulky Items ARE NOT: car bodies, Construction Debris, Electronic Waste, universal waste, and items weighing more than sixty (60) pounds, exceeding four (4) feet in width and eight (8) feet in length, or items that cannot reasonably be moved with equipment of the type which, pursuant to industry standards, would normally be carried in a truck collecting Bulky Items. Excess bags of trash not fitting in your barrel will not be considered bulky items.

and Dr. Mary Hanes Professional Development Center. While the District itself will not receive any part of the savings, Covina-Valley Unified pursued the opportunity strictly to benefit local taxpayers as part of their continued support for the District's students and their education.

Covina-Valley Unified School District Delivers More Than \$6.1 Million in Savings to Local Taxpayers

COVINA - Covina-Valley Unified School District recently refinanced some of its General Obligation (G.O.) bonds, resulting in decreased interest rates and saving taxpayers \$6.1 million.

Under the leadership of the Board of Education, Covina-Valley Unified sought to refinance the bonds to take advantage of historically low interest rates in 2021. The refinancing reduced the interest rate on the

prior bonds from 4.67% to 2.91%.

This move will result in \$6,133,480 in savings to local taxpayers from 2023 to 2044 and lower the repayment ratio on these bonds from 1.42 to 1. The refinancing applies to all current interest bonds.

The bonds have funded facilities improvements across the District, including the construction of the Covina-Valley Unified School District Field

and Dr. Mary Hanes Professional Development Center.

While the District itself will not receive any part of the savings, Covina-Valley Unified pursued the opportunity strictly to benefit local taxpayers as part of their continued support for the District's students and their education.

"The District consistently aims to benefit local taxpayers by seizing opportunities to refinance old G.O. bonds with higher interest rates and replace them with new bonds with lower interest rates," Covina-Valley Unified Superintendent Elizabeth Eminhizer said. "Since 2013, the District has saved taxpayers about \$24.7 million through 2052."

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IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO THE POLICE

Around the Valley & Senior News

"TIME JOCKEY" - Official Language

English or... The United States has no official language. There are those who say it has always been English but it has never been enforced. But even though history would prove otherwise, the misinformation still continues to circulate. As usual, the proponents for an English only language requirement for the United States, fail to recognize Native Americans were here long before the Europeans started arriving in North America. Over 1,000 dialects were spoken by Native American people but the arrival of Europeans saw the demise of the Native American lifestyle leading to the reduction of spoken dialects. Today, only 200 dialects are still spoken throughout the United States, continuing the spoken Native American language as the first language of the United States.



Joe Castillo

elections were to be held. Even bilingual and dual language education was taught in the classroom and as immigration increased over the next century, the inclusion of multiple languages in voting, education and society expanded.

The War with Mexico brought about new immigration and language issues. When the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, it specially stated that those Mexican citizens who lived north of the Rio Grande, would be allowed to speak their Native Spanish language. The stipulation was agreed to and as the Southwestern states were constitutionally

organized, English and Spanish were allowed throughout their society. In the 1850's, California allowed bilingual government services and even when the first California Constitutional Congress was held, translators were provided for those delegates who did have a good understanding of the English language. And when the first California Constitution was drafted, approved and finalized, it was written in both English and Spanish.

But California's population continued to grow with the Discovery of Gold, and by 1879 the Spanish-speaking population became a minority and bilingual government services, ballots and education became optional in selected areas with a Spanish-speaking population. Immigration has always brought issues with language uses and has been a veiled method of discrimination. By not providing multi-language services including within voting and education, then those permanent and naturalized citizens whose primary language is not English, are at a disadvantage. Perhaps United States Congressional leaders recognized that a country which provides equal rights for all, is a country which speaks multiple languages....

Joe Castillo is a freelance historical writer who has been covering Southern California history for 11 years and has written 5 books on the topic. He can be reached at joeacastillo@aol.com.

Seen Or Heard Around Town And All Around

By Ed Torres

1. Some smaller cities in the area, reportedly, for voting purposes, have been separated into *Districts* (similar to large cities)... Thus, eventually, instead of every council member being elected by voters throughout the city, and directly representing the whole city, an individual council member (under the new arrangement), will specifically represent the district in which the council person lives – and will only be elected directly by the voters living within the individual District...

2. For communities everywhere, and therefore, in *this "reading area"*, too, there are crime statistics available, *online*... In some sections of any city, for various reasons, there are higher crime rates than in other sections... Once smaller cities are organized into Districts, some council members might find higher crime rates in their *Districts*, and be expected to be more responsive to crime issues, and to the problems of drug addicts and the mentally ill within the voting District... Will council members then do a better job?

3. The term "silent majority" first became part of American political speech in the 1960s... The term *generally* referred to Americans who overall were *quiet* in how they shared their views, about how the government

was functioning on their behalf, whether good or bad. People whose views were difficult to understand because they did not *make-waves*, folks who did not create public *controversies* – they just went to work and came home to their families.

4. Nowadays, it is not unreasonable to believe that there are *Independents*, as well as members of all political parties (of all races and ethnicities), who could be classified as part of a "Silent Majority", ones who might decide in coming elections, that they do not like the direction politicians are taking the nation, and who will begin to *disregard* what "their political party" tells them – yes, ones who will vote only for the politicians who more closely represent their traditional views, regardless of their Party.

5. This year there will be elections throughout the region – and politicians surely are aware that most communities have problems with "squatters", those who live-on-the-streets and *riverbeds*, or in the *hills* and parks and parking lots – many who are drug addicts or are mentally unstable, who *disrupt* neighborhoods in various ways and create *fearsome* problems for normal people... Overall, *politicians* are not being compassionate nor fair to anyone, when they allow *this* problem to persist.

6. *Street people* have been around for years in some cities, because the decisions of politicians there allowed the problems to fester. Along the way, shallow thinking national and state politicians, in effect, encouraged the expansion of the problem to cities and towns previously not *infected*, by making little or no effort to control the use of illegal drugs – and by *helping* drug addicts and the mentally ill to roam freely... Some say that "street squatters" have rights, so normal

folks should just *shut-up*... Seriously?!

7. These *street people*, reportedly, are eligible to receive *assistance checks* from local, state and federal governments – "*Taxpayer monies at work, Ruining communities and lives*": how 'bout putting-it-on-a-glossy-billboard?... Additionally, some organizations provide *free bicycles and tents for them*, making *them* more mobile and problematic for miles around! Because of this issue, and others, the "silent majority" might silently *unite*, and vote-the-bums-out, politicians who allow this dread to continue.

8. By the way, some "Progressive" politicians and *voters* say that drug addicts and mentally ill folks are "harmless people" – until-they-kill or harm. Then they frown and fret, and fret and frown some more, but do little else...

9. When Biden ran-for-office, he promised student college-debt would be "forgiven", that taxpayer money would be used to pay off college loans, but the president has not done so – MAYBE because he did not know that he doesn't have the authority to do that, or, he *did* know, but misled the voters.

10. Additionally, the president has a dilemma – if he "forgives" the student loans, what about those students who paid off their loans through hard work? Or those who did not go to college – shouldn't they get some money too, to pay off their credit card debt; or to pay off other loans they might have; or to give "*stimulus* type checks" to them, equivalent to the kind of loan *forgiveness* given to college loan holders?... So, with elections coming up, if he *forgives* student loans, he might gain votes for his Party, but lose votes too – yes, a political dilemma.

Comments/suggestions: honnod1@yahoo.com

ESGVRWF Regular Monthly Meeting

COVINA - The East San Gabriel Valley Republican Women Federated (ESGVRWF) is having their regular monthly meeting this Friday, January 28th at 10:30 a.m. at South Hills Country Club in Covina.

Speaking this month will be John Harrold, retired Los Angeles County District Attorney, former Executive Vice President of the Los Angeles County District Attorney Association, Special Attorney General for the State of California handling prosecutions for the California

National Guard, Lieutenant Colonel, California JAG, Reserve status, and a former Mayor of Glendora.

Laurie Harrold is current president of the Eastern Bar Association, and 30-year member of the Mt. Sac Paralegal Advisory Board. John and Laurie Harrold are partners in the Law Offices of Harrold and Harrold and will share about their trip to Florida for the O'Reilly/Trump History Tour last November and provide an update on the Recall George Gascon efforts.

A Conversation With Gholar and Richie

DUARTE - In recognition of Black History Month, the Monrovia Duarte Black Alumni Association will present a conversation with Barbara Gholar and Brian Richie hosted by 20-year radio veteran Chris Loos on **February 20, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.** at the

Duarte Historical Museum, at 777 Encanto Parkway in Duarte. Admission is free. Space is limited. Loos has worked in top markets in the U.S. and has interviewed the likes of Eminem, Mike Tyson, the Black Eyed Peas and Kendrick Lamar.

Health & Wellness Fair

GLENDORA - Learn how to create a healthier lifestyle by attending the free Annual Health and Wellness Fair on Thursday, **January 27th** from 12:30pm to 3:00pm at the La Fetra Center; 333 E. Foothill Blvd in Glendora!

No registration required. Subject to current LA County Health Department Guidelines.

Celebrate wellness with the City of Glendora Community Services Department. Over 20

businesses and agencies will be present giving out information on a variety of topics such as transportation, public library programs, financial planning, healthcare, first aid safety, memory care, insurance, cancer support, healthy eating, elder care, and more. Free screenings will be available. Don't forget to enter your name in the raffle.

For more information please call (626) 914-8235.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD - THEME: SUPER BOWL

ACROSS

- Shout from a ship?
- Shout from the bleachers
- ___ and don'ts
- Infamous Henry's number
- One with COVID, e.g.
- Fighter jet button
- Resting stops
- Not guilty, e.g.
- One of Singapore's official languages
- *Home of last year's Super Bowl winners
- Armor chest plate
- *Given name of 2011 Super Bowl MVP
- African grazer
- Greek woodland deities
- Ramones' hit "I Wanna Be ___"

DOWN

- Pertaining to a pope
- Cain's unfortunate brother
- Gives a hand
- Anoint
- Bébé's mother
- Season to be jolly
- *Most Super Bowl wins by one team
- Snoop
- Carhop's load
- DOWN
- *Roman number of this year's Super Bowl
- "___ Misbehavin'"
- Santa Maria's traveling partner
- Despair in the face of obstacles
- "The Hobbit" hobbit
- "Caribbean Queen" singer
- Colloquial approval
- Cold cuts counter
- South American tubers
- Pig's digs
- Not dense
- Make corrections
- *Florida team with no Super Bowl appearances
- Return punch
- Come and ___ it
- Lamentably
- Bye, to Edith Piaf
- Bottom line
- *2022 Super Bowl stadium
- Upholstery choice
- *Archie to Super Bowl MVPs Peyton and Eli
- Exploits
- *Super Bowl Halftime show Snoop's "last name"
- Hardly a beauty
- *Like some teams
- Oenophile's concern
- Many, many moons
- Empower
- Big Dipper's visible shape
- Oppressive ruler
- On the wagon
- Nail salon board
- Feminine of raja
- Mt. Everest to Earth
- Aladdin's light
- Christian of fashion
- Result of a brainstorm
- Rudolf Nureyev's step
- Stallone's nickname

CROSSWORD

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55						56			57		58
59						60			61		
62						63			64		

BART The BLOCKHOUND

As you obligate yourself to Bear the burdens of those around you who do not take their interest to heart...do not be surprised when all is said and done that you were the blame for their misgivings...

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 covid19.ca.gov

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Colleen Flores' Path to Becoming La Verne's 22nd and First Female Police Chief

LA VERNE - The new year is off to an exciting and historic start in the San Gabriel Valley as La Verne's new Chief of Police, Colleen Flores, assumes her influential role as the city's 22nd Chief of Police and first female Chief in the department's 116-year history. Chief Flores' path to reaching this incredible milestone, however, actually began due to chance encounters with police officers in a restaurant as a young adult.

"Like many hardworking youths, I took a job as a hostess to help support myself when I was 15-years-old. As it turned out, the restaurant was a popular spot for local police officers to stop for their lunch breaks and write their reports, which gave me an opportunity to ask them a multitude of questions," Chief Flores said with a laugh.

Noting her intense interest in the area of law enforcement, one officer suggested she get involved in the Explorer program with the local police department. Explorer programs essentially offer young adults an internship opportunity to explore a career



Colleen Flores assumes her influential role as the city's 22nd Chief of Police and first female Chief in the department's 116-year history.

in law enforcement by working directly with police officers.

"It did not take long for me to take this officer up on his suggestion, and so I officially began my law enforcement career as an Explorer with the Upland Police Department," said Flores. "It was a great learning opportunity and

made me that much more passionate about the work. We also have an Explorer program here in La Verne, which I highly recommend to anyone considering this career field."

While her path to becoming a police chief was challenging-at one point, Flores was balancing

multiple responsibilities including serving as a police cadet while simultaneously attending school and working at the restaurant-she looks fondly on her journey and her experiences with various police departments in California. The magnitude of having the title as first female police chief in La Verne is also not lost on Flores. She has expressed special appreciation for all the women in law enforcement who came before her, noting their journeys and battles throughout their careers which made it possible for her to lead as a woman today.

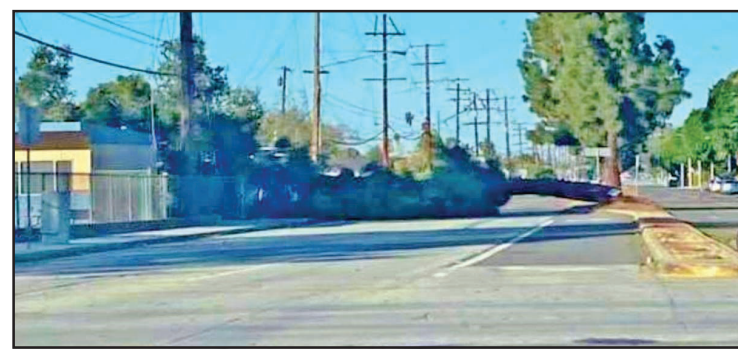
"I know I am leaving the La Verne Police Department in good hands," states former Chief of Police Nick Paz. "Chief Flores' commitment to building and growing a community-driven police department will ensure she is successful as La Verne's leading officer."

With extensive experience in law enforcement and deep insights into the La Verne community, Chief Flores is fleshing out several goals for the future of the city's public safety. Her first priority is to work collaboratively with her trusted team and continue her implementation of team building workshops. She strongly believes planning and preparation are key to successfully running a police department, and is excited by the breadth of experience, expertise and insight her fellow officers have to offer.

With the full support of the La Verne City Council, former Chief of Police Nick Paz and City Manager Bob Russi, Chief Flores promises to bring new energy to the La Verne Police Department while respecting and honoring La Verne's "small town" traditions and virtues.

(Information via news release from the City of La Verne, City Manager's office)

The Winds Came and Left an Aftermath Nightmare



George Lozynsky took this photo of a tree down in the eastbound Badillo Avenue between Lark Ellen and Vincent Avenue in West Covina. The tree took down all the power and telephone lines and damaged the fence and other property at Grove Center School.

By George Ogden

WEST COVINA - The winds came and left, but not until it created havoc across the San Gabriel Valley. Power is still out in some places with some streets still blocked because of fallen trees.

There was extensive wind damage to properties with all kinds of. Anything that wasn't tied down was blown around. Those canopies and EZ-Ups took a hard hit. Many ended up in the neighbor's

yards. Power outages were everywhere and in some areas it still hasn't been restored. There were a number of traffic accidents due to people NOT STOPPING at inoperative traffic-controlled intersections. You must stop if they are not working.

Various cities are still on the mend trying to restore power and to clear roads.

Catalytic Converter Theft Suspects Arrested by Glendora Police

GLENDORA - On January 20, 2022, at about 2:13 pm, Glendora Police Officers were dispatched to the 700 block of West Route 66 for a catalytic converter theft that just occurred. The suspect vehicle was located using the City's FLOCK license plate reader system. A Glendora Police Officer located the suspect vehicle parked in a business parking lot. The two suspects subsequently ran to avoid apprehension.

Glendora Police Officers and Detectives contained the area. The two suspects were located and a felony stop was conducted. Saul Osorio Henriquez, male 34 years of age and Julian Avila, male 29 years of age were arrested for grand theft, vandalism, possession of burglary tools, and delaying a peace officer.



Photo courtesy of the Glendora Police Dept.

Osorio Henriquez is on county probation for vehicle theft and Avila is on Post Release Community Supervision (PRCS) for assault.

Both suspects remain in custody pending their court date.

Free Covid Testing Sites in West Covina



West Covina's City Hall testing facility. Enter through the Library on West Covina Parkway.

By George Ogden

WEST COVINA - The City of West Covina has opened two additional COVID-19 testing sites. The first site is at Shadow Oak Park which has begun offering services recently, from 7:00am to 7:00pm. Everyone is welcome. Shadow Oak Park is located at 2121 Shadow Oak Drive, West Covina.

West Covina City Hall will serve as the second site and is offering testing on from 7:00am to 7:00pm. The City is partnering with ASG Corps to offer this service.

There is also a test site at West Covina Senior Center on Cortez Ave. just west of Citrus Ave. Call the city prior to going to see if there are any issues.

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