



Members of the Ganesha High School Class of 2018 take their positions on the field as graduation ceremonies get under way last month.



# La Nueva Voz

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



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Thursday, June 28, 2018

## Ganesha High School students go out into world for 'a brighter future'

*Editor's Note: A total of 210 students graduated from Ganesha High School this year, with more than 2,450 parents, family members and friends in attendance (the school's football stadium has a capacity of 2,450, according to school district officials, but the event overflowed into standing room only). About 1,400 students graduated this year districtwide – including Ganesha – throughout Pomona Unified School District. (La Nueva Voz selects schools to cover for graduation each year on a rotating basis.) Congratulations to the graduates!*

Graduating seniors at Pomona's Ganesha High School were told by this year's valedictorian

that they all "proved to the people around us and to ourselves that we were able to overcome the obstacles that could hinder us from succeeding."

Vy Vy Lu told her classmates during graduation ceremonies last month on the field at the school's Nancy McCracken Stadium that those obstacles

included "the doubt, the judgment and the intimidation that we faced."

She cited all the late-night study, procrastination, stress,

**A brighter future... pg. 8**

### Route 66 Fair theme set based on community input in Fairplex strategic plan

OK, show of hands – how many of our readers came out here to California driving the old Route 66? (La Nueva Voz will be the first to hold up our hand – we drove that road in 1968 when a lot of the original "Mother Road" was still there before the Interstate Highway System replaced it).

It is just that kind

**Fairplex... pg. 2**



**SUPERVISOR SOLIS HONORS FAIRPLEX** -- Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis, appearing at a pre-Fair conference this month at Pomona's Fairplex, honors Fairplex on its recently completed strategic plan and its upcoming L.A. County Fair on a Route 66 theme. Pictured, from left, are Fairplex Board Vice Chair Tina Loza, Fairplex President and CEO Miguel Santana, Solis and Fairplex Board Chair Cid Pinedo.



Russell Evans, left of center, last month a Pomona Eagles Trustee and now Secretary, and Ernie Verdugo, then Eagles President and now "Past Worthy President," place a wreath of honor during Memorial Day ceremonies at Pomona Valley Memorial Park. Accompanying the Eagles are members of Pomona's American Legion Post 30 color guard under the direction of Post 30 Second Vice Commander Bob Radcliff, pictured at far right. See story, additional photos, p. 18.

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(Grades 9-12)



## Fairplex... from pg. 1

of history – and the fact that the original Route 66 still travels through Pomona and surrounding communities (up on Foothill Boulevard) that is part of the reasoning Fairplex officials decided to make “Route 66 – Get your Kicks at the L.A. County Fair” the theme of this year’s Fair.

And to make sure they get it right, Fairplex President and CEO Miguel Santana drove the entire route himself (with the help of two staff members) – covering eight states in six days in a Chevrolet Traverse.

The original highway covered 2,451 miles from Chicago to Santa Monica.

“We picked Route 66 because it places us uniquely here in Pomona and La Verne, in Southern California,” Santana said at a special pre-Fair news conference this month. “And as I experienced driving from Chicago, stopped here, and later this week I’m headed off to Santa Monica, this community is very special in a broader national context.”

The news conference was held

at the base of the Hillside at Fairplex (near the Flower and Garden Pavilion) against a backdrop of reproductions of memorabilia from the old Route 66. At the L.A. County Fair, the Hillside can be expected to be filled with even more.

### Route 66 reminders throughout the Fair

And throughout the Fair, visitors will see more reminders of the Route 66 theme – a special menu at food vendors with a special price of \$6.60. Samples of special pricing food items were on display at the news conference.

Santana said last year’s year-long series of Fairplex strategic planning meetings resulted in a number of “wish list” items, including making the Fair more affordable. And Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis told members of the news media and representatives of the community at the news conference that in response to that, there will even be a special price of admission to the L.A. County Fair –

on Sept. 2, all residents of the county will be able to get in for only \$6.60 (the discounted tickets are available on line now at lacountyfair.com).

“The 10 million people that live in the County of Los Angeles will be able to come here and enjoy and hopefully other counties will feel a move to want to come and see what’s so exciting about what’s happening here in this special place,” Solis said.

She added that Santana is “taking it to a different level.”

“This is the beginning of where we go in the next decade and



**A NEW FRIEND** -- Mary Prendergast, of Fairplex Friends, poses for the La Nueva Voz camera before the pre-Fair news conference this month with her new friend, Bobby the Burro, named in honor of Bobby Troup, composer of the song “Route 66.”

### Final strategic plan completed

Copies of the final version of the Fairplex Strategic Plan, a 14-ounce, 52-page publication (plus a nine-ounce, 90-page appendix) developed based on comments received at last year’s strategic planning meetings, were distributed at the event.

Fairplex... pg. 4



**NEW FROM SPECTRA** -- Jack Rogers, executive chef for Spectra Food, the year-round concessionaire for Fairplex, shows off his new offering for the L.A. County Fair -- a New Mexico Hatch Green Chile Carne Fry.

I know we’re going to bring more county resources here,” she said.

This year’s L.A. County Fair opens on Aug. 31 and runs through Sept. 23.



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## Fairplex... from pg. 2

Santana called it a “strategic vision for the future.”

“At the direction of the board... we launched a very inclusive process, had over 10 different meetings, 100 people showed up to every single one and we listened carefully to what they said,” Santana said, adding that the Fair is almost 100 years old. “This process was important to begin a new chapter for the next hundred years.”

“And the one message that everybody gave is that when you look towards the future, where you should start with is your past, our foundation, our values, that were founded back in 1922,” he said. “So today we renew our mission.”

“We are in fact a non-profit enterprise that serves as a place, as a convener, and a creator of memories,” Santana said. “We exist to strengthen the community through art and entertainment, agriculture, education and commerce. That’s who we are. That is our mission.”

“Guest experience is at the



**SMOKIN' NITRO** -- Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis, at left, reacts to a new iced treat infused with liquid nitrogen, producing a smoke-like effect. The snack will be available at this year's L.A. County Fair, courtesy of Dragon's Breath, a Fontana-based company owned by Murat Sahin, at right. Pictured with Solis are Fairplex President and CEO Miguel Santana and Fairplex Board Chair Cid Pinedo.

center of what we do and defines our success,” he said. “We are always at our best when we engage in a partnership with others, we are committed to being both financially sustainable and good to the environment, and we will always celebrate what makes

Southern California special.”

Santana called Fairplex an economic engine that provides \$58 million of economic impact in Pomona, \$323 million in Los Angeles County, \$557 million statewide and \$797 million nationwide.

### Future growth

La Verne Mayor Don Kendrick said Fairplex joined with the City of La Verne and the University of La Verne 15 years ago to create a plan on the future Gold Line station in La Verne that would benefit all three entities “and we created a station that’s going to be just up Fairplex Drive between First Street and Arrow Highway” that will feature a bridge across to Fairplex.

“Our goal is to create the station of choice and destination between Union Station and the end

drick said. “We know that we are satisfying a need in this area.”

And Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval said he is interested in what can be done to make the Fairplex campus available to the community on a year-round basis.

“An idea was formed in the context of our strategic planning session to create a green belt on this campus so whether there’s an activity going on inside or not that people could actually experience this space, walk their dog, ride on a bike, have a picnic, enjoy the greenery and still be connected to

something that’s bigger,” Sandoval said.

He said that concept will be one of many projects eventually planned that will connect people from Thompson Creek Trail in Claremont to the ocean.

“There’s an opportunity for us to connect people and it’s so critical at this time given the types of divisions that exist in our society,” Sandoval said.

He proposed making this an immediate goal, working with the county and state to identify



**CHICKEN CHARLIE'S BACK WITH NEW ITEMS** -- Chicken Charlie himself made a personal appearance at this month's pre-Fair news conference to show guests several of his creations, including this one -- a chicken-mac and cheese in a waffle cone. Chicken Charlie has been a regular at the Fair since 1985.

of the Gold Line that everybody comes to La Verne station,” Kendrick said.

Kendrick, who helped found the Career and Technical Education Center at Fairplex, said that’s another program that is helping educate kids at no cost with hundreds of students out of high school going into jobs in a variety of fields, or going on to college, “all out of a vision that we’re not doing enough for our kids.”

“CTEC was created mainly to help the City of Pomona and the majority of our students in all of our disciplines, all of our pathways, come from Pomona and they are kids that probably would not have much of a chance,” Ken-

funding, “to ensure that this place becomes accessible to the community.”

### Bringing back the clock tower

The strategic plan, unveiled at the event, featured a history of Fairplex complete with photographs, along with recommendations for the future including bringing back the old “clock tower,” once used as a meeting place for visitors to the Fair. Construction of an updated version of the clock tower is planned.

In all, more than 700 ideas were generated and discussed during the development of the plan. Selected ideas were prioritized as short term (to be imple-

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**SUMMER LITERACY PROGRAM**  
 -- Rhonda Miles-Brown, at rear, of Pomona Unified School District's Footsteps2Brilliance "early learning" initiative based on its own free computer and mobile "app," helps kids -- and their parents -- learn how the program works during the second of four hour-long Tuesday morning sessions at Pomona's Barfield Elementary School. The program, called the Barfield Summer Reading Family Fun Festival, is being repeated at Lopez Elementary School. Two volunteers from Safelite Auto and Glass in Ontario assisted in the Barfield program. Organizers said additional volunteers are needed from local businesses or service clubs.

**DISTRICT OVERALL TOTALS**

-- Marilyn Hokanson, of Pomona Unified School District's Footsteps2Brilliance program, shows students and parents at Barfield Elementary School how the early learning program has been working so far district-wide. She asked the parents to make sure their children read 15 minutes every day as a minimum. She told La Nueva Voz the program pulls together all the skills from learning to reading to how to operate the laptops used in the initiative.



**GETTING THE HANG OF IT** -- Christopher Egons, 7, shows the class of two dozen parents and children at Barfield Elementary School how he reads the digital book "Nelly the Lizard," written by another student. In all, students participating in Pomona Unified School District's Footsteps2Brilliance program have read 177 million words so far and have created 161,000 "books." To sign up for the free program, visit the web site at [www.myf2b.com/register/pomona](http://www.myf2b.com/register/pomona). Egons, who has already read 45 books in the program, told La Nueva Voz the program is important to him "So I can learn, so I can be a better writer." Barfield Principal Mrs. Rosario Ambriz said all 200 students in her kindergarten through third grade classes are participating in the literacy program.

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**POMONA OPTIMIST STUDENTS OF THE MONTH** -- Members of the Pomona Breakfast Optimist Club honored their students of the month again last month at Mr. D's Diner in Pomona, recognizing students from Pomona's Philadelphia Elementary School for their accomplishments. Pictured, front row from left, are Valeria Serna-Ledesma, 4th grade, and (not pictured) her brother, Herman Serna-Ledesma, 6th grade, students of the month for May; Citlali Castaneda Martinez, 4th grade, and Joileana Garcia, 5th grade, students of the month for April. At rear, from left, are Optimists Fernando Meza, Vice President Ruth Alvarez and Dr. Roberta Perlman. The Optimists adopt a different school each year and feature different students each month.

**Morocco exhibit on display at Cal Poly Pomona**

“Morocco: Crossroads & Meeting Ground,” celebrating the country’s rich history, art and culture through photographs, objects and sound installations, is on display through Sept. 20 at Cal Poly University Pomona.

The exhibit explores aspects of a five-week journey by 14 members of the university community to Morocco, made possible by a Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad fellowship.

Assistant Professor Hilary Haakenson, of the College of Education and Integrative Stud-

ies, said the trip was designed to enable members of the group to deepen their understanding of how to teach about Morocco and its place in the Mediterranean world.

The exhibit is on view in the new Don B. Huntley Gallery on the Cal Poly campus. Hours are noon to 4 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, and from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Admission is free and parking is \$2 per hour.



**PUBLIC SAFETY AWARD HONOREES** -- A Pomona police officer and an L.A. County Fire Department Captain assigned to Pomona were recipients of this year’s “respect for public safety” awards presented by the Pomona Breakfast Optimist Club at its meeting this month at Mr. D's Diner in Pomona. Honored from the Pomona Police Department was Officer Diana Hernandez, who has been assigned to the department’s youth services unit as a school resource officer for the past two years. She is one of two officers assigned to handle calls for service at 32 schools in the Pomona Unified School District. She also mentors students, helps teachers in the classroom and is the lead planner and organizer of the popular “Cops 4 Kids” program, a 10-week semi-militaristic style program designed to instill discipline, respect and responsibility within the youth of the community. She has also assisted in vice operations and the arrests of prostitutes and “johns,” working in both a uniformed and undercover capacity. Pictured, from left, are Optimist President Lorraine Canales, Pomona Police Deputy Chief Hector Rodriguez (presenting the award), Hernandez and Optimist treasurer Fernando Meza.



**HONORING FIRE CAPT. PAT LONG** -- Pomona fire station 183 Capt. Pat Long received the Pomona Optimists public safety award at this month’s Optimist Club meeting -- and the only problem was he wasn’t able to attend. It turned out he had been called away, as he often is, to help with another assignment out of the area, this time on a top secret humanitarian logistics mission for the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C. (His colleagues said he often is called away to help with disasters such as an earthquake in Haiti, the Ebola epidemic in Africa and more.) Long began his career with the City of Pomona in 1994 at Fire Station 182, in 2009 transferred to Fire Station 181 and is currently assigned to Station 183. Accepting the award for Long are, from left, Firefighter Kevin Ortiz, Battalion Chief Ed Lozano, Optimist awards committee chair M. Joyce Bakersmith, Fire Capt. Gary Schiaretti, and Fire Engineer Robert Adomeit. According to Lozano, Station 183 is the busiest fire station in Los Angeles County and one of the busiest in the nation.

**National organ donor group looking for donations of cars and trucks**

MatchingDonors, a 501c3 non-profit organization and the nation’s largest living organ donor organization finding and registering living organ donors for people needing organ transplants, is looking for donations of cars, trucks, recreational vehicles, airplanes or real estate.

According to a spokesperson for the organization, 22 people die every day waiting on the government’s deceased organ donor waiting list. Those who live to get a transplant can wait seven to 12 years for their organ.

In contrast, many patients receive their lifesaving organ transplant from matchingdonors.com within only six months.

One hundred percent of the proceeds from donations go to help save the lives of people needing organ transplants, according to the spokesperson.

For more information, go to matchingdonors.com or boats4kids.com or call (800) 385-0422.

**Fairplex... from pg. 4**

mented within 24 months), mid term (within the next five years) and long term (review and decide with a likely implementation timeline beyond five years).

Representative tactics include:

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## 'First annual' Library Foundation Mayor's Gala nets \$75,000 for library

Ever wonder what would happen if you threw a party and pretty much everybody in town came?

Well, that's kind of what happened when the Pomona Public Library Foundation presented its "first annual" Mayor's Gala this month – and they ended up raising nearly \$75,000 for the Pomona Public Library in a room filled with about 300 supporters at the Sheraton Fairplex Conference Center.

Of course, it helped a little that they had as co-hosts Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval, Fairplex President and CEO Miguel Santana, Cal Poly University Pomona President Soraya Coley and Pomona Unified School District Supt. Richard Martinez.

Highlights of the evening – on the theme "Unlocking Pomona's

presented to Garen for his long-term investment in the Pomona community and for his service to Pomona youth.

Garen teamed up with Tim Sandoval and Garen's cousin Stephanie Campbell, who recently retired from the organization, to launch Bright Prospect in 2001.

The program got under way with 12 students in its first graduating class in 2003 and has now helped more than 2,000 low-income students, most from Pomona, go to and graduate from college – including names like Harvard, Yale, Stanford and others, many coming back to work locally as engineers, teachers, attorneys, doctors, and even city and school district employees.

"Eric believed that our students with additional mentorship

cator teaching history earlier in his career, and his mother was an English teacher.

"So there was always a connection with libraries," he added. "The heart of a community, the dreams, the visions, the goals, the history, is all based at the library."

Also part of the mix supporting the library at the event were the Board of Library Trustees, Friends of Pomona Public Library and the Support Our Pomona Public Library advocacy group.

"The Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the resources and services of the Pomona Public Library and providing educational and cultural programming for all ages," Clifford said. "We strongly believe the library is the city's treasure and the base upon which the community will build its future. It is also where Pomona's history lives."

Clifford told guests that their support helps the Foundation continue serving the library and to provide new programs, adding that their signature program is the homework "club" at the library which provides after school tutoring to Pomona's children and youth, with the help of students from the University of La Verne and Cal Poly Pomona.

He said another program getting under way next month is the summer enrichment program, providing children and families in Pomona with educational and cultural excursions throughout Los Angeles County with bus or train trips to local colleges, musical concerts and more.



Bright Prospect founder Eric Garen, at left, receives the "Mayor's Award" from Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval at this month's Mayor's Gala Pomona Public Library fundraiser presented by the Pomona Public Library Foundation.



Pomona Public Library Foundation President John Clifford, at left, presents the "Foundation Award" to Richard Pumerantz, receiving the award on behalf of his parents, Harriet Pumerantz and the late Phil Pumerantz.

Hidden Treasures" – included the presentation of the Foundation's "Mayor's Award" to Eric Garen, Founder and President of Pomona's Bright Prospect, and the presentation of the "Foundation Award" to the late Phil Pumerantz and his wife, Harriet Pumerantz, who attended the event.

The Mayor's Award, for someone who has made a contribution to the culture and improvement of the entire city, was

and guidance could succeed at any college in this country and they have," Sandoval said.

Garen explained that libraries played a pivotal role in his development and led directly to Bright Prospect.

"With resources that help young people, and you never know where they're going to lead, without the resources people are stymied but with them they can go anywhere," Garen said. "(People) are meant to not

just take up space and not just to take up air but to actually have an impact on the world, to do something for other people that's going to be beneficial."

He added that he learned this in his readings in the library.

"When you have resources for students they can open their minds," he said. "You never know what's going to happen. It can be very amazing things. And it's why libraries are so important."

Foundation President John Clifford explained the Foundation Award was presented to the Pumerantz family for someone who has had a significant impact specifically on the library.

He said in 2012 when the library faced imminent closure, the Foundation was reformed and during their initial meetings discussing fundraising possibilities, he had suggested honoring Phil Pumerantz, founder and original president of Pomona's Western University of Health Sciences, and his wife Harriet because of their many contributions to the library.

He said the two also brought a "world class" library to Western University but have remained "consistent and enthusiastic sup-

porters of our Pomona library."

Richard Pumerantz, their son, accepted the award on behalf of the family, explaining that his father was the first in his family to go to college and receive a degree.

"From the very beginning, everything that we did as children was to continue this educational process," he said. "Our house became a mini-library. My father was a voracious reader. He would have sometimes three or four books at a time that he'd have going because he just couldn't get enough of it, he loved it."

He said his father was an edu-

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## A brighter future... from pg. 1

extracurricular activities and jobs, along with “the world of college applications and career objectives.”

“I think the things that drove us to overcome such hardships and to work with determination were to get out into the world, the prospect of becoming successful, the honor to bring to our humble families and the desire to lead by example, not just for ourselves but for the people around us and our successors,” she said.

She added that “through this journey we have also created and shaped everlasting bonds and relationships” but have learned to care more about society and the world around them.

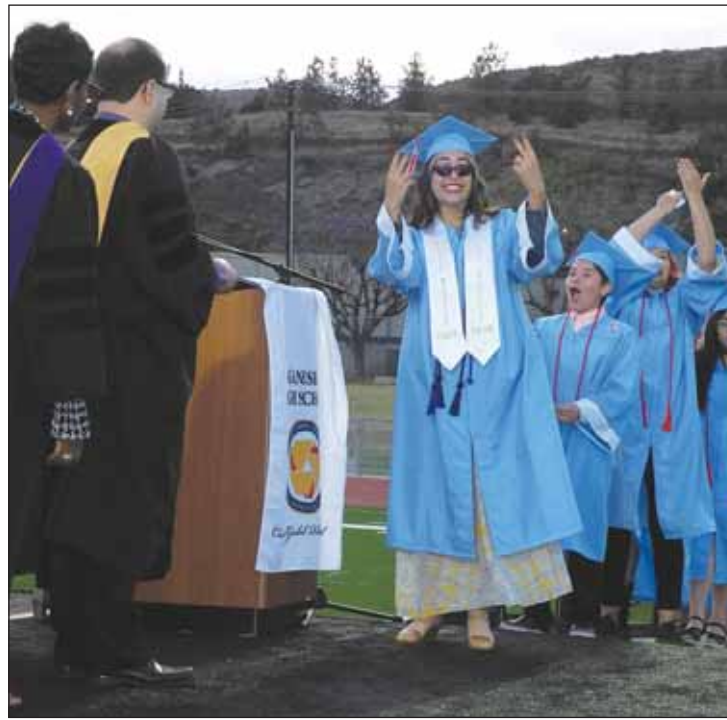
Lu, who will attend UCLA in the fall, said some

members of the Class of 2018 will go on to college, some will go into the military and others will go into the work force.

“Wherever you guys go, do what makes you happy and what you believe to be of your calling in the world because this is only just the beginning,” she said.



Nezahualcoyotl Rubio Gonzalez, son of Pomona City Councilmember Rubio Gonzalez, works his way down the receiving line and is congratulated by Salutatorian Floresita Sanchez at Ganesha High School's graduation ceremonies last month.



Graduating senior Veronica Orozco Diaz shows a little enthusiasm as she is about to receive her diploma from Pomona Unified School District Board members Adrienne Konigar-Macklin and Jason Rothman.



Ganesha High School Principal Jennifer Francev



Ganesha Salutatorian Floresita Sanchez



Pomona Unified School District Board members Jason Rothman, at left, and Adrienne Konigar-Macklin officiate at Ganesha High School graduation ceremonies.

ents who left everything in their home country to give their children a better life,” she said, adding that their parents now are happy that “all their sacrifices are paying off.”

She spoke to their parents in Spanish, thanking them for being the “best parents that you can be.”

“The Class of 2018 has been undoubtedly one of the most successful and triumphant classes of Ganesha High School,” she told her classmates.

She quoted American rap artist Tupac Shakur, who once said “during your life never stop dreaming, no one can take away your dreams.”

“Each and every one of you has the potential to change the world . . . you are all destined for greatness,” she said.

Associated Student Body President Claudia Gutierrez, who is off to San Francisco State University, quoted Apple Computer co-founder Steve Jobs, who once said “your time is limited so don't waste it living someone else's life.”

And Senior Class President Ana Galvan, who will attend Cal State University Los Angeles, said, “these last four years have been amazing, filled with so many memories.”

“Be proud of what you have accomplished – this graduation is not only for us but it's for those of us who didn't have the chance... to graduate,” she added.

Ganesha Principal Jennifer Francev told La Nueva Voz after the graduation ceremonies that the reference was to those who lost their lives due to school shootings across the country.

“Our students like so many across our country have felt the emotional impact of so many school shootings in the last few years,” Francev told La Nueva Voz.

“We are the future and we must use our voices to make change,” Galvan said.

Francev told her graduates that the ceremony was a “celebration of your academic achievement.”

“Go forward proudly and

“I hope that we take what we've learned so far to only move forward from here and out towards a brighter future, and I hope that we all become better versions of ourselves,”

we were walking in to the first day of Ganesha for the first time and now we are today anxious to leave.”

“The majority of us come from immigrant parents, par-

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**MAYOR'S A 'CAR GUY'** -- Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval poses with committee members who organized "For the Love of Cars Car Show and Cruise," the "first annual" car show to raise funds for the Historical Society of Pomona Valley. The event was held this month at the Village at Indian Hill. Pictured with Sandoval's 1957 Porsche 356 replica, from left, are committee member Mike Suarez, Sandoval and Deborah Clifford, President of the Historical Society. Not pictured (because they were working elsewhere at the time of the photo) are car show committee members Alice Gomez, Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole and Art Delgadillo, who was also the mobile DJ for the event.



**CRUISING INTO THE CAR SHOW** -- Participants in this month's "first annual" Historical Society of Pomona Valley car show "cruise" into the parking lot at the Village at Indian Hill in Pomona at the start of the show. The cruise along Holt Avenue started at Pep Boys at Palomares Street and continued east to the show.



**'BEEN THERE, DONE THAT, BOUGHT THE T-SHIRT'** -- Pomona volunteer Alice Gomez, at left, a member of the Historical Society car show committee, poses with her granddaughter, Breeanna Gomez, to show off the official t-shirts for the car show event.



Photo by Renee Barbee  
Sunflowers were in bloom in the parking lot of Pomona's Sacred Heart Catholic Church last month and this one caught the eye of Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz.

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## Fairplex chief Miguel Santana calls Pomona's Youth and Family Club a 'critical program'

Fairplex President and CEO Miguel Santana, guest speaker at this month's annual "Friends Luncheon" fundraiser at the Youth and Family Club of Pomona Valley, called the work "The Club" does a "critical program for the well-being of the thousands of families who live in this community."

Speaking with La Nueva Voz before the luncheon, he said Fairplex is "more than happy to

do what it can to ensure its survival" and make sure it "stays here for a very long time."

"We all know that the club went through some difficulty last year through its transition (from the Boys and Girls Club of Pomona Valley) and now they not only survived that transition, but they've forged new partnerships, new levels of support with the community," Santana said.

He said when he was a child

### Book chronicles success of Pomona native who completed college after becoming deaf

A Pomona native who began losing her hearing at the age of 4 but went on to graduate with honors from Diamond Ranch High School and receive two degrees in four years at Cal Poly University Pomona has written a book on her ability to learn how to communicate with the world through writing.

The book, "Ready to be Heard – How I lost my hearing and found my voice," is the story of the author's journey to find a balance between the hearing world she was raised in and the deaf culture to which she now belonged.

Author Amanda McDonough swore her parents to secrecy regarding her hearing loss when she was young but as she grew older, her hearing loss increased causing her to struggle in school, in her relationships and with her identity.

By age 22, she could no longer rely on her wit to hide her hearing loss and became 100 percent deaf in both ears – unable to hear, talk, lip-read or sign.

Her only method of communication with the world was through writing. And her book is the story of how she taught herself to speak again, lip-read and sign.

Along the way, she explains how she discovered a new culture, language and even herself.

She describes how she managed to finish college after becoming deaf, how she was able to earn straight A's in school, how she entered the work force

and enjoyed a successful Hollywood acting career and more.

"I think I always knew I would become deaf," McDonough said. "I may have fought it, denied it, and hid it for a good portion of my life, but it has always been a part of who I am."

"Once I was finally able to accept that part of me, my life's purpose became clear," she added.



"I don't use the word 'can't' because I don't believe in limiting myself," she said. "I am able, I am capable, I am strong. Never think less of yourself because society expects you to behave a certain way."

Today, McDonough is a resident of Los Angeles and enjoys successful inspirational speaking and acting careers.

The 248-page book (ISBN #1982201118), which will be released on July 23, will be available on-line at readytobeheard.com (\$17.99 in soft cover, \$35.95 hardcover).



**FRIENDS LUNCHEON AT 'THE CLUB'** -- Fairplex President and CEO Miguel Santana, who grew up in a Boys and Girls Club, was the guest speaker for the second consecutive year at the annual Friends Luncheon fundraiser at Pomona's Youth and Family Club of Pomona Valley, formerly a Boys and Girls Club. Pictured at the event, from left, are Santana, the Club's "Future Leader" Paul Chitt, and Club Board President John Forbing.

he grew up "going to the club in my neighborhood... so I am one of these kids and I certainly understand better than anyone what an important program this is."

Club Board President John

Forbing, a State Farm agent in Pomona, said the transfer of name and an accompanying expansion of programs "is working out very, very well for the club."

"The community is getting

more and more involved in the operations," he added. "The parents are getting more involved with their kids and what's going on and the membership is increasing every month."

"So we're very excited about the future, we're getting more people contributing financially and being involved in what's going on in the community," Forbing said. "We're very happy about the condition and the future of the club."

He said the huge turnout at this month's luncheon shows that the community is interested in hearing the story of what is happening at the club.

Paul Chitt, the club's 2018 "Future Leader," agreed.

"It touches my heart that they recognize an outstanding organization, programs that help the community, that help invest in our club," Chitt said.

Chitt, a high school senior this fall at Pomona's Fremont Academy, has big plans – he wants to major in law, possibly at Harvard or Yale.

## Pomona Valley Hospital offers safety tips for the Fourth

Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center's director of trauma has issued a few safety tips for residents to keep in mind during local Fourth of July celebrations with a fireworks warning topping the list.

"Although fireworks are illegal in the City of Pomona and throughout Los Angeles County, injuries from fireworks are one of the most common injuries we see in our trauma center on the Fourth of July," said Dr. Michael Jimenez.

"If you're in a city that permits fireworks, never give them to small children and always follow the instructions on the packaging," he said. "Since eye injuries are also very common around fireworks, wearing eye protection is key."

"The weeks surrounding Fourth of July are some of the busiest times of the year for hospitals across the country and, unfortunately, we see the aftermath of this holiday first hand every single year," Jimenez said.

He added that families can stay safe and avoid a trip to the

emergency room by remembering a few simple safety tips.

"Drinking and driving is a real concern every Fourth of July," Jimenez said. "The best way to avoid a serious car accident is to designate a driver or call a taxi or a Uber. Whatever you do, do not drive drunk and do not drive buzzed."

He also cautioned against leaving children unattended around water, "even if you are confident they are skilled swimmers."

"Hire a lifeguard or designate a non-drinking adult to have his or her eyes on the water at all times," he said. "If there is alcohol at a party, encourage the serious partiers to stay out of the water and stay safe."



Dr. Michael Jimenez

Jimenez also said there is no way to avoid a stray bullet, so he suggested that residents "skip this problematic way of celebrating altogether."

"This form of gun violence is often overlooked, so it's vital to be aware if you

find yourself at a party where firearms are present," he said.

A hospital spokesperson cited Fourth of July figures from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission which show 200 people are injured each day from fireworks nationwide in the days before and after Independence Day.

In addition, about 60 percent of all fireworks injuries occur around the Fourth of July, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission.



## Pomona Concert Band announces 'Summer Concert Series' schedule

The Pomona Concert Band has announced its 71st annual "Summer Concert Series," which kicks off this year at the new time of 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 5, with an "American Jubilee" concert.

Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval will serve as master of ceremonies at the season's opening concert.

All concerts will be held at the G. Stanton Selby Bandshell, behind the community center building in Pomona's Ganessa Park, 1575 N. White Ave.

The schedule includes nine Thursday evening concerts – with the finale on Aug. 30 – along with two "bonus" concerts.

All performances are free to the public and residents are encouraged to bring a lawn chair, visit the band's concession stand or bring their own picnic baskets to enjoy an evening of music.

The band will host the Claremont Symphony Orchestra as a "bonus concert" at 7 p.m. Sunday, July 8. Theme for the evening will be "Favorites from Hollywood and Broadway." The orchestra's annual "instrument petting zoo" will get under way at 6:30 p.m., giving kids a chance to try out various instruments.

The Pomona Concert Band's "The British are Coming" con-

cert is scheduled for July 12, and the band will honor the Pomona Unified School District on July 19 with its "Around the World" concert. Pomona Unified School District Board member Jason Rothman will serve as master of ceremonies.

"God Bless America" will be the theme of the July 26 concert, with Pomona City Councilmember Rubio Gonzalez serving as master of ceremonies.

Concerts on Aug. 2 and Aug. 9 on the theme "Pomona Concert Band's Got Talent" will showcase several of the band's regular members.

And on Aug. 16, the theme will be "Musical Odds and Ends" featuring Richard Pumerantz from Pomona's Western University of Health Sciences as master of ceremonies.

The concert scheduled for Aug. 23 will feature "A Salute to the Williams Guys," including music from composers with the last name of Williams. Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole will be master of ceremonies.

A second "bonus" concert at 6 p.m. Sunday Aug. 26 will feature the Golden State British Brass Band.

And the Pomona Concert Band's

final summer concert on Aug. 30 will have the theme "Great American Songbook," with Pomona City Councilmember Robert Torres serving as master of ceremonies.

The band, conducted by Linda Taylor and assistant directors Dr.

Jorge Garcia and Kerry Kline, is sponsored by the City of Pomona.

Band members come from Pomona and more than 20 surrounding communities.

It was founded by former Pomona Mayor G. Stanton Selby in

1947 as part of Pomona's American Legion Post 30.

The band toured Europe and Japan in 1985 and 1988 and represented the city in 2015 at the Association of Concert Bands Convention in Sacramento.

**POMONA VALLEY HOSPITAL HOSTS 'NATIONAL SIDEWALK CPR DAY' EVENT** – Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center joined with Wingstop, the Los Angeles County Fire Department and Western University of Health Sciences this month to provide free sidewalk CPR and automatic external defibrillator training. Pictured is the training in progress at Wingstop, 756 E. Arrow Highway, Pomona, as Tammy Freehling, RN, a chest pain coordinator at Pomona Valley Hospital, trains Siska Utama in the correct technique. Nearly 50 people participated in the training. A hospital news release said CPR is a life-saving skill that is vital for people to learn since four out of five cardiac arrests occur at home, and immediate CPR can double or triple a victim's chance of survival.




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## Cal Poly boasts largest graduating class size ever

Approximately 6,650 students graduated with their bachelor's, master's or doctorate degree during Cal Poly University Pomona's 62nd commencement ceremonies spread over a three-day period this month.

Cal Poly President Dr. Soraya Coley told La Nueva Voz it was the largest number of graduates in the 80-year history of the school.

Graduation speakers included Bob Weis, President of Walt Disney Imagineering, who addressed students at the College of Environmental Design ceremony. He received a bachelor's degree in architecture from the college in 1980.

Michele Gendreau, director of food and beverage and "experience integration" at Disneyland Resort, spoke at the Collins College of Hospitality Management ceremony. She received her bachelor's degree from the program in 1983.

And Marissa Andrada, Chipotle's chief of human resources, spoke at the College of Business Administration ceremony. She received her bachelor's degree in management and human resources at Cal Poly Pomona in 1989.

Maria Klawe, President of Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, addressed graduates at the College of Engineering graduation ceremonies.

Each of the university's eight colleges held its own commencement ceremonies.



One happy graduate in Cal Poly Pomona's College of Letters and Social Sciences shows the photographer she really does have her brand new college diploma.



Photos by Tom Zasadzinski / Cal Poly Pomona  
Cal Poly Pomona's College of Environmental Design graduate Ryan Shepard shows off his McPhee Award for student excellence, presented by Dean Michael Woo, at right, as Cal Poly President Dr. Soraya Coley looks on.



One Cal Poly Pomona graduate -- using his mortarboard as a communications tool -- asks the age-old question asked by college graduates everywhere -- "So what now?" Congratulations and good luck to all the graduates.

See past issues at [www.lanuevavoz.net](http://www.lanuevavoz.net)

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## A brighter future... from pg. 8

follow your dreams," she said. "And I challenge you to turn around one day and give back to those around you."

"It is your destiny to make a difference in the lives of those around you wherever you go," she said.

"Your life is a gift – live your life with honor and always (Ganesha) 'Giant' pride," she said. "Your education and your determination is the fuel which will light the flame of your genera-



Ganesha ASB President  
Claudia Gutierrez



Ganesha Valedictorian  
Vy Vy Lu

tion. Take on this world. It is our gift to you."

"It comes with both challenges and joys," she said. "Take care of one another. Spread kindness and love and do your own part to make our world a better place so that one day you too can pass our world on to the next generation."

"And when you do that, I know it will be a better and brighter world because of you,"

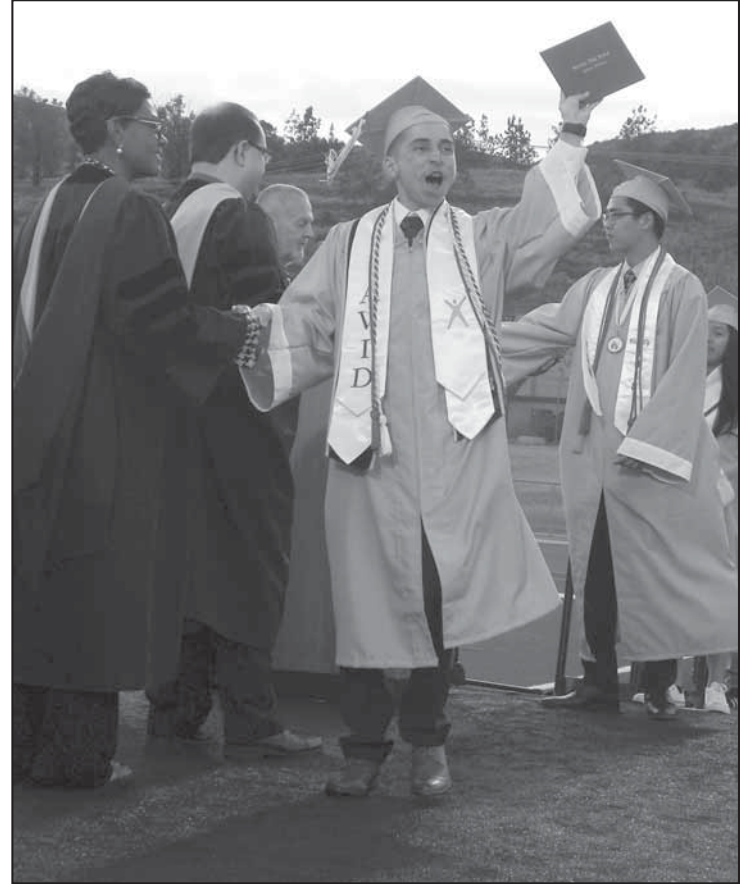
Francev said.

Pomona Unified School District Supt. Richard Martinez told the students "it is important that you do find the thing that will fascinate you and interest you and hopefully will help you make the world around you a better place, because ultimately that is what we are here for, to leave our marks on the world."

"I wish you all to be extraordinary," he said.



Ganesha Senior Class President  
Ana Galvan



Raymond Vincent Picazo proves he actually received his diploma as he is congratulated by Pomona Unified School Board member Adrienne Konigar-Macklin at last month's graduation ceremonies at Ganesha High School.

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**ANNE HENDERSON TAKES GAVEL AS NEW POMONA HOST LIONS PRESIDENT** -- Anne Henderson, at left, becomes this year's President of Pomona Host Lions Club as she takes the gavel from outgoing President Carmen Morris at last week's 98th installation of officers ceremony as installing officer Director Gil Smith, Past District 4-L4 Governor, looks on. "I'm excited because we have a great year coming up -- we're doing more and more in the community, we're becoming more and more visible, and that's my plan to be more and more visible," Henderson said. "But the whole thing is the power of 'we' -- my team, my leadership team, my shining stars of leadership, and we've put together a great team." She has been a member of Lions for the past seven years and a Director for the past five. The event was held at Pomona Valley Mining Company. Past President Jack Lightfoot served as master of ceremonies. The mission of Lions Clubs International is to empower volunteers to serve their communities, meet humanitarian needs and encourage peace.

## Pomona Catholic Principal Sam Torres named Superintendent of San Bernardino Diocese

Pomona Catholic Principal Sam Torres is stepping down from his post in Pomona to become Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of San Bernardino.

Torres, who has served as principal here for the past nine years, will succeed Patricia Vesely, who is retiring this month, according to a Pomona Catholic news release.

Torres, who will leave behind a legacy that has highlighted the value of Catholic education, has continued to communicate the attainability of an education at the school -- even to families who originally only imagined it.

He became known for reaching out to the underserved Hispanic population in Pomona and surrounding communities as he continued to build enrollment at the school.

During his tenure, the school added a music program, an AP (advanced placement) Capstone college preparatory program and endless opportunities for students to grow and prosper as they transition to higher education.



Sam Torres

"We have a duty to keep schools open to build faith-filled students," Torres said. "What will our leaders look like if they're not morally based? That's what our schools do."

Mrs. Rebecca Arteaga, vice principal and director of counseling, will serve as interim principal for the 2018-2019 school year.

Pomona Catholic is an all-girls high school and co-ed middle school which prides itself on the diversity and appreciation of its multi-cultural heritage.

It was founded in 1898.

## New book by author Farrell Chiles chronicles history of African American Warrant Officers

"African American Warrant Officers -- Their Remarkable History," the latest book by Pomona's Farrell Chiles, an author, historian and community volunteer, has been released and is available on line.

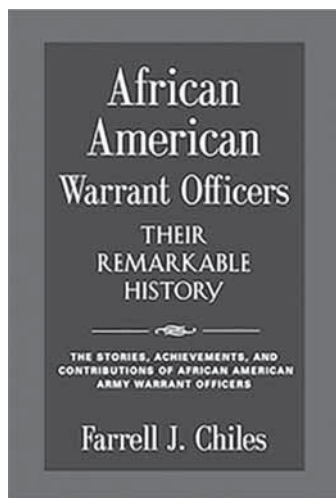
Chiles said the book was published in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of the Army Warrant Officer Corps (July 9, 1918 through July 9, 2018).

The book is a compilation of the biographies, stories and photos contributed by African American warrant officers who served or are serving in the U.S. Army.

Included are stories of 84-year-old Chief Warrant Officer Three (Ret.) Julius Green, the first African American deep-sea diver in the U.S. Army; CW5 (Ret.) Rufus N. Montgomery, Sr., the first African American Warrant Officer inducted into the Order of Eagle Rising Society; and CW4 (Ret.) Leonard Dungey, who at age 95 shared his Army story in his autobiography "The Best Man I Can Be."

Chiles is a retired Chief Warrant Officer Four and a Vietnam veteran with 38 years of military service on active duty and in the Army Reserve. He was the first recipient of the CW4 Michael J. Novasel Outstanding Warrant Officer of the Year Award and the Don Hess Lifetime Achievement Award.

The e-book is available for \$9.99 (hardcover \$28.95 plus shipping) at [www.booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com), as well as [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com).





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**SAFETY FIRST** By Jose Bermudez, Certified Safety Professional

## Safe or unsafe – what are the odds?

My primary intent when writing in this column about safety and health will be to communicate to our readers the conditions, and actions, that may cause accidents, injuries, and deaths – away from work.

There will be occasions when off-the-job-safety and work safety conditions and consequences are similar. Then, work safety will be addressed.

Our point of reference is how we think of safety and health. Whether on or off the job, risk perception and reality vary with individuals, and with their respective environment.

At work, we follow written policies, procedures, and formal training. At home, there is no formal requirement to act safely, aside from written instructions that may come with equipment and tools when purchased.

If we behave safely because our employer and management require it, but not because we value it, our actions away from work may not be consistent with our behavior at work if safe behavior is not a personal value.

Often, conditions and causes that we perceive as unsafe may not be as they seem. In this day and age of casino and online gambling, we need to review the odds of dying from specific causes as compiled by the Na-

tional Safety Council in their Injury Facts 2017 publication. These lifetime odds are statistical averages over the entire U.S. population, and do not reflect the possibility of death for a particular person from a specific cause.

Our top causes of unintentional injury and death away from work, according to Injury Facts 2017 from the National Safety Council, include:

<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Odds of Dying</u>
Heart Disease and Cancer	1 in 7
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	1 in 28
Intentional Self-harm	1 in 95
Unintentional Poisoning by Exposure to Noxious Substance (prescription, drug abuse, asphyxiation)	1 in 96
Motor Vehicle Crash	1 in 114
Fall	1 in 127

1. Poisoning, 2. Motor Vehicle Crashes, 3. Falls, 4. Choking and Suffocation, 5. Drowning, 6. Fires and Burns, and 7. Natural and Environmental Incidents.

Consequently, a relatively closer concern than lifetime odds of dying are physical and environmental conditions that pose a need for timely proac-

tive behavior, and response from each of us.

In our daily lives we may not view the previously cited causes as actual diseases, risks and hazards that can affect us individually. Our thinking could be that these conditions – causes, illnesses and injuries

– do not apply. Our actions – driving, smoking, drinking and eating and at-risk behavior – may not be recognized as a cause that can result in a given consequence.

In the future, we will connect the environment and behavior that can bring about a specific event and an injury or fatality. We will also review methods and actions to prevent accidents and injuries. The areas covered will be more common to our environment and not necessarily follow the referred lists since our focus is safety and accident prevention. We may also focus on subjects such as heat stress or other relevant topics at a given time.

So stay with us and be safe!

*Editor's Note: Jose Bermudez, a safety professional for nearly 40 years, has worked as a consultant and a regional safety and health manager for colleges, hospitals and an environmental engineering consulting firm, working for companies such as General Electric, Waste Management, Inc. and Quaker Oats. He received the designation of Certified Safety Professional from the Board of Certified Safety Professionals. His column is presented as a public service.*

**Cuentito for today**

## The Everyday Trials and Smiles of Pops and Nana

By Susie Perales

We had a heck of a day today. Wait. We've had a hellish six months. My hubby had major oral surgery about six months ago. He had to have all his upper teeth extracted. He had a hard time getting used to the temporary implants. By the end of the six months he was looking forward to getting the permanent ones put in. But he has been having a lot of pain and we were worried he might have an infection.

On Saturday we went to see the oral surgeon to see why he was in so much pain for the last month or more. He couldn't even eat ice cream! There is nothing like no ice cream to motivate my hubby to see the dentist ASAP.

This poor man has just been eating soup mostly every day. I'm thinking by the end of this mess my honey is going to look like Tom Cruise—todo flaquito.

The surgeon had to unscrew all of his implants and when he saw them he was shaking his head in disbelief. All the implants were shattered! So, now pops has to go through this ordeal again. He has to wait to heal and in six months the new implants are going in! I pray they are ok this time around.

It's been hard on me, too. I fell in December and I'm still suffering from the pain it caused to my arms. First, I was told it might be a dislocated shoulder on my right arm. Now it looks like I have a torn rotator cuff. I have been waiting forever to get approval to see a doctor to give me a final diagnosis. It hurts me when I try to do things I have to do. Today I was trying to figure out why I had no internet. Opening the ONT panel was no easy task for me. It wouldn't budge, and I knew I was going to be crying later on from trying to pry it open.

I wasn't able to fix the problem after hours of YouTube videos. I called Frontier, but the guy couldn't help me, because their system was down! WTHeck! But I am a determined Nana.

I managed to open the panel

with a little help from my espo-so and followed all the steps to trouble shoot it, but it was still flashing fail! It was red like my angry eyes. I tried everything possible with my modem, the panel and the battery. I have no idea why it's not working.

After crying out of frustration I got a text from my son, Danny. He was letting me know that he was coming over to help me mañana! Thank God for His many miracles, big and small!

With that light at the end of my horrible day I sat down to vote for tomorrow. That was a bloody chore. Those bubbles on the voting card are so tiny that even with my glasses on I had a difficult time staying in the lines. Can't they make these dang things user friendly for old timers? I bet no viejitos are able to see those itsy-bitsy dots you have to mark a perfect oval in! It is 2018 and they still can't find something easier!

My honey got up from his nap later in the evening. He takes extra naps when he sees me seeing red. I don't blame him. I can get pretty scary when I can't figure techy stuff out. I told him I stopped messing with it.

Finally, I had a minute to put my TENS unit on (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation, OK? It is a pain reliever. The publisher of this newspaper made me explain it.) to see if it would calm the awful pain in my arm. I love that little gadget!

A few hours later it was time to give my viejito his meds, but I couldn't open the containers. I told him to please help me and to get one of the pills and bite it in half! He turned slowly and looked at me smiling with this huge toothless smile and says, "OK!"

OMG! We laughed so hard our panzas were aching. He said, "how could you forget I have no dientes," and I replied, "pues, two days ago you had all your teeth, so I totally forgot!" "But you know something Viejo, you just made my day and that was the best pain medicine I've had in a long while." Y se acabó el cuentito for today.

### A new La Nueva Voz publishes each month on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Pick up your free copy of La Nueva Voz at these locations and dozens more:

- Pomona City Hall lobby
- Pomona library
- Claremont library
- Claremont City Hall lobby
- La Verne City Hall lobby
- La Verne Senior Citizens Center
- Pomona Chamber of Commerce, 101 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona
- Downtown Pomona Owners Association, 119 W. 2nd St., Pomona
- Pomona Unified School District administration building lobby
- Western University of Health Sciences Patient Care Center
- Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center maternity lobby, outpatient services, emergency room
- Gold Strike Market Carniceria, 412 N. Park Ave., Pomona
- Jicamez Tacos Y Carniceria, 604 E. Mission Blvd., Pomona
- Fairplex Chevron, Fairplex Drive and San Bernardino Freeway, Pomona
- Discount Market, Philadelphia Street and Towne Avenue, Pomona
- LaunderLand Coin Op Laundry, 744 E. Holt Ave., Pomona
- American Legion Post #30, 239 E. Holt Ave., Pomona
- Pomona Eagles, 854 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona





## Pomona native serving with U.S. Navy in Romania welcomes kids on 'Children's Day,' a Romanian national holiday

U.S. Navy Sailors from Naval Support Facility Deveselu (Romania) – including Pomona native Master-at-Arms 1st Class Peter Peidra – and Romanian 99th Military Base service members hosted more than 100 kids from Olt County last month for “Children’s Day,” a Romanian national holiday, providing displays and demonstrations giving the visitors a look at everything from weapons to high tech intelligence vans.

“The most important reason we have the children here on Children’s Day is we want them to have fun and feel appreciated,” said Capt. Charlos Washington, commanding officer for the support facility. “The children here were able to see what their parents do and how they support the Romanian military, the NATO mission and how they interact with our Navy in the U.S.”

He said the event enables the kids to see the U.S. Navy and the Romanian military as “a team that builds camaraderie.”

“We love having the children here and we want to teach them and let them learn some things,” he added.

Romanian 99th Base Commander Col. Razvan Bratulescu also enjoyed the festivities on his base.

“It is pretty impressive to see all the kids running around and enjoying themselves,” he said. “It is important to show our kids what we do and what our role is in this military system. It teaches them to join the military and help their nation out or it brings them up to have respect for their military.”

The Navy Support Facility is the first Aegis Ashore Missile Defense Facility placed into operation, providing support to NATO’s overall ballistic missile defense system.

The Aegis command consists of a fire-control radar deckhouse and an associated Aegis command, control and communications suite, and housing launch modules that contain SM-3 defense missiles.



**Photo courtesy of U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jeremy Starr**  
**POMONA NATIVE SHOWS HOW IT IS DONE DURING 'CHILDREN'S DAY' IN ROMANIA** -- Master-at-Arms 1st Class Peter Peidra, a Pomona native assigned to Naval Support Facility Deveselu (in Deveselu, Romania), holds an M240 demonstration during a Children's Day event last month at the U.S. Navy's Romanian 99th Military Base. The military base plays a key role in ballistic missile defense in Eastern Europe.

**GETTING INTO THE SPIRIT OF THE OLYMPICS** -- The spirit of the Olympic movement rolled into Pomona last weekend in an annual celebration commemorating the birth of the modern Olympic Games in 1948. More than 2,400 similar events are taking place nationwide during the months of June and July, along with activities in more than 160 countries worldwide. Pictured are some of the kids in USA Fit Force Taekwondo classes enjoying some of the games in between their taekwondo demonstrations and “sparring.” USA Fit Force owner Master Frank Gonzales says the school, which he operates with his wife, Vita, provides “training for a balanced life” for kids, adults, and businesses with benefits including physical fitness self-awareness, weight control and maintenance and more. Taekwondo is recognized by the California State Games, United States Olympic Committee and the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. Gonzales and his wife are both ambassadors with the Pomona Chamber of Commerce.




**'MASTER' FRANK AND JEFF** -- Taekwondo Master Frank Gonzales, Jr., a sixth degree black belt and master instructor, at left, poses with Jeff Schenkel, publisher of La Nueva Voz, at last weekend's "Olympic Day" at the Village at Indian Hill, featuring taekwondo demonstrations, kid games, board breaking, community booths, food and music to celebrate and commemorate the birth of the modern Olympic games. The event, held outside Gonzales' taekwondo school, USA Fit Force Taekwondo, Inc., Pomona's only non-profit taekwondo school, was sanctioned by the International Olympic Committee. Gonzales asked Schenkel to volunteer to provide a little music for the event for the second consecutive year to entertain both families and vendors and Schenkel did -- everything from Merle Haggard, Johnny Cash and Jerry Lee Lewis to Eric Clapton and Neil Young. Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz recorded Schenkel's performance as a "live video" on Facebook (Eye on Pomona and Renee Barbee Facebook sites) and it had been viewed by nearly 400 people by the time La Nueva Voz went on the press for this month's issue. (It is now available on YouTube -- search for "Jeff Schenkel.")



The following public service ads are courtesy of La Nueva Voz:

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## Retired Marine says military means everything to him, all because of a billboard

Retired Marine and Vietnam War veteran Walter Kuiland, guest speaker last month at the annual Memorial Day program at Pomona Valley Memorial Park, told the audience that to him, “the military has meant everything” – and all because he parked under a recruiting sign.

He explained that after graduating from high school in 1970, he was homeless and living in his car “having escaped the clutches of an evil stepmother.”

Kuiland said he was on his way to New York to live with his mother when he got to Twentynine Palms, lost his wallet, had an overheated Pontiac and was almost out of gasoline. He parked his car at a city park and went to sleep in the back seat. The next morning, when he woke up and looked out the windshield, he looked up and saw he had parked under a billboard that said “Join the United States Marine Corps.”

In a speech that was beginning to sound like a Forrest Gump type of story, Kuiland called it a revelation and decided that joining the Corps wouldn’t be that bad of an

idea, but first he had to get back to Los Angeles.

Of course, filling up his gas tank was a problem and he tried asking three gas stations if he could do some work in exchange for gas. On his fourth try, the owner gave him the gas and wished him well.

He said he headed straight to the Marine Corps recruiting station, at the time in Pico Rivera, but was told he had to wait for the next class to sign up. So for the next six weeks he continued living out of his car.

Eventually he made it to boot camp.

“Whenever all of us who raised our hands and took an oath to defend this country from all enemies, foreign and domestic, what we are in essence doing . . . is that we are giving our country a blank check for our lives, a blank check that says that they can send us anywhere, and that we are willing to pay with our lives with that blank check,” Kuiland said.

“Today we are here to honor those individuals who had their check cashed and are no longer here,” he added.

He served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1970 to 1974.

Following his military service, Kuiland used the veterans benefits to go to college – and he stayed in college “because they kept sending checks” – enough to pay for his car, his rent and to get him through college.

Three and a half years later he



Marine Corps Veteran  
Walter Kuiland



Flags were placed at grave sites of U.S. military veterans the Saturday before Memorial Day at Pomona Valley Memorial Park. Volunteer scouts were from Boy Scout Troop 818 (Pomona), 202 (Chino), 214 (Chino Hills), 777 (Diamond Bar) and Cub Scout Troop 309 (Ontario), according to scouting’s Assistant District Commissioner Don Bloch.

graduated from Cal State University Fullerton with a degree in business and worked for the federal government for 25 years, eventually studying law and graduating from law school at the age of 42.

He said he became an attorney, retired, went on to become a public defender with the Los Angeles County Public Defender’s office in Pomona and then retired from that.

And because of his service and the CalVet program, his son was able to go on to college and receive a master’s degree, also from Cal State Fullerton.

“So to me the military has meant everything,” he said. “I would not have the life that I have, I would not have the family that I have, the creature comforts that I have, all of that has been made possible because one day I happened to park underneath a billboard in Twentynine Palms **Military means everything... pg. 19**



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## Military means everything... from pg. 18

and saw a sign that changed my life forever.”

But he also said that his military service has taught him “what it is to be an American.”

And he said in these divisive times he remembers what he was told at boot camp – that everyone was the same color – they all wore green.

“It seems to me that in times like this we all have to remember that we all wear the same color, and that’s the color of an American,” Kuiland said.

### Running across America

Also speaking at the observance was Katie Strong, who this month started out on her run across the United States – 30 to 40 miles a day – to Arlington National Monument and then on to the U.S. Capitol – each day planting 22 American flags along her route to honor military veterans, an estimated 1,700 flags altogether.

She told the audience that the military veteran suicide rate is more than 22 each day and her goal is to raise funds to provide service dogs for veterans suf-

fering from post-traumatic stress syndrome or who were wounded in combat.

Strong said her father, stepfather and father-in-law all were military veterans and all were purple heart recipients who were willing to lay down their lives in battle for “anyone that is American.”

“They taught me to be a patriot, to respect the flag, to respect veterans and those currently serving,” she said. “I feel that I’ve had a very comfortable life, I’ve lived free and I’ve enjoyed that because of the sacrifices of hundreds of thousands of veterans.”

She said it is now her time to serve.

### Women in the military

Retired Navy Lt. Commander Vanessa Burgos, who served in Haiti, Iraq and Afghanistan and presented a tribute to service



**HONORING VETERANS** -- Katie Strong, at left, who is running across the U.S. to honor military veterans, is pictured with Pomona Valley Memorial Park General Manager Janet Roy.

women, said that women make up about 16 percent of the total military force including the reserve component.

“Many still view volunteering and serving in the military as better suited for men,” she said. “I am here to tell you that in my 26 years of service I have proudly served alongside many phenomenal women.”

### Other guests

Rev. Beth Bingham, of Pomona’s Pilgrim Congregational Church, said in her invocation that “it is indeed safer soil on which we stand . . . for the men and women we honor today are those who left their homes and their families to serve their country so that each of us may feel

safe in our homes and with our families.”

“Our great country would not be what it is today if not for the men and women throughout our history who have been willing to give their lives for something much greater than themselves,” said Congresswoman Norma Torres.

Pomona City Councilmember Rubio Gonzalez, representing Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval to honor those veterans who gave their life to ensure freedom for others, thanked all the veterans for their service.

And Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole thanked the veterans for their service, adding that her uncle served in the Marine Corps and was killed in action at the age of 18. She added that her father, who served in the Army Air Corps, was buried in the Pomona cemetery.

City Councilmember Robert Torres wished everybody a happy Memorial Day and thanked the veterans “for their service and **Military means everything... pg. 20**



Retired Navy Lt. Commander Vanessa Burgos

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Limit one coupon per table per visit. Expires 7-31-18 LNV



## Military means everything... from pg. 19

their sacrifice to our great country.”

And Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez said it is important to “put a time aside in our busy



Dr. Huu Dinh Vo

schedules to honor and remember the commitment of our veterans, especially the ones that didn’t make it back and also the families and the sacrifices they’ve also done.”

Pomona Unified School District Board President Dr. Roberta Perlman said she was the daughter of a disabled World War II veteran.

“This Memorial Day let us take a moment to think about the many soldiers who died or were disabled fighting for our liberty,” she said. “And let us reflect on the rights and freedoms that we sometimes take for granted in our country today.”

Yolanda Fuquay, assistant field deputy for Los Angeles Supervi-

sor Hilda Solis, said it was a day “to remember and honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country.”

“As a proud American and daughter of immigrants, Supervisor Solis cares deeply for our country, particularly those who take the courageous and selfless step to serve in our military.”

“For those of you who have lost loved ones, know that their sacrifice was not in vain and it was made to protect all of us in the name of defending our values and what makes us all true Americans,” she said.

And Pomona’s Dr. Huu Dinh Vo, President of the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley, said he came to this country in 1975 as a refugee with the “boat people” after the Vietnam War.

“(In the) Vietnam War we had 58,282 die to defend (the) freedom of our country,” Vo said, adding that we must be thankful and grateful for those who are still alive.

“I came here empty handed 43 years ago but with the help of America I became a doctor here and serve (the) community,” Vo said. He has practiced medicine



La Verne’s Lutheran High School Navy Junior ROTC presents a firing squad salute.



Rev. Beth Bingham of Pomona’s Pilgrim Congregational Church offers the invocation as Pomona’s American Legion Post 30 Commander Richard Haro, master of ceremonies, looks on.



Bagpiper Larry Grossman

in the U.S. for 40 years and today practices in Pomona.

“So today I can express my gratitude for the ones who served for America and their families and then the ones who left behind,” he said. “America is number one in the world. I salute you.”



Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole



Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez



Pomona City Councilmember Rubio Gonzalez



Pomona City Councilmember Robert Torres



Yolanda Fuquay Office of Supervisor Hilda Solis



Pomona Unified School District Board President Dr. Roberta Perlman



Members of the Pomona Concert Band



Congresswoman Norma Torres