



## Celebrating our nation . . .

When it comes to things like honoring our nation and its flag, Pomona's American Legion Post 30 isn't going to let something like a worldwide pandemic stand in the way of observing Independence Day on July 4, a federal holiday commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

So, as with so many events these days, Post 30 partnered with the City of Pomona and conducted a special "virtual" presentation of the colors by the Post 30 color guard on the steps of Pomona City Hall.

The morning ceremony included the singing of the National Anthem by Katie Hudson, guest singers, comments, and even the presenta-

tion of special certificates of appreciation to La Nueva Voz and the City of Pomona.

Ceremonies were live streamed over the city's Facebook page and should still be on there (scroll down a ways to get back to July 4).

Pomona Councilmember and Vice Mayor Nora Garcia, representing Mayor Tim Sandoval at the event, quoted from the Declaration of Independence:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," she read.

Garcia pointed out that later

in history, the country's Founding Fathers incorporated the phrase "a more perfect union" in the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution.

"A more perfect union implies that the progress of the American experience is never complete," Garcia said. "In these trying



**Facebook screen photo**  
**'LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING'** -- Linda Wright Lee, at left, and Ethel Gardner, both representing the National Council of Negro Women, perform the song 'Lift Every Voice and Sing,' today known as the 'Black National Anthem,' on the steps of Pomona City Hall during Pomona American Legion Post 30's Fourth of July streaming video ceremony honoring the nation's Independence Day, veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and more. Pictured, at rear, are members of the Post 30 color guard, led by Second Vice Commander Bob Radcliff, at left.

## . . . and protesting our nation

An estimated 150 protestors rallied at Pomona's Tony Cerda Park and marched six blocks to Pomona Unified School District administrative offices last month calling for a laundry list of changes including adding ethnic studies to the curriculum, opening up voting in school district elections to youth and non-citizens, and removing

**Protesting... pg. 3**



**Photo by Renee Barbee**

**CALLING FOR CHANGE** -- Protestors march north on Garey Avenue in Pomona -- from Tony Cerda Park on Grand Avenue to headquarters offices of Pomona Unified School District -- to call for making ethnic studies a graduation requirement, opening up voting in school district elections to youth and non-citizens, and removing police from school campuses. The peaceful protest started with a rally at the park.

times we remember the principles, values and hope with which our country was created, and we bring it forward today to remind us that while the United States may not be perfect, it is written into our Constitution that we constantly strive to achieve life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all."

"I ask you all to please honor those who have fought for these ideals and died, for all of the immigrants that came to our shores because of these ideals, and celebrate safely and humbly," she added.

Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold welcomed a "virtual" com-

munity to the ceremonies "as we celebrate the 244th year since the Declaration of Independence."

"It was the first formal statement by a nation of people asserting the right to choose their own government," he said. "With our current state of the pandemic and issues surrounding the military, (at) Chas P. Rowe American Legion Post 30, we stand and support all of our service members."

Arnold presented a certificate of appreciation virtually to La Nueva Voz as this newspaper covered the event on-line. La Nueva Voz had

**Celebrating our nation... pg. 4**

### Be a voice for your community... A message from Tri-City Mental Health

Anyone can experience the challenges of mental illness regardless of their race, gender, or sexual orientation. While mental illness does not discriminate, one's background and identity can make access to mental health treatment more difficult. Racism, social injustice, and limited access to care contribute to poor mental health outcomes, including suicide, among racial, ethnic and minority populations. Since 2008, National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month has been observed each July to raise awareness and address the unique experiences Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ+ communities face when seeking mental health treatment.

#### Would you like to help raise awareness and strengthen the mental wellbeing of our local community?

We invite you to join Tri-City's Cultural Inclusion and Diversity Committee (CIDC) and support the mental health needs of BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities in Pomona, La Verne and Claremont. Our mission is to help elevate voices, to listen and better understand, and to ensure high quality, culturally appropriate services are accessible to all. Become a member of one of our new CIDC subcommittees: African American Family Wellness Advisory Council and ¡Adelante! Latino and Hispanic Wellness Committee. Members consist of clients, consumers, families, advocates, community members and local partners committed to the wellbeing and empowerment of our diverse communities. Your voice is important! For more information about CIDC membership and how to get involved with future committees, please contact Jennifer Phang, CIDC Chair, at [jphang@tricitymhs.org](mailto:jphang@tricitymhs.org) or (909) 326-4648.

#### ¿Le gustaría ayudar a crear conciencia y mejorar el bienestar de nuestra comunidad Latina y Hispana?

Únase a Tri-City y a su comité ¡Adelante! para el bienestar de la comunidad Latina y Hispana. Los miembros de ¡Adelante! consisten en clientes, consumidores, familias, defensores y miembros de la comunidad que se comprometen al bienestar de las personas y familias Latinas y Hispanas en Pomona, La Verne y Claremont. ¡Su Voz es muy importante! Para obtener más información sobre nuestro comité y cómo convertirse en un miembro, comuníquese con Daisy Martinez a [dmartinez@tricitymhs.org](mailto:dmartinez@tricitymhs.org) o lláme al número (909) 326-4630.

For those who need support, Tri-City is here. Call us at (866) 623-9500 or visit [www.tricitymhs.org](http://www.tricitymhs.org).

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Photo by Renee Barbee

**NEW ICE CREAM SHOP IN POMONA!** -- Delicious Freedom USA, a new shop offering ice cream, yogurt, funnel cakes and more, is expected to open for business soon in Downtown Pomona. The ice cream shop, once the site of the old New York Deli, is located at 310 S. Thomas St., Pomona, and will be open seven days a week. Owner Virginia Villasenor said she was inspired to open the business after seeing adults and kids eating funnel cakes. She said she selected Pomona "to have a place where people can go to eat desserts instead of waiting for a festival or going out far to eat a simple funnel cake." Pictured is Geraldine Mendoza, 13, Virginia's daughter, who helps in the business. She is standing in front of a new mural on the wall of the store. For more information, call (818) 219-1877.



Photo by Duane Smith

**NEW MURAL INSIDE POMONA PUBLIC LIBRARY** -- An unveiling of a new mural inside the children's section of the Pomona Public Library will take place at a future date during an official dedication, according to city officials. Pictured is just a small portion of the mural on the wall above bookshelves. The mural was produced by artist Athena Hahn, who was commissioned by the City of Pomona and funded out of public art "in-lieu" monies as approved by the city's Cultural Arts Commission. Developers building new projects in Pomona are required to either provide approved public art on their building or, instead, to deposit funds into the city's "in-lieu" account which is then used for other public art projects. The mural has been a project of both the Cultural Arts Commission and the Board of Library Trustees for the past four years. The Pomona Public Library is located in the Pomona Civic Center.

## New director of Cal Poly Pomona Foundation

### looks for ways to support students' 'academic side'

College auxiliary services veteran Jared Ceja has taken over the reins as executive director of the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation with a long-term goal of finding more ways to engage with the university's academic mission and the academic side of students.

"We already employ hundreds of students on a normal basis," he said in a telephone interview this month with La Nueva Voz. "I do see a potential for growth in that area where we ... can develop more links to the academic learning and the 'learn by doing' philosophy that Cal Poly so much enjoys with the academic mission."

Ceja said he also wants to grow the foundation's link with the community, explaining that the university already has mechanisms in place to conduct commerce, particularly through the Innovation Village Research Park on campus.

He said the foundation will be looking at ways to add opportunities to increase products and services on campus to benefit either the academic community or to enhance philanthropic relationships with the school.

And Ceja will be looking at the foundation's existing operation to assure it is using best practices and to ensure it is responding to the univer-

sity's needs.

Ceja came on board in March after serving as a division director at Cal State University Long Beach, auxiliary services director at Chaffey College, and bookstore manager at Santa Ana College.

Prior to working in higher education, he held positions in corporate retail, banking and theme park operations.

"This is a dream job for me," he said. "I have wanted to be at Cal Poly ... for a decade."

He replaces Paul Storey at the foundation who served as executive director for 22 years and retired in June 2017.

Ceja said while he loved his experience in both the private sector and higher education, Cal Poly "is what I consider home."

"The foundation has such a strong reputation in NA-CAS (National Association of College Auxiliary Services) and in the Cal State system for being innovative ... in bringing value to the institution," he told La Nueva Voz. "I wanted to be a part of that."

Of course, he came on board at the time of an international pandemic which he said presents a challenge. He explained decisions had to be made to make certain the foundation was not "poised just to weather the storm of COVID but to reemerge and grow coming out of this."

Then what are some of his next steps?

For one, he said, the foundation will assess needs to determine if the university needs more housing and, if so, it will look to respond to that.

The foundation currently operates University Village, which provides campus housing to 1,300 stu-

Ways to support students... pg. 4



Jared Ceja

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## Fairplex head Miguel Santana stepping down

Fairplex President and CEO Miguel Santana, who took over the reins of Pomona's Fairplex in 2017, is stepping down and will not seek an extension of his four-year \$485,000 contract, according to the Los Angeles Times.

The former City of Los Angeles city administrative officer told the Times the financial impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the organization – and his own plans for his future – played a role in his decision.

Santana canceled the 2020 LA County Fair in May for the first time since World War II.

And after the pandemic hit, he and his staff cut their salaries by as much as 25 percent.

While he told the Times he has no position lined up, he said he now wants to focus his attention on issues of equity in Los Angeles.

He told his board in a letter that Fairplex needs to figure out its priorities since the future of public events will be questionable for the near future. But he told the Times his decision to leave was not based on any conflict with the board.

Santana replaced Jim Henwood at Fairplex. Henwood left in 2016.

## Protesting... from pg. 1

police and representatives of the military from all campuses.

Participants marched east on Grand Avenue and then north on Garey Avenue, walking in the street and carrying placards with two Pomona police patrol cars bringing up the rear with lights flashing to serve as a buffer between protestors in the traffic lanes and on-coming traffic behind them.

Police did not interfere as the protestors assembled in front of the school district offices, but took a position across Garey to observe the orderly activities.

Organizer Fabian Pavon, a Pomona parks and recreation commissioner and a board member of the Latino and Latina Roundtable of Pomona and San Gabriel Valley, told La Nueva Voz before the rally the event really was a coalition of community organizers from a variety of groups in solidarity with the "Black Lives Matter" movement, an outpouring in response to the death of George Floyd at the hands of police May 27 in Minneapolis.

He said representatives of the group planned to meet with members of the Pomona Unified School District board the following Friday, a meeting which Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman, in a telephone interview with La Nueva Voz this month, confirmed took place as a "Zoom" on-line video conference.

Rally speaker Eric Vasquez, who said he served as a youth advocate and mentor for overlooked youth in the community, has worked with former foster youth, youth with gang affiliations and those who he said are "struggling."

"People call them 'at risk' . . . but we call

that 'at promise' because we believe that they are the key to community revitalization and change," Vasquez said. "With a little bit of love, a little bit of support, a little bit of strengthening their character, their leadership and their ability to be contributing members in this community, they will carry the torch into the future and lead our community to health."

He said the protest was in keeping with recent conversations calling for systemic change.

"We have made progress . . . but we've got a long way to go and the time for real change is now," he said. "All three of the issues that were promoted (by organizers) as areas that we desire to see change in are near and dear to my heart but none more than the issue of removing a police presence on school campuses."

"We are willing as a community to work through the kinks, through pilot programs and begin to change the culture of our schools, our youth, our communities and the world," he said.

Speakers called for an ethnic program in the schools as a graduation requirement to enable students to learn "the truth and history of their people." **Protests... pg. 12**



Three placards at last month's rally sum it all up -- no police in schools, voter suppression and ethnic studies as a graduation requirement.



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## Ways to support students... from pg. 2

dents. It also operates the Kellogg West Conference Center and Hotel on campus.

And if more digital course material offerings are needed while the university is working remotely, the foundation will need to respond to that through the Bronco Book Store which is one of the foundation's units.

The bookstore is already looking to get involved with publishing companies to be able to offer students the best price and materials that are adaptive.

He added that course content itself is selected by the college faculty, although the bookstore works with faculty to best respond to needs.

In the area of dining, Ceja said staff is continuing to work to provide nutritionally sound, affordable meals that meet a variety of dietary restrictions and are something people want.

And the foundation will continue

to provide support in the areas of grants and contracts.

"We have the ability to really enhance the environment for everyone who comes in contact with Cal Poly," he said, adding that he sees that as another responsibility of the foundation.

"I am a big believer in the value of education and the fact that that helps elevate individuals to achieve," he said.

And, while in today's world the value of higher education is questioned more and more, "our goal is to show that value" as a foundation "to make sure the student experience is optimized."

"Education has helped me get where I am today," he said, adding that if even one reader reads this story and is encouraged to attend college, "that would make my day."

Ceja received an MBA from the University of Redlands, a bachelor's degree in business economics and accounting from UC Santa

Barbara, and an AA degree from Citrus College.

He has served as the western regional representative to the National Association of College Auxiliary Services and serves on the national board of the group that brings together all of the enterprise operations on the university campus from bookstores, dining, hotels, parking and other areas out of the academic realm and with a revenue element involved.

Ceja also has held "CASP" (certified auxiliary services professional) certification since 2013.

A native of Southern California, Ceja was born and raised in Baldwin Park and is a resident of Pomona.

The Cal Poly Pomona Foundation, the largest employer of students on campus, offers valuable work experience and hands-on training to some 1,500 Cal Poly University Pomona students each year. It also contributes operating

support to nearly 1,100 foundation and scholarship programs every year, including Bronco Athletics and the Norman J. Priest Scholarship.

It administers grants and contracts, contributes to campus security, and supports several university publications.

The foundation, established in 1966 as a 501(c)(3) public benefit charitable-educational organization, contributes more than \$1 million annually to the university.

### Hispanic Chamber of Commerce offers free small business on-line computer class

A free on-line eight-week computer skills class is being offered by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Pomona Valley beginning Friday, July 31.

The class, which will be presented entirely in Spanish, is open to all small business operators in the Pomona Valley area.

Included will be taking advantage of the "world of opportunities" on the internet, along with computer skills and concepts from scratch to advanced.

Included will be computer components and program management including PowerPoint and Excel, e-mail and more.

The first class is scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m. July 31.

To register, call (909) 568-7917 or (909) 507-9401.

For more information, visit the web site at [www.camaradecomerciohispanadepomona.com](http://www.camaradecomerciohispanadepomona.com).

## Setting the record straight

A news story in last month's La Nueva Voz said a group of students at Pomona's Western University of Health Sciences is working with Pomona Unified School District officials to provide support to the school district's nearly 200 students who are homeless and on their own, something the group believes is exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although the source of the story was a Western University news release, La Nueva Voz did not make it clear that no students were involved. Working with the school district were members of a group called the Pomona Leadership Network who put together backpacks filled with food, clothing and other essentials.

Patricia Lozano, Western University's executive assistant to the university's chief of community and governmental relations, is a member of the organization and participated in the effort.

Others were Lauren Seganos Cohen, Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren; Lidia Manzanares, a Pomona resident; Lina Mira, Latino and Latina Roundtable; Adriana Dale, Cardenas Market; Jerry Perez, Pomona Public Works Department; and Oscar De Leon, Certified Farmers Market, Claremont and Riverside County.

To contribute to the backpack project, e-mail [ptownleaders7@gmail.com](mailto:ptownleaders7@gmail.com).

## Celebrating our nation... from pg. 1

been asked not to attend "live" in the interest of maintaining social distancing.

"Thank you so much for always standing and supporting us, always being part of our organization, and always letting us be heard by the City of Pomona and the community," Arnold said.

"Renee (Barbee) and Jeff (Schenkel) from La Nueva Voz consistently try to attend," he continued. "They take photos and publish articles of . . . events. We appreciate the constant effort to inform the community of our outreach services."

Arnold presented a second certificate of appreciation to the City of Pomona, explaining that Post 30 was appreciative of all the hard work the city does.

"They continue to support us, they continue to see the vision and mission that we're bringing to our veterans in the City of Pomona," he said. "We're building a bridge and we're creating the system that has been broken for many years in our city. Veterans have been left behind but now with our new mission of 'no one left behind' (we are) pushing toward a new day, a new broad light in our city."

Councilmember Garcia accepted the certificate on behalf of the city.

Post 30 Adjutant Stefanie Boatman spoke in commemoration of

Native Americans and the slaves of two centuries ago.

"As we remember the 13 colonies that began the growth of America in 1776, I would also like us to remember the Native American tribes . . . that were met with injustice during our American Revolution," she said. "We value you, our brothers and sisters, especially the lives that were part of building this nation."

"(And) the slaves of early America were the backbone of the freedom that we have today and deserve the recognition, appreciation and our apology (for) the injustices," she added.

Community activists and volunteers Ethel Gardner and Linda Wright Lee, both members of the National Council of Negro Women, performed the song "Lift Every Voice and Sing," a song Lee explained in her introduction was first written as a poem and was first performed by 500 school children in celebration of President Lincoln's birthday on Feb. 12, 1900, in Jacksonville,

Florida.

It was adopted by the NAACP as its official song and today, known as the Black National Anthem, is considered one of the most cherished songs in the African-American civil rights movement, she explained.



Facebook screen photo Pomona's American Legion Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold conducts a "virtual" Fourth of July ceremony in partnership with the City of Pomona this month on the steps of Pomona City Hall. The ceremony was streamed live over the city's Facebook page.

## La Nueva Voz

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**Pomona City Hall keeping up a good front but COVID-related revenue reductions leave anticipated \$6 million budget deficit to come out of reserves**

The City of Pomona has been doing a good job dealing with the COVID-19 crisis by getting City Hall opened up again to get back to some sort of business as usual, but issues related to the worldwide pandemic have resulted in dramatic reductions in revenue – roughly 7 percent, or about \$8.2 million, less than originally budgeted for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

And projections for next year don't look much better – perhaps about \$1.3 million more coming in compared to this year, or an anticipated \$110.8 million in anticipated general fund revenues.

As a city spokesman pointed out – and the city's budget resolution city council report indicated – property tax, sales tax and the utility user tax make up 75 percent of the city's total general fund revenues which, along with other sources, are estimated to decrease due to COVID-19.

The city's total 2020-2021 budget for citywide expenditures is proposed at \$272.2 million and includes seven operating fund types – the general fund, special revenue funds, debt service funds, capital project funds, enterprise

funds, internal service funds and housing authority funds.

And the new fiscal year's budget anticipates a \$5.9 million deficit of revenues over expenditures – a deficit which, as the council report indicated, likely will need to come out of reserve funds.

Reductions have been made and city staff is reviewing additional possible cuts, along with any possible new revenue sources that may become available.

"We understand that known cases (of COVID-19) are growing in Pomona and that's why it's critical to follow the key guidelines of state and county health officials," said Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval. "I strongly encourage all residents to maintain social distancing, wear your masks, avoid large gatherings and wash those hands. We will recover more quickly if everyone does their part."

At least city staff is following its own advice by closely monitoring all state and county health official guidelines and directives.

"We have installed protective equipment including sneeze shields at all public service counters and staff locations where ap-

propriate social distancing cannot be otherwise maintained," said city spokesperson Mark Gluba. "Staff has also implemented frequent disinfecting protocols in line with these guidelines and we are requiring use of personal protective equipment, including masks, as well as no-contact temperature screens for all staff and members of the public entering city facilities."

He said City Hall currently is open to the public from 8:30 to 11 a.m. and from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

There are queuing locations at the entrances of facilities, including City Hall, to limit the number of patrons inside the buildings as a "social distancing" precaution. City staff is largely back to work at work-

sites, with efforts to maintain increased social distancing through staggering of work shifts or in-office duties and allowing for telecommuting when practical.

However, Pomona Public Library, community centers and city pools remain closed until further notice.

On a positive note, because the Sheraton Fairplex Hotel has been converted to a quarantine center for Los Angeles County, the county has submitted \$420,000 during fiscal year 2019-2020, or the

equivalent to the amount of transient occupancy tax (hotel taxes) payments that would have been received had the hotel been fully occupied.

Similar payments are expected during this fiscal year, Gluba said.

COVID is keeping other parts of the city busy, as well. Gluba said there has been a "noticeable increase in solid waste tonnage" during the pandemic.

"There was over a 50 percent increase in the amount of residen-

**A good front... pg. 14**

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**'CUSTOMERS' FOR TABLETS CAME IN ALL SIZES** -- Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis, at right, offers a free Amazon Fire 7 tablet to a "customer" this month at a special give-away at the East Los Angeles Civic Center made possible by a donation from Amazon to help an estimated 1,000 young people from low-income households who are learning remotely due to COVID-19. Another 1,000 tablets were distributed to 16 non-profits for their own kids. Included were Pomona's Project Caring and Sharing and the Pomona Economic Opportunity Center. "It's a matter of equity that all of our students have access to technology in order to stay on a level playing field with students able to afford computers, tablets and other technology," Solis said.

### Pomona's 'poet laureate' keeps busy with Instagram 'open mic' show during COVID

Pomona's inaugural poet laureate David Judah Oliver, selected by the Pomona Public Library's Board of Library Trustees for his outstanding achievements in poetry, hasn't been spending his time during the COVID-19 stay at home order just resting on his laurels (as in those laurel wreaths presented to victorious athletes in Ancient Greece).

Nope, he's been hard at work every Saturday night co-hosting a virtual open mic night on Instagram welcoming everything from poems to hip hop to acoustic vibes.

Co-hosting with Oliver is Treesje EmPowers on the show "Pride of IG Virtual Open Mic" and it is on Instagram "live."

It is presented by "The Lions of Lionlike Mindstate" which Oliver describes as his crew.

Showtime is 8 p.m. Saturdays. Just hit @lionlikeartcommunity to sign up and watch. The Instagram account has 1,164 followers.

The program originally was planned to be held "in person" at Pomona's Fairplex and plans for a poetry festival are on hold due to COVID,

So, tune in one Saturday night. You might like it. And we're not lion.

The City of Pomona announced Oliver's selection as poet laureate in December and his two-year term began in January.

The concept of the new position was to honor a local poet to increase community connection to and vitality within the art of poetry.

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**American Legion Post 30, City of Pomona host successful COVID food give-away**

Pomona's American Legion Post 30 partnered with the City of Pomona to conduct their second COVID-19 food give-away in the post parking lot last month to distribute some 100 bags of food to members of the community in need.

"It's working out really great," Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold told La Nueva Voz. "I love the fact that we are able to link up with the city and serve more than just our veteran community but the community as a whole."

He explained that each bag was able to feed a family of three to five.

Food was provided by Harvest Ministries, an organization that provides food pantry supplies to anyone providing food to a local community.

Arnold explained last month's food give-away actually was Post 30's second give-away. The first, held several months ago in the Post 30 parking lot when COVID first erupted, was for veterans only.

"As soon as we found out that all of our veterans were taken care of, we opened it up for the rest of the community," he said. "So we called local churches and we were able to feed a lot more families altogether."

Pitching in to help was Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole who said this was her second food give-away as well – she organized an earlier event at the Village at Indian Hill.

"We have some great food, we have eggs,



Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, volunteering at last month's American Legion Post 30 COVID-19 food give-away, takes a moment to pose for the camera before placing a frozen pizza in the back of a car. The City of Pomona partnered with Post 30 on the project.

Volunteers coordinate a COVID-19 food give-away in the parking lot at Pomona's American Legion Post 30 last month. The event was a joint effort conducted by Post 30 and the City of Pomona. Pictured showing off some of the items being distributed, from left, are Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold, Second Vice Commander Bob Radcliff, and community volunteer Lorraine Canales.



milk, frozen chicken, tortillas, all kinds of vegetables . . . I mean, we're really doing great today," she said.

Post 30 is located in her fourth city council district.

"(Post 30) did an amazing job – they just pitched in, they've done it before, so they are very familiar with what they have to do," Cole said. "This is our vets, this is our volunteers for the American Legion, so we're just doing wonderful."

"We're just doing whatever we have to do to keep our community safe," she added. "It doesn't matter if you have a car, if you are on a bike, if you need food, come down, we're here until the food is gone."

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Photo by Renee Barbee

**LIGHTING THE NIGHT SKIES** -- Fireworks "bursting in air" were visible in the night skies throughout Pomona on the Fourth of July (and the days leading up to the Fourth, as well as for a week or so after the holiday) as seen in these photos captured from the hills of Westmont. This year's apparent trend of more illegal fireworks than usual has been attributed to the fact that "official" fireworks displays were canceled due to COVID-19 restrictions. A spokesman for the City of Pomona said fireworks complaints to the police department were up 300 percent over last year.



**SUPERVISOR SOLIS SUPPORTS POMONA OPTIMIST PROGRAM** -- Eva Thiel-Maiz, field deputy for Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis, presents a check for \$1,000 last month to members of the Pomona Optimist Club to support the club's "My Future in Ties" scholarship program. Young men who are graduating high school seniors are invited to submit applications which include essays talking about how they have overcome struggles in life to be a better person and not let their roadblocks determine their future, according to Optimist Club President Lorraine Canales. Winners receive a complete suit of clothes that they then can wear to attend a prom, graduation, college presentations and other special occasions. This year, 49 students submitted applications. Due to efforts of club members Hugo and Sonia Molina, who belong to a group of realtors who believe in the cause, the club raised enough money to buy all 49 young men a suit. Members will meet with all 49 winners to buy the suits once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, Canales said. The Pomona Optimist Club created this program six years ago. "Our experiences have been so rewarding to see these young men wear their suits with pride," Canales said. Pictured at a check presentation in Solis' field office in Pomona are, from left, Sonia and Hugo Molina, Eva Thiel-Maiz, and Lorraine Canales.

**Pomona Valley Democratic Club takes stand with 'Black Lives Matter' movement**

Members of the Pomona Valley Democratic Club have voted to take a stand "in solidarity with our African American sisters and brothers" and have distributed a formal statement to make their point.

"We stand with Black Lives Matter," the group said in a letter from Ronald Gonzales-Lawrence, club president. "We are outraged by the murder of George Floyd at the hands of four heartless policemen. We are outraged at the murder of Breonna Taylor by police. We are outraged by the murder of Ahmaud Arbery at the hands of

three white men." "We are outraged that these three recent deaths are only examples of centuries of brutality against the African American community," the letter continued. "Such horrific actions need to stop now."

"A core value of the Pomona Valley Democratic Club is that we demand equity for those that have been oppressed," the letter said. "A society needs to address the needs of its most vulnerable members and effect change to protect such vulnerable communities."

"Police brutality has not only

happened in Minneapolis or Louisville," the letter said. "Pomona has also faced challenges over the years when some officers from the Pomona Police Department have abused their power and targeted people of color."

"The Pomona Valley Democratic Club is ready to join the efforts to create a just society," the letter said. "We are committed to build a country, state and Pomona Valley where Black Lives Matter!"

The Democratic Club of Claremont distributed a similar letter this month.

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- Transición Cosmetología a Peluquería
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- Clases Combinadas, Asistente de Enfermera Certificada & Ayuda Médica en el Hogar
- Certificación ServSafe
- Ensamblaje e Instalación de Solares (cursos empiezan Oct. 2020)

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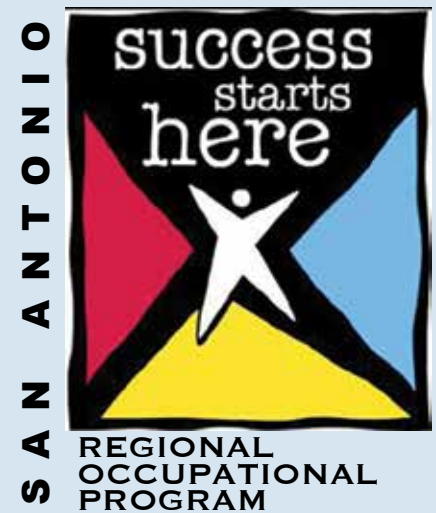
The San Antonio Regional Occupational Program provides Career and Technical Education in the surrounding high schools of Bonita and Pomona Unified school districts and at the Fairplex, Pomona. Courses are offered to students in grades 11 through 12 who live in Bonita Unified (San Dimas and La Verne) and Pomona Unified School Districts. Career and Technical, ROP courses provide students with job readiness and soft skills, career guidance and industry experience to help students become career ready, productive citizens and participants in a diverse society and global economy. Adult fee-based classes are available to adults 18 and over.

El Programa Regional de Oficios San Antonio ofrece Educación Técnica y Profesiones en las escuelas secundarias de los Distritos Escolares Bonita y Pomona y en Fairplex. Los cursos se ofrecen a alumnos del 11 al 12 grado que residen en los Distritos Escolares de Bonita (San Dimas y La Verne) y Pomona. Cursos por parte del Programa Regional de Oficios en Carreras Tecnicas ofrece capacitación para la preparación laboral y social, guianza para profesiones y la experiencia industrial para ayudar a los estudiantes a ser ciudadanos productivos y participar en la economía global y la sociedad diversa. Clases de paga estan disponibles para adultos de 18 en adelante.

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## Pomona native Alfredo Camacho announces candidacy for Pomona school board

Lifelong Pomona resident Alfredo Camacho, who works in the area of public health policy, has announced his candidacy in the Nov. 3 general election for the Trustee Area No. 2 seat on the Pomona Unified School District board.

Camacho, who both pulled and filed his nomination papers on July 14, is seeking election to a seat now held by Jason Rothman who, according to unofficial sources, does not plan to seek re-election.

Rothman declined to confirm or deny that report in an e-mail conversation with La Nueva Voz. No other candidates had filed for the Area No. 2 seat by deadline for this issue.

Rothman has served on the board since 2009.

Camacho, a product of Pomona Unified School District schools, said in a prepared statement he has more than 15 years of experience

working with young people, families, decision-makers and community partners to improve the quality of life in Pomona.

He attended San Antonio, Kingsley, Marshall, Simons and Ganesha High School and said he “would love nothing more than working to improve the district that helped me grow and develop into the person that I am today.”

Camacho was appointed to the Pomona Youth Commission at the age of 16 and worked to register young voters, organize events for young people and advocate for the adoption of Pomona’s Youth and Family Master Plan.

During his senior year in high school, he was elected student body president and served as the student representative to the Pomona school board.



Alfredo Camacho

And in college, he represented 11 community colleges in the region in Sacramento as the Region VIII senator for the California Community College student senate.

He received a political science degree from Loyola Marymount University and went to work for a low-income housing developer before his current work in public health

policy.

“I have worked to educate stakeholders on how to improve our community through policy, systems and environmental change,” he said, including “walkability” and pedestrian safety, advocating for a smoke-free parks policy and installing water fountains that dispense cold and clean drinking water in schools in the Pomona school district.

“I have the institutional knowledge and the community connections to improve our schools through bold leadership,” he added. “If elected, my focus during my tenure would be to improve our school climate, prioritize student wellness, and reimagine how we engage with the community.”

“Our schools are far beyond just physical spaces where our students learn,” he said. “They are an integral part of our community – they are reflections of the value that we put on our students, teachers, campus staff, parents, and community members.”

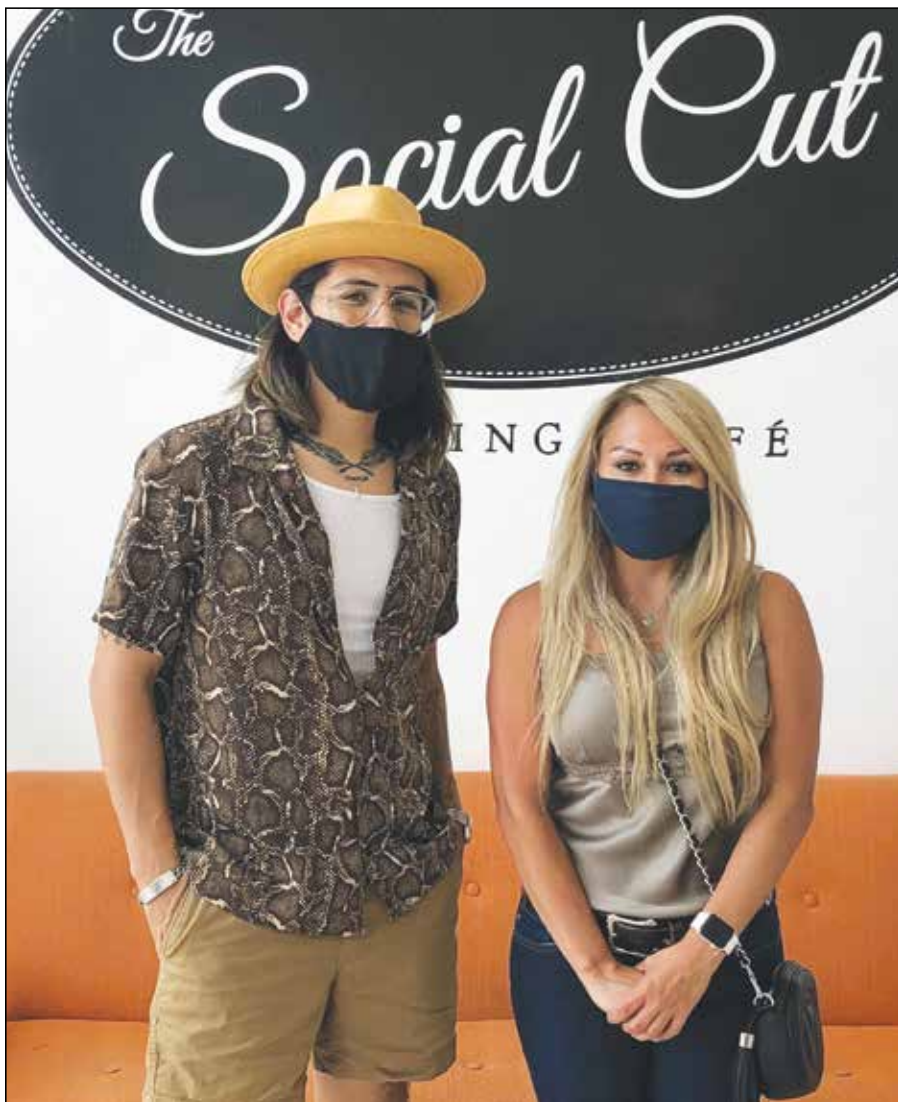
Because of that, he said, he believes in investing to improve the climate of the schools and ensuring that teachers and school staff are supported.

He said he also will work to address the social, mental and physical health needs through programs, services and partnerships to provide students the “tools they need to succeed in school and in life.”

And he said he is a strong advocate for genuine, quality community engagement, pointing out that “too often, parents and community members are left out of the conversation” to the detriment of the success of students and programs.

“Let’s create transformative change together,” he said.

The second trustee area includes an area generally from Westmont and a portion of Phillips Ranch on the southwest to the San Bernardino Freeway on the north and Gibbs Street on the east.



Patricia Lozano, executive assistant to the chief of community and governmental affairs at Pomona’s Western University of Health Sciences and a board member at the Youth and Family Club of Pomona Valley, has helped build a partnership with The Social Cut, a men’s hair styling salon in Downtown Pomona. Under the arrangement, The Social Cut has agreed to offer free haircuts to members of The Club who are prospective job applicants and need a little grooming before their job interview. The offer also extends to graduates of the vocational training that currently is offered at The Club when they are ready for their first career interview. Pictured is Steve Nunez, owner of The Social Cut, at left, and Lozano.

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## ‘Distance only’ learning set for Pomona Unified back-to-school

Pomona Unified School District says it’s “distance only” learning for back to school plans next month.

School district officials made that clear to La Nueva Voz just last Thursday – only three days following an extensive interview with district spokesperson Oliver Unaka on July 13 in which a creative and innovative “combination” back to school plan was the offering of the day – a plan that essentially left the decision of distance or on-line learning versus live, in the classroom learning to the parents.

Of course, all of that was out the window following last week’s most recent order from Gov. Newsom which was to return to ratcheting down California based on the continuing spread of COVID-19.

“I am declaring that when school reopens on Aug 11, 2020, it will be solely through the established distance learning model until circumstances permit otherwise,” Pomona Unified School Supt. Richard Martinez said Thursday in a prepared statement to parents and guardians.

“Although we all wish the facts surrounding this pandemic were different, a 100 percent distance-learning approach is the only approach that will ensure the health and safety of our students, staff and community which is always our first priority,” Martinez said. “We look forward to being able to reestablish a traditional, on-site learning model as soon as it is safe to do so.”

Of course, in all likelihood, things won’t go from 100 percent computer to 100 percent classroom in one fell swoop. Odds are there will be some middle ground during a transition that will be based on that combination plan that district officials – and dozens of parents and members of the community – have been working all summer to develop.

When the state’s COVID numbers reach appropriate levels in the opinion of the governor and state and county health officials, students in Pomona Unified – in Pomona and Diamond Bar – likely will get that combination approach offering the best of both worlds – using both “hybrid” live classes and distance learning – and officials are leaving the final

decision up to parents.

But as district officials point out, nothing is in concrete these days and everything can be revised at any time depending on sometimes conflicting and always changing mandates from a half a dozen agencies overseeing schools everywhere.

Meanwhile, the race is on in Pomona as local officials try to beat the clock and have all the pieces in place before school starts on Aug. 11.

“We are in the middle of a crisis and we have students returning to school in less than a month,” said district spokesperson Unaka.

He told La Nueva Voz during this newspaper’s “deadline week” last week that top district officials had been negotiating with the unions – for both teachers and non-teaching staff – to figure out the details surrounding how everything – at the time revolving around the combination plan – would be implemented.

“This thing is about what’s best for kids,” Unaka said at the time. “It’s a combination of options.”

What that meant was parents would have been able to elect to “go virtual” for their students for the fall or they would have been able to select the “hybrid” option. And they may still, once the pandemic numbers change and authorities in Sacramento order restrictions to be relaxed.

Unaka explained the hybrid plan is a combination of traditional “in-school” classes and off-campus learning.

Students would be in classes two days each week and would log in for “distance learning” on their computers or devices three days each week.

No “phase-in” approach was planned as fall classes get under way – even before the governor’s action last week.

“Initially what we thought, we would go sort of remote learning and slowly start coming back,” he said. However, as the discussion continues in Pomona and across the country, he said that “could change next week and phase learning could be back on the table.”

Of course, the plan did change – but it changed in the other direction.

Clearly, part of the issue is there are so many “moving pieces” as

Unaka described it. For example, the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic itself has been changing.

“We haven’t experienced flattening of the COVID curve to date,” Unaka said.

And because of this, he said, many parents were opting to have their children participate in remote learning “just until there is a little more certainty about COVID, be that a vaccine, be that a cure” – even before the governor’s most recent order.

“There is still a lot of uncertainty,” he added.

Even so, “locally, we are responsible for making the best decision with all the information we are provided on a daily basis and trying to communicate with parents,” Unaka said.

For example, he said on the day of the La Nueva Voz interview, Pomona Unified had its second “town hall” meeting on an on-line conferencing “Zoom” event with more than 100 parents on the call.

Breakouts after the larger group met included about 40 parents in a “room” to hear more about hybrid learning.

More than two dozen parents were in another room focusing on “distance learning,” and another two dozen were in a third group reviewing the issue of how at-

### Back to school during COVID – what the others are doing

Pomona Unified School District and Cal Poly University Pomona will be all “distance learning” in on-line “virtual” classrooms when school starts in the fall.

Students at Pomona’s School of Arts and Enterprise have a list of options depending on government mandates at the time, but plans now call for “distance learning” for students with teachers allowed back on campus.

But St. Madeleine Catholic School in Pomona – following an intensive review process – is banking on opening its doors on a phased-in basis for “live” in-class instruction sometime in September, with “distance learning” on-line beginning in late August.

“That’s our goal,” said Principal Maria Irma Jimenez, who is starting her seventh year at St. Madeleine’s next month.

It hasn’t been easy – Jimenez and her staff have been working closely with and receiving guidance from the Archdiocese of Los

tendence would be recorded for those students opting for distancing learning.

He said the district is attempting to educate parents step by step, being responsive to parents who want “real time” answers to their questions.

Then how are the numbers working out in terms of distance versus hybrid learning?

Unaka said the district conducted a poll at the end of May and at that point responses were “split.” (La Nueva Voz asked to have a look at the results of the poll but has not yet received the official figures.)

But with 23,000 students and a lot of parents, clearly the district has its hands full in reaching out through e-mails, automated telephone calls and other approaches.

Even so, Unaka said the poll was important.

“You have to have some sort of baseline data because if this disproportionate number of parents (is) telling you they are extremely uncomfortable to return their child to (an) in-class setting in any form, it would be futile to even offer that option,” he said.

Besides, he pointed out, a lot has happened since the beginning of summer when the poll was taken – protests erupted in Pomona and around the country and COV-

Angeles Department of Catholic Schools, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and others to prepare for this year’s opening of school.

#### St. Madeleine’s plans follow Los Angeles Archdiocese guidelines for back to school

She said the Archdiocese produced an entire 18-page document called “Starting the School Year Smart” to provide COVID guidelines for more than 250 Catholic schools – 214 elementary schools and 51 high schools – serving the counties of the Greater Los Angeles Region.

The Archdiocese announced last month that, based on state and county health orders, all Catholic schools in its system would be returning to campus for in-person instruction. That plan was revised slightly this month, calling for the school year to open with on-line “distance learning” classes beginning in late August, transitioning to full-time in-person instruction

ID restrictions were eased and the spikes have gone up, something he said “lets us know social distancing was at the least working.”

Then how is that social distancing going to work in the classrooms in Pomona, when Sacramento even allows schools to get to that point?

Unaka explained that with the hybrid approach, teachers are dealing with half of the load they would normally deal with since they are not teaching the same students “live” every day but working on an alternating schedule.

When the students are in classes “live,” of course, they will be required to wear masks, and teachers will be required to wear masks.

“Whatever the county is recommending as a safety precaution is what we’ll abide by,” Unaka said.

The combination plan was developed after a series of virtual “town hall” meetings with parents, e-mails from parents, ongoing staff meetings at the district and daily monitoring of mandates being handed down – from the U.S. Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and others.

by the end of September (subject to changes in Archdiocese and public health guidelines and, of course, relaxation of last week’s restrictions from Gov. Newsom).

When the schools are allowed to reopen for in-person instruction, Jimenez said the guidelines provide everything necessary “to open our Catholic schools smartly.”

“Everything is outlined clearly, from academic planning to food to distancing to masks, creating the healthy environment, communication with parents,” she said. “My pastor and I felt there’s nothing in here we can’t do – we are already doing it,” she said. “It’s a good guideline, a good checklist of what we have to do to open the schools and we can do it.”

That means St. Madeleine’s – at least, if all goes well, by the end of September – will be able to continue as normal a school day as possible “to support our children



## Grocery Outlet teams up with L.A. Food Bank in 10th food drive campaign

Grocery Outlet Bargain Market has partnered with Los Angeles Regional Food Bank and other non-profit organizations for its 10th consecutive "Independence from Hunger Food Drive" to combat food insecurity.

The month-long campaign is collecting cash donations and pre-made bags of nonperishable foods in-store at Grocery Outlet's 350 locations. Food collected will be distributed to local food agency partners.

In addition, the company has initiated a "million dollar match" pledge to match up to \$1 million of donations made to the stores.

According to a news release, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank alone, before COVID-19, was helping 300,000 people per month – a number that currently is up to 500,000 per month, 45 percent of whom are Latinos.

Each independently owned and operated Grocery Outlet store is committed to giving back to the local community, the release said.

"We feel it is more important than ever to help lessen the num-

ber of families across America at risk for food insecurity," said Grocery Outlet CEO Eric Lindberg. "Last year, with the overwhelming help of our community, our campaign funded over \$2 million to those in need. In our 10th year, we are dedicated to make a greater impact."

The drive ends on July 31.

Grocery Outlet stores in the Inland Empire include locations in Upland and Ontario.

## Final funding approved for Pomona's State Route 71 upgrade

The California Transportation Commission approved more than \$1.8 billion in projects last month including the final \$43,025,000 for Pomona's State Route 71 improvement project, according to a news release.

Caltrans officials told La Nueva Voz this month the total cost of the project – converting Route 71 from an expressway to a freeway between Mission Boulevard to State Route 60 – is \$174,544,000.

The Pomona project includes adding one "mixed" lane and one high occupancy vehicle (HOV or carpool) lane in each direction.

The final installment, while formally approved last month, was a part of initial funding sources identified when Caltrans conceptualized the project, a state spokesman told La Nueva Voz.

It will pay costs of actual construction of the project which has already gone through plan-

ning phases, purchasing of real estate needed for widening along the route, demolition of 17 houses and the like.

A variety of federal, state and local funds are going into the 3.1-mile project which will include a new pedestrian bridge near 9th Street, and other new bridges replacing the Valley Boulevard "undercrossing," East Spadra and West Pomona "overheads."

Also included will be ramp improvements at Rio Rancho Road, Mission Boulevard and Valley Boulevard.

The project is expected to be completed by summer of 2023.

A second phase, the 1.1-mile stretch from the 10 Freeway to Mission boulevard, is expected to begin construction in winter of 2022 and open to traffic in summer of 2025.

Total cost of both phases is expected to be \$320.8 million.

The project design is anticipated to handle traffic needs until 2030.

Residents can check for updates and lane closure informa-

Route 71 upgrade... pg. 15

### DELIVERING FOOD TO THE COUNTY'S MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES --

Volunteers went to work last month at Los Angeles County's East Los Angeles Service Center to pack and distribute fresh food to patients of Optum, a health services company, some of the most vulnerable residents in the county during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the recipients are elderly or have a compromised immune system that prevents them from going out, according to a spokesperson. Uber drivers delivered the food to some 7,000 residents throughout Los Angeles County. The on-going initiative, which began in June, offered the free delivery service to more than 60,000 residents. Each food package provides an individual 10 days of food. Participating in the effort were non-profits including Wider Circle, Helping Hands Community, the county's Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services, and representatives of both Optum and the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis. A spokesperson cited Los Angeles County Department of Public Health figures indicating more than half a million households in the county face barriers accessing nutritional foods, and the pandemic has further exacerbated the problem. "Food security and health are so intertwined," said Dr. Jaime Ramos, regional medical director for Optum California. Since the beginning of California's shelter in place order, the program has offered social support and meal delivery services free of charge to more than 20,000 patients in the county before expanding the offer to another 60,000 residents last month.



## Para Compradores por Primera Vez

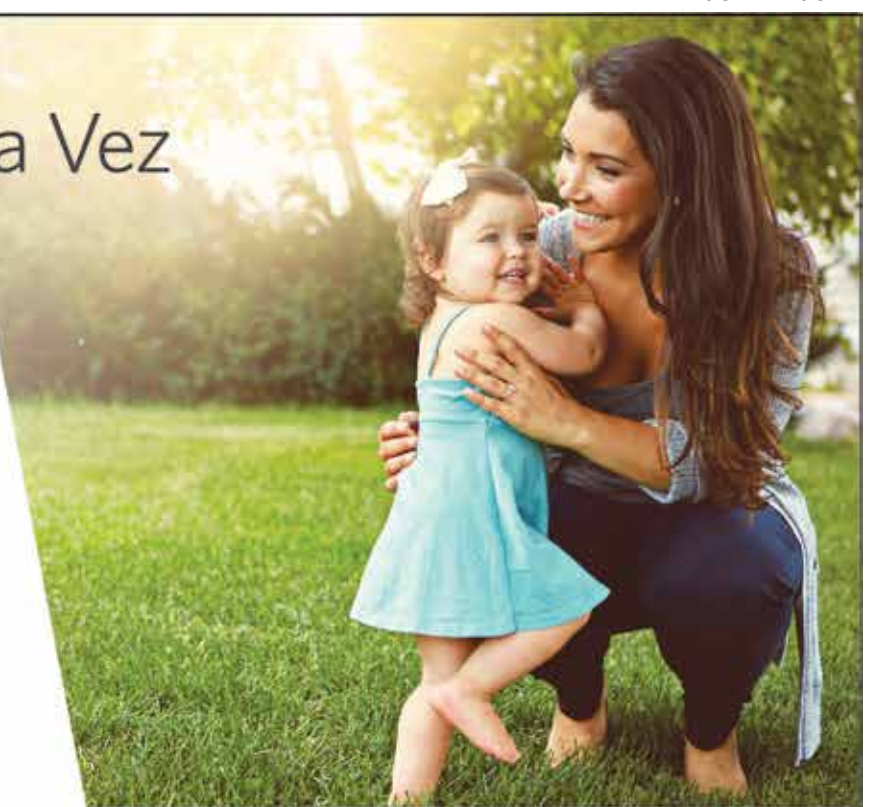
La compra de su primera propiedad puede traer múltiples preguntas y dudas. Desde nuestros inicios en el sur de California a más de 130 ubicaciones hoy en día, hemos ayudado a familias inmigrantes a alcanzar sus metas y sueños. Nuestros especialistas en préstamos le proporcionarán las opciones de financiamiento de acuerdo a sus necesidades.

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## Protests... from pg. 3

### Protestors want school board election voting by undocumented residents, 16-year-olds

On the issue of undocumented residents voting in local elections, speakers said 34 percent of Pomona residents are non-citizens and have no say in who represents them on the school board.

And on lowering the voting age from 18 to 16 in school board elections, speakers argued that by the time students are old enough to vote, they are out of high school, on to the next chapter in their life and have little interest in school board elections.

Pavon said in an e-mail that California Assembly Bill 331, which would actually require ethnic studies as a high school graduation requirement, is stalled in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

If approved, it would amend the California Education Code encouraging each school district and charter school to develop a

course of study in ethnic studies based on a model curriculum developed by the Instructional Quality Commission and the State Board of Education.

According to the California Legislative Counsel's Digest dated Jan. 31, 2019, AB 331 would add the completion of a one-semester course as a high school graduation requirement, with an option to local school districts to require a full year at their discretion.

La Nueva Voz learned this month that the school board meeting was under way inside PUSD headquarters at the time of the demonstration on the sidewalk outside, although most of the board members were participating by Zoom.

### Board member Perlman says ethnic studies was biggest issue in follow-up meeting

Perlman said the Zoom meeting with protestors included several representatives of the coalition of organizers, Pomona Unified

School Board member Frank Guzman and herself.

She said the ethnic studies issue was the major point considered in the meeting.

But on the issue of police on campus, the school district contracts each year with the city to provide "school resource officers" (SRO's) on campus for a variety of services.

"Because of the uncertainty revolving around COVID and what school will look like in the fall, we didn't renew the contract with the SRO's," Perlman said.

She added that in addition to the issue of uncertainty, the decision also was a cost-saving measure in a time of reduced revenue available to the school district.

On the issue of military involvement in the schools, Perlman said the district offers Junior ROTC at Ganesha, Garey and Pomona High Schools in what she described as a "very successful program," although a "very

small percentage" of the participants actually go into the military.

As examples, she said this year only one student recruit entered the military from Pomona's Village Academy High School, three from SEEO (School of Extended Educational Options), one from Pomona High School and one from Palomares Academy of Health Science.

She pointed out that college recruiters are on campus "all the time," as many as five colleges a month, explaining that she views the military in the same light as college and career recruiting.

Perlman said both she and her fellow board member Guzman support Junior ROTC in the schools because it teaches the kids responsibility.

"I see many students that respond very well," she said.

On undocumented voting, Perlman said, "that's a big issue."

She said she told participants in the meeting that "I don't know who votes and doesn't vote, I don't care," explaining that the school district accepts every child into the school district "and with that comes their family."

"My responsibility is to educate the children, no matter what family they come from, no matter what school they attend," she said. "I represent



Organizer Fabian Pavon speaks to participants at the beginning of the rally.



One protestor carrying a "law enforcement off campus" placard wears a t-shirt calling for ethnic studies classes.



Photo by Renee Barbee

Protestors gather outside Pomona Unified School District offices last month following a rally at Tony Cerda Park and a march in the street north on Garey Avenue to the school district headquarters. They were calling for making ethnic studies classes a high school graduation requirement, removing police from school campuses and allowing 16-year-olds and undocumented residents to vote in school board elections.



Brenda Cerda Munoz, at left, daughter of Pomona Native American leader Tony Cerda, blesses participants in last month's protest with burning sage at a rally in Pomona's Tony Cerda Park named after her father.



Tony Cerda, long the tribal leader of Pomona's Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe, participated in the rally at the park named in his honor.

everyone, I don't look at who voted."

"Personally, I'm OK with anybody voting, but it's a matter of doing what we can within the law," she added.

And on 16-year-olds voting in school board elections?

"I would support it if the data pans out," she said. "There are already districts that do that — Chicago and there's other places."

"We'd have to do a little more investigation into that but if the data demonstrates that 16-year-olds can vote responsibly, I represent everybody," she said.

Perlman said "it takes a lot of steering committees and investigating committees" to change voting eligibility requirements. "We don't just do these things."

And on the ethnic studies issue, Perlman said organizers were calling for classes "helping students learn about themselves and their place in the world," with a focus on Latino and African-American studies.

"I'm in favor of anything that helps people find themselves



## Rubio Gonzalez charged with possessing child porn, taking inappropriate photos

Pomona City Councilmember Rubio Ramiro Gonzalez was charged last month with possessing child pornography and taking inappropriate photos of girls at two elementary schools where he was a substitute teacher, according to a Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office news release.

Gonzalez, 45, was charged with one felony count of possessing child pornography and four misdemeanor counts of annoying or molesting a child.

He is scheduled to be arraigned Aug. 28 in Dept. 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center in Los Angeles, according to the district attorney's office.

Deputy District Attorney Angela Brunson of the cyber crime division is prosecuting the case.

Gonzalez is accused of taking inappropriate pictures of female students at Cortez and Arroyo elementary schools in Pomona. He also allegedly had child pornography images in his e-mail accounts.

He was arrested in May by deputies from the San Dimas Sheriff's Station where he was booked.

If convicted as charged, Gonzalez faces a possible maximum sentence of seven years in custody.

The case remains under investigation by the district attorney's bureau of investigation.

In a statement released last month to parents, guardians, staff and community members, Pomona Unified School District Supt. Richard Martinez said based on information made available to the district and the community by law enforcement, the school district "immediately terminated any relationship with Mr. Gonzalez."

In addition, he said the district is providing immediate support and counseling for students at the two schools involved in the investigation.

He added that the district is launching an independent investigation into the scope of Gonzalez' alleged conduct. Parents who suspect their child may have been affected

and may need support services can call the district's student and family support services office at (909) 397-4491, ext. 26553.

"We share the deep concern of our community regarding the disturbing nature of these allegations," Martinez said. "We are committed to the overall safety and well-being of every student and will continue to cooperate with law enforcement."

He encouraged anyone suspecting any alleged wrongdoing by Gonzalez to contact law enforcement immediately.

Members of the Pomona City Council in a special virtual meeting in May voted unanimously to censure their colleague. Gonzalez was not present at the meeting and has not attended a regular meeting since, although he reportedly attended a closed session once by "Zoom."

Councilmembers also asked staff to draft a letter to Gonzalez asking him to resign.

He remained free on \$20,000 bail pending his initial court appearance.

and discover their place in the world to help them be successful in whatever they are doing," she said. "You need to understand yourself before you understand other people."

She added that with COVID restrictions and budget limitations, she does not believe adding ethnic studies as a graduation requirement can happen now but "it is something that can be discussed."

Perlman said the district currently offers Chicano studies at four campuses.

## Protests... from pg. 12



Community activist Al Villanueva sets up an altar on the edge of the stage using the head of a buffalo during last month's rally in Tony Cerda Park. "The buffalo is sacred to Native Americans here in the United States and Mexico because it sacrifices its life so others may live," he told La Nueva Voz. He explained the bones were used as tools and utensils for Native Americans, the animal provided sustenance, and the fur provided warmth and shelter (the hide or skin was used to build teepees). "It represents the creator because the creator gives life," he said, adding that it is a "very sacred object."

She said she would be happy to participate in a steering committee on the subject, adding that the graduation requirement would be the part that needs to be investigated.

## Pomona Valley Hospital again postpones elective surgeries due to COVID

Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center took action last week to again postpone until further notice some elective surgeries and procedures that can safely be delayed without risk to patients, all due to a recent steep increase in cases and hospitalizations of COVID-19.

The hospital said in a news release that the decision was made "in consultation and agreement with our physicians" and following recent recommendations from the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services "to decompress in preparation for a surge of patients."

"The Los Angeles County Department of Health has recom-

mended this action to all hospitals in response to the skyrocketing number of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations in recent weeks," according to the news release. "These numbers are projected to continue to rise in upcoming weeks."

"Our top priority is the health and safety of our patients, visitors, associates and community," the hospital statement continued. "Our hope is that by postponing procedures, we can limit potential exposure for staff and patients, preserve critical resources, such as personal protective equipment, and manage hospital beds that may be needed in the event of a surge of

patients."

Hospital officials said they hope to reopen in the "near future" for elective procedures and surgeries.

The hospital's first postponement of elective surgeries started on March 20 and returned to normal on May 21.

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## Back to school... from pg. 10

who need to be here and certainly our parents who want their children to be here” for the school’s after school program that continues until 6 p.m.

According to Jimenez, the school’s total enrollment last year was 70 students and, while this year’s numbers are still unknown, the school has large classrooms with plenty of room, so distancing is not a problem.

Even with the possibility of additional enrollment this year, “we have small class size to begin with” so adding enrollment is not going to be a problem.

“We’re not a school of 300 – being small has its advantage,” she said.

Jimenez said some parents are waiting to see what the school’s protocol is going to be. She sent out a survey to parents to see what

they are looking for and will follow up with additional parent meetings.

“We won’t know probably until mid-August what the initial numbers will be,” she said, but “we have the flexibility to decide on our own opening date.”

Then how does she see the new school year falling into place, particularly if “live” classes are permitted to begin in September?

“When I think about the kids, I treat them as though they were my own and I would never put them in a situation that would bring harm to them or expose them to an environment that is not as safe and healthy as we can get it,” Jimenez said.

And, while she can’t guarantee they will eliminate COVID, the school certainly can mitigate its effect by the decisions they are

### How to safely wear a mask in the heat

By Dr. Claudia Lopez, Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center

Summer has finally arrived in Southern California (though some may argue it never left), and while many shops and public spaces are reopening, COVID-19 is still a threat to public health.

The most effective ways to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 are to maintain social distance from others, practice hand hygiene and to wear a mask. Masks that cover your mouth and nose protect others from respiratory droplets, which may be carrying the COVID-19 virus, that are produced when you talk, breathe out, cough or sneeze.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to advise wearing a mask when you are unable to maintain a six-foot distance from others. On June 18, Gov. Gavin Newsom also issued an order mandating all Californians to wear a face-covering when in high-risk or public settings.

Wearing a mask in our hot, desert weather can seem uncomfortable, even unbearable, for some, but it is important to remember that this safety measure is critical in reducing the spread of the virus in our community.

Here are a few tips on how to wear a mask safely, and a little more comfortably, in hot weather:

1. Try a mask with cotton fabric instead of a heavy material.

Researchers have found that materials such as cotton and T-

shirts are both breathable and have a high droplet-blocking capacity when developed with at least two layers. Nylon, polyester and canvas, while great for particle filtration, rank poorly in breathability.

2. If your mask becomes wet, it’s time to switch it out.

Wearing a wet mask lessens the ability of the mask to filter out bacteria, meaning it defeats the effectiveness of the mask. Cloth masks that become wet from sweat or exhaled moisture also lessen airflow of oxygen, making it harder to breathe. Always bring an extra mask to swap out in case yours becomes moist.

3. Wash your mask, often.

Ideally, you should wash your mask after each use. Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest water possible for the material and dry it on a high heat cycle. You can also hand wash a mask in a bleach solution.

4. Need a break from your mask? Take a walk.

If you are wearing a mask in a setting where other people are nearby, take a walk so that you can remove your mask while

making.

“Everybody on the staff takes care of the kids as though they were our own,” she said.

Jimenez, who has served as a principal for 12 years, has served for six of those 12 years at St. Madeleine’s, where two years ago she started a new model based on PK3 (prekindergarten) through fifth grade with a focus on early childhood education and literacy.

She told La Nueva Voz it is a new model for the Pomona Valley. “This is our specialty,” she said, adding that when she came on board she brought in all new teachers.

“It was a new beginning,” she said.

### Pomona’s School of Arts and Enterprise to reopen using phased-in ‘hybrid’ approach

At the School of Arts and Enter-

maintaining a safe distance from others.

5. Or, recreate away from others so you don’t have to wear a mask.

According to the CDC, you do not need to wear a mask if you are exercising or recreating outdoors and are able to maintain a safe six-foot

distance from others. However, it is important to always have a mask with you in the event that you encounter a situation where you cannot maintain social distancing.

Even if you are wearing a mask and keeping a safe distance from others, it is best to limit the amount of time spent outside to lower your risk of developing a heat-related illness.

If you must be around others with a mask, take proper safety precautions for hot weather, such as staying hydrated, wearing loose-fitting clothing and refraining from high-intensity activities.

*Editor’s note: Dr. Claudia Lopez is a family medicine physician practicing at the Pomona Valley Health Center in La Verne, a satellite facility of Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center.*

prise, a State Board of Education authorized public charter school, administrators have developed a flexible phased return plan with phase one calling for all students to receive on-line instruction with faculty off-campus and be responsible for daily on-line instructions through Google Classroom.

At the time of this writing, plans called for starting school at phase two, with all students receiving on-line instruction but faculty and staff working on campus each day. Faculty will continue to use Google Classroom.

Phase two is a transition and is expected to last no more than one to two weeks, according to an open letter to the community from Jon Gundry, the school’s executive director.

Original plans were to open at phase three, a “hybrid cohort model” with students coming to school twice a week, depending on their “cohort,” and some remaining on-line with parent or guardian permission. Staff and faculty will remain on campus each day.

Phase four is a “full campus return” with all students, faculty and staff on campus and resuming traditional daily operations on all three school campuses.

“This four-phase approach will allow us to move from one phase to the next in response to the most current information about COVID-19 and health and safety guidelines from the County Department of Public Health,” Gundry said. “As we adjust to the changing situation in the coming months, we will build increased levels of safety, equity and support for our students and school community.”

“We will continue to evaluate the situation and communicate with SAE families as we implement the phased return guided by federal, state and local health agencies,” he added. “We think it is important to be responsive to the changing public health cri-

sis and to do everything in our power to educate our children while protecting their health and safety.”

### Cal Poly Pomona to go ‘virtual’

California State University Chancellor Timothy White announced in May that all 23 CSU campuses – including Cal Poly University Pomona – would be conducting instruction “virtually” during the upcoming fall semester, according to an open letter to students last month from Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Sylvia Alva.

She said immediately following the announcement, Cal Poly President Soraya Coley laid out an operational plan calling for updating the specific mode of virtual instruction for each course.

In a message to the Cal Poly community, Coley said the impact of the pandemic “has always been at the center of our decision-making as our leadership team has confronted this dramatic shift in our operations.”

“For while history shows us that we can meet and overcome such challenges, it is fair to say that many of us have not experienced anything like this in our lifetimes,” she added.

“We have faced challenges before,” she said. “If we stay united as a Bronco community, we will emerge from this crisis stronger than ever.”

“The entire Cal State University system is taking all the necessary steps to mitigate the disruptions caused by COVID-19 while ensuring the health and safety for our students, faculty, staff and communities,” according to a bulletin on the web site.

Cal Poly classes start on Aug. 20.

Cal Poly Pomona’s student enrollment last year was 27,914 and the university has a similar enrollment target this year of 27,973, according to spokesperson Cynthia Peters.

### A good front... from pg. 5

tial trash in the months of April and May versus February collections,” Gluba said. “We have actually seen a slight decline in overall water consumption during the (stay at home) order, but this is likely attributable to cooler weather versus this time period last year and not usage trends as-

sociated with the stay at home order.”

Calls for service initially were down at the police department, Gluba added, but have since reached more normal levels.

Fireworks calls, on the other hand, were up some 300 percent over last year.



## Pomona hires new library manager with background in Burbank, Calabasas

Veteran library manager Anita Torres, who started work this month as the new library services manager for Pomona Public Library, told La Nueva Voz she is “thrilled to be part of such an amazing city that is so rich in history and vibrant with community support.”

She said she looks forward to joining staff and patrons “on the journey to continue moving the organization toward a bright future.”

Torres began her library career in 2002 as part of the grand opening team for the new Buena Vista Branch Library in Burbank. She served as a circulation clerk for two years before being promoted to circulation supervisor, working alongside staff to create a welcoming environment for patrons

in a new location that replaced a facility which had been in operation for more than 50 years.

In 2007, she became part of another library grand opening, this time for the City of Calabasas, where she was hired as circulation supervisor and remained there for 12 years.

While there, she helped implement a new ILS (integrated library system) along with new technology.

A self-described believer in community partnerships and connecting patrons to information, she helped establish an initiative between the library and the local school district, enabling students to use their school identification number to access library databases and other digital resources.

Torres graduated cum laude from

Cal State University Northridge with a degree in sociology. She went to work on a library and information science degree in 2017 in a new program at USC, where she received her master’s degree in management in library and information science in 2019.



Anita Torres

She returned to Burbank early this year to serve as the adult literacy librarian supervising a grant program, staff, volunteer tutors and learners.

And when operations were placed on hold due to the pandemic, she helped facilitate a transition of adult

literacy services to a distance learning format.

The Pomona library currently has 19 employees. The manager’s position was vacant since last August and the city was in the process of filling the position prior to COVID.

Torres will oversee library operations reporting to the library director, a position in which Deputy City Manager Mark Gluba has served in an “acting” capacity since 2012.

## Sheraton Fairplex COVID occupancy numbers show pandemic still on the rise in Pomona

In May and June, the daily occupancy rate at the Pomona Sheraton Fairplex Hotel topped out at new record highs – on La Nueva Voz deadline day, of all days – and July was no different, reaching a new record high on July 17 of 148.

Only La Nueva Voz is using the occupancy at the 244-room hotel – which opened its doors to COVID patients on March 25 in a contract with Los Angeles County – as an indicator of how COVID-19 is doing in Pomona and, from the looks of it, the numbers are continuing to climb with no end in sight.

Occupancy was 70 on May 22 and 109 on June 19, both deadline days for this newspaper, according to official Los Angeles County daily COVID updates.

Of course, there have been several dips as the numbers have gone up and down during the month, but the chart has been a consistent upswing.

In addition, there have consistently been far more patients in the Pomona hotel than at any other sheltering facility in the county’s system which, while the number has varied, now is a total of four

locations.

The Sheraton Fairplex was the first hotel in the county to be placed in service for temporary housing of possible coronavirus patients or actual patients requiring medical attention but less severe than requiring hospitalization.

It has been used as a “safe haven” for first responders, members of the region’s homeless population and others with no other place to go during treatment or self-quarantine.

According to the county, Pomona has logged 2,535 cases of COVID resulting in 42 deaths.

### PARTNERING TO 'HIRE' NEW K-9 OFFICER

-- Pomona’s Western University of Health Sciences community and governmental affairs office partnered with the City of Pomona and the Pomona Police Department to bring a new K-9 police officer on board. Western University partially sponsored the purchase and training of the 14-month-old Belgian Malinois named Bari, who will receive veterinary services through the Western University Pet Health Center and the College of Veterinary Medicine, just as his predecessor did when Western sponsored a K-9 unit in 2016. The Western University logo will be displayed on the K-9 unit vehicle. Bari was selected after testing three candidates this month. Pictured with Bari are Officer Jeffrey Hayward, Bari’s handler, and Patricia Lozano, executive assistant to the chief of community and governmental affairs at Western University.



## Route 71 upgrade... from pg. 11

tion during the project at quickmap.dot.ca.gov.

The \$1.8 billion in statewide funding approved last month will go to projects throughout California to repair highways and bridges and improve the state’s growing network of pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit routes.

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