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Pomona Chamber of Commerce



Member

Issue No. 163

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Nation's former 'top cop' Bill Barr calls media 'important to democracy' but newspapers need to examine why they lost public trust

Editor's note: Jeff Schenkel and Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz attended this month in Sacramento the three-day capital conference "CapCon" produced by the California News Publishers Association on the theme "Rebuilding trust in an age of disinformation," with participants including more than 200 other news executives – representing news organizations large and small – from throughout California. La Nueva Voz was approved as a member of CNPA nearly two years ago. Following are some of the conference highlights.

By **Jeff Schenkel**
Publisher

Former U.S. Attorney General Bill Barr told 200 news media executives meeting in Sacramento this month that the news media is "so important to the proper function and health of a democratic republic" but that the media needs to "engage in some careful examination as to why people no longer trust them."

Barr, who was keynote speaker at the California News Publishers Association event CapCon on the theme "Rebuilding trust in an age of disinformation," added that current trends in the media toward



Bill Barr



Dee Dee Myers



David Axelrod



Brian Karem

consolidation are "dangerous" and result in a single voice and the concentration of "big tech" and digital platforms.

"I think this is dangerous and I think we need to do everything we can to be sure, nurture as many voices as we can," he said.

Barr, who served as attorney general under both Presidents George H.W. Bush and Trump, commented on the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, saying the nation should "not be afraid of speech" but should do everything possible to "encourage broad, robust debate and unpopular views sometimes."

Speaking on the topic "Com-
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Record number of students recognized at Garey High School 'biliteracy classification' ceremony

A total of 72 English learners at Pomona's Garey High School – the most ever to receive biliteracy classification – were recognized in front of their friends and family in the school gym last month in Pomona Unified School District's first ever certificate presentation ceremony.

PUSD Interim Supt. Darren Knowles told the students he is in his 30th year with the district and he has never seen such a thing.

"Back in the day, on a good year for Garey High School, we might get 40 students that would reclassify," he said. "You guys have 72. Give yourselves a big round of applause."

Biliteracy ceremony... pg. 8



FIRST IN LINE AT ENGLISH LEARNER CERTIFICATION CEREMONIES -- Dalia Licon, 14, a ninth-grader at Garey High School and first in line of 72 students being recognized for completing their biliteracy classification requirements, receives his certificate from Pomona Unified School District Board member Patty Tye. Pictured, from left, are Tye; Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman; Licon; Pomona Unified Interim Supt. Darren Knowles; Juan Ortiz, who oversees the district's English learner program; Monica Principe, the school district's administrative director of secondary education; and Deputy Supt. for Educational Services Lilia Fuentes.



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Visit www.tricitymhs.org to download our toolkit and for more information on actions you can take to support yourself and the people you care about. Follow us on social media @TriCityMHS to get involved during Green Ribbon Week.

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bating disinformation: Justice at risk,” he labeled “disinformation” as “false information that is deliberately disseminated to achieve a political purpose, knowing that the information is false or in reckless disregard of its veracity.”

“Our politics obviously have always been infected with some degree of mendacity, but I think today the volume of falsehood that is injected into public discourse is steadily growing,” Barr said. “And it seems that there are an increasing number of people that are all too ready to extend conspiracy theories.”

He said some of this undoubtedly has to do with “the polarized nature of our politics today and the tacit intensity that is involved.”

“Now when you think of disinformation, I think you’re probably thinking of the press as the guardian of the truth, part of whose mission is to confront those falsehoods that are flying about in the political arena,” he said. “And that’s certainly something we want in the press and I think that’s

something that many journalists do a very good job at.”

“But when I started under the Trump administration, I was confronted by what I think is one of the big lies in politics, the Russia collusion narrative that had been battering the president for two years and I think it can fairly be described as a disinformation campaign,” he said.

Barr added that he leaves it to others to judge whether it was deliberate or lies involved or simply reckless disregard of the truth.

“But regardless, there’s no doubt that I think that that episode did some very serious harm to our body politic on many levels,” he said.

“So when I think of disinformation, initially I think about the mainstream media . . . itself and the extent to which it gets involved in advancing false narratives for perhaps political purposes,” Barr said. “In fact, over the past two decades, I’ve personally seen an increasing number of instances where journalists have jettisoned journalistic standards and



PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPERANZA GUEVARA
LATINO MEDIA COLLABORATIVE WELL REPRESENTED AT CNPA'S CAPCON CONFERENCE -- Jeff Schenkel and Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz were able to hang out with their fellow members of the Latino Media Collaborative at this month's California News Publishers Association CapCon conference in Sacramento. Pictured, from left at an evening reception at the conference, are Arturo Carmona, president and founder of the Latino Media Collaborative, senior advisor to La Opinion in Los Angeles and a CNPA Board member; Martha Diaz Aszkenazy, publisher of the San Fernando Sun and a CNPA Board member; Rossana Drumond, publisher and founder of Alianza News in San Jose; Renee Barbee and Jeff Schenkel; Esperanza Guevara, managing director of the Latino Media Collaborative; and Andrew Ysiano, publisher and founder of the Latino Times in Stockton.

any semblance, and I’m talking about some journalists, any semblance of objectivity to engage in deceptive reporting.”

“The net effect of this I think has

been over the past few decades the steady decline in the press’s credibility, not just among republicans but many ordinary Americans,” he said. “And the dominant perception today I think is that the media cannot be trusted.”

He cited figures provided during a morning session at the conference that showed media credibility is at an all-time low of 16 percent.

“And I think that that’s very damaging to our body politic because the loss of credibility means that the press is not in the position to effectively counteract all the lies and disinformation and wild conspiracy theories that are promoted by other actors – political leaders, organizations, activists on social media,” he said.

“And indeed I think it is precisely because the media has lost its status as a trusted and objective voice in the public square that we are experiencing more and more unchecked mendacity in our public discourse,” he added.

“Very simply, when the cat’s away, the rats will take over,” Barr said. “And I think that’s what’s happening in the marketplace of ideas today.”

He said serving under two presidents he had a “ringside seat” to what he termed two of the more “egregious examples of media disinformation.”

One was the media’s “really gross coverage of the economy”

when in March 1991 America had one of the shortest and shallowest business cycles come to an end.

He said the economy had turned around and started to expand again over the past 19 months, but the media began a period of “equating it to the great depression.”

Yet in November after the election the media “turned” and, he said, 86 percent of coverage on the economy was positive.

A second part of the “assault on Bush” as he termed it was that the president was out of touch with ordinary Americans during “these terribly economic times.”

He told the story of the president’s well-known visit to a national grocers’ conference when he was briefed about grocery store scanners and the story was written to make it appear he had never seen one in operation.

But Barr said the president actually was briefed on a new type of scanner that was able to read labels that had been torn up.

He also said Bush was unfairly blamed for the perpetration of the Iraq-gate scandal (based on loans guaranteed by the U.S. to Iraq) with critics claiming the president did not deserve credit for ending the Gulf War because he precipitated it by secretly and illegally arming Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

Barr said this was not true but that the money was for a billion

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dA Center applies arts to invite compassion

By Magaly Valdez

Office Manager/Community Relations, The dA Center for the Arts
Member, Compassionate Pomona

The dA Center for the Arts in Pomona is the peoples' space to create, meet, and connect with the community. At The dA, compassion is an action, a feeling, and a powerful connection.

As one example of how The dA applies the arts to invite compassion, The dA Art Dove Project was a creative response to help console those who lost a loved one to COVID.

Families and friends shared a fond memory of the person whose life was lost and whom they wished to honor. In response, an artist created a lasting work of art to celebrate that individual's life in a unique and lasting way.

The dA sent the artwork to those in mourning and this action brought honor and closure for these individuals. Safe distancing and required isolation created a deep void in our lives, and this project demonstrates how the arts offer lasting connectivity and healing in challenging times.

Art truly connects, heals and lasts.

Following are thoughts describing how The dA prioritizes connecting and supporting Pomona residents.

"When I first walked into The dA, I had no idea what to expect; but I am glad I stepped into the door. The dA offered me many opportunities to expand and test my artistic and creative abilities. It offered a sense of community. The dA opened my eyes and I realized how important and necessary a place like this is for the community. In a city where programs are cut from schools and being exposed to the harsh reality of crime and violence, The dA is literally heaven on earth. All the programs and classes it offers to underprivileged kids and young adults is the small spark it takes to transform their lives and give them a sense of belonging other than that they are accustomed to."

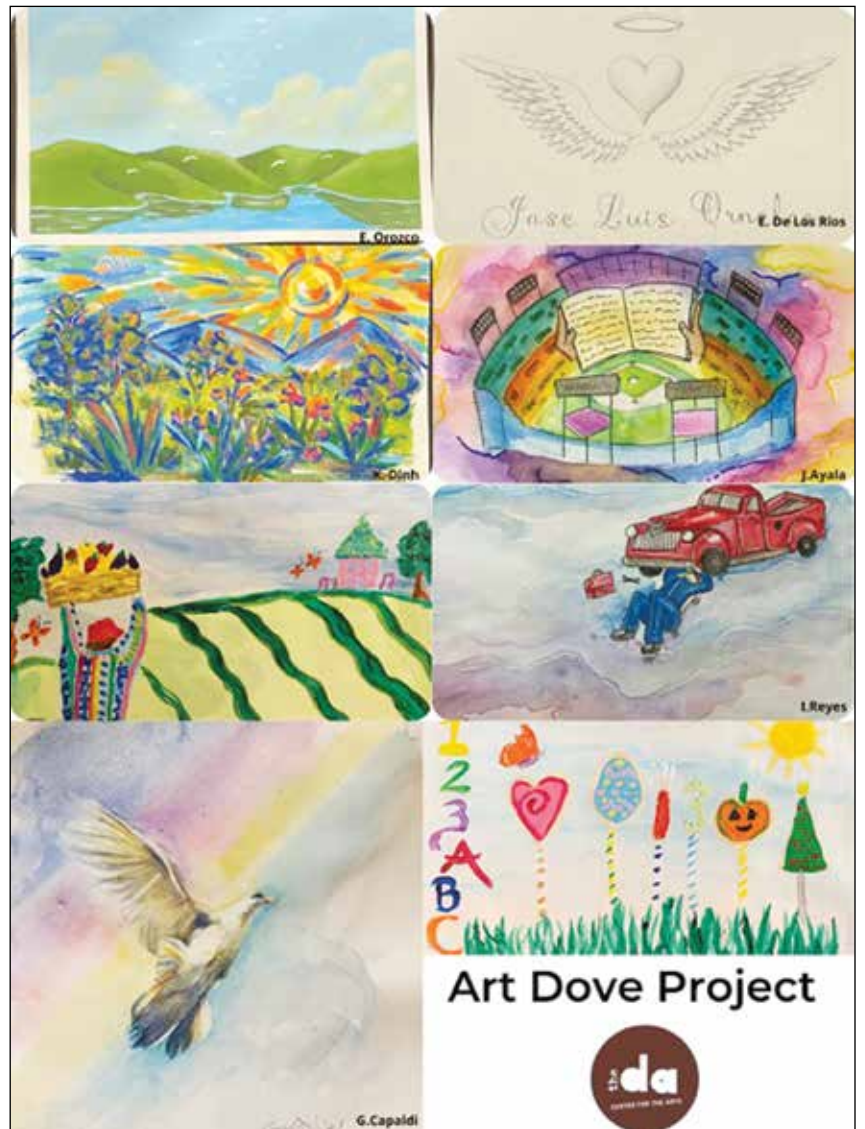
Esteban O.,
Pomona Resident, Artist,
and dA ArtBridge
Outreach Art Leader

"At the dA Center for the Arts, we operate under the premise that art is a human right, not a luxury. Thanks to the vigorous art programming that we carry out, communities enrich their lives, and most importantly they are given the opportunity to imagine and bring to fruition other, better lives. If art in general allows us to experience reality from different perspectives, giving access to art becomes even more relevant when the reality that surrounds us is defined by struggle, scarcity, conflict, injustice, and fear. This is the case with the population we serve, which has a higher percentage living under the line of poverty than the rest of the country.

We, at The dA Center for the Arts, have consistently proven our commitment to culturally nourish these families through art programming and to offer our struggling community a safe space for expression and experimentation. What this means for us goes beyond offering a show, art classes, or a workshop but engaging the members of our community through an organic and consistent forum that allows them to rethink themselves and their reality, to redefine what it means to succeed, and to honor their own possibilities. We are today more committed than ever to create a web of support that serves the spiritual and cultural needs of our residents in the City of Pomona."

Pablo Baler,
The dA Board President

"Every child and every person is born with creative potential! Everyone deserves access to creativity.



Samples from the Art Dove Project at The dA Center for the Arts.

At The dA we advocate for accessible, equitable, and inclusive arts for all ages and abilities because we have a front row seat to witness how creativity invites transformative ways of thinking in terms of possibilities. All ages and abilities grow individually and collectively through the creative process and creative citizens are empowered to be advocates for the culture they want to see when they wake up in their community.

The dA is shifting perceptions of art from exclusive to inclusive and prioritizing equitable art ex-

periences for all ages and all abilities.

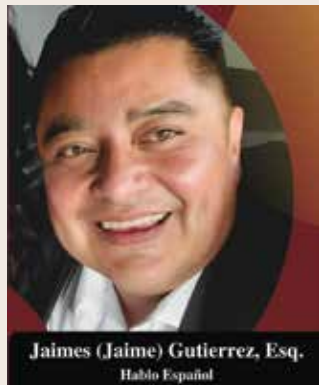
The dA offers an inviting space for artists, musicians, poets, dancers, actors and community to have conversations that ignite transformational and essential lifelong learning skills.

The dA supports listening, and encouraging all ages to be understanding, empathic, and creative citizens who are empowered to be advocates for the culture they want to see in their community."

Margaret Aichele,
Executive Director

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Monday through Friday from 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Homeless resource fair set for Friday

A "Fair Chance and Homeless Career and Resource Fair" will be held Friday, Feb. 24, at Pomona Valley America's Job Center of California in Pomona.

The event is scheduled for 1 to 4 p.m. at the Village at Indian Hill, 1460 E. Holt Ave., Entrance

3, Suite 130, Pomona, and is free and open to the public.

Representatives will be on hand Pomona Valley, East San Gabriel Valley and Rio Hondo Comprehensive America's Job Center of California offices, along with officials from the

state Employment Development Department, Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity, the Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board and others.

For more information, contact Denise Moran, (909) 326-4789.

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dollars in loan guarantees as an agricultural credit program that was not illegal, not secret, and had been going on for a long time.

And he added that Bush actually reduced them to \$390 million worth of grain.

Plus, he said, no money was ever sent to buy weapons, only grain.

“So those are the actual facts and yet I spent most of that year being called a criminal by the New York Times . . . because I would not appoint an independent counsel because I said there was nothing illegal,” Barr said.

The truth, he said, “never caught up with the lies” and polls on election day said two-thirds of the American people had serious concerns about Bush’s handling of the arming of Saddam Hussein.

“So probably one of his greatest accomplishments was turned into a liability,” Barr said.

He said the media became known as “an extension of the democratic party . . . (and) a propaganda machine,” making it possible for Trump later to tap into that sentiment.

“So Trump was able to capitalize on that and tap into that frustration and run directly against the media,” he said, and in a close election he added that Trump’s belligerence toward the media “was actually one of the key factors that enabled him to win.”

Russia-gate, he said, was one of the other major disinformation campaigns.

“It sort of emerged at the time that Hillary Clinton made the decision during the summer of 2016 to try to create a scandal about Trump and his relationship to (Russian president Vladimir) Putin and that he might have been involved in Russian interference,” Barr said.

“Whatever one thinks of Trump, he was a duly elected president and in my mind he deserved, he was the candidate I supported for the nomination, I agreed with his policies, but he was the elected president, he deserved the opportunity to get his administration off the ground, and I think that whole thing was a grave injustice,” Barr said. “It really hobbled his administration.”

He also said that journalism is not the only institution that is seeing its professional standards

eroded.

“I think it’s happening across many of our institutions, in government, in the private sector, in science and medicine,” he said. “I think an increasing number of people are willing to cut corners and sacrifice institutional values for the idea that they are actually advancing some greater purpose.”

He cited an increase in leaks among staff of the U.S. Department of Justice, something that he said just did not happen during his first term as attorney general.

And he said Trump’s own election night claim that his 2020 election was stolen was an example of disinformation, adding that “it’s OK to challenge elections . . . but pretty soon into it you have to be able it seems to me to point to actual evidence of fraud.”

Barr said he knows many “great journalists” who report the news impartially, “but I see an increasing number who don’t seem to be able to do that and they see themselves more as agents of societal change and progress.”

“It is critically important that we have institutions in the public square that are a trusted and credible source of information and I think today that’s one of the crises we have, the media is not playing that role,” he said.

And, “not only is it not playing the role but it’s also helping to destroy the credibility of other potential sources of trusted information.”

He said this will only be corrected when “individual journalists and entities of the fourth estate see the need and the critical value of restoring as much credibility as possible in this cynical time and become the kind of impartial reporters of news that we desperately need in a self-governing democracy.”

“I think the real threat to democracy today is depreciation of the First Amendment and the values of a free and robust public discourse that it stands for,” Barr said.

Dee Dee Myers

Dee Dee Myers, the first woman White House press secretary under President Clinton and now director of GO-Biz, California’s job growth and economic development arm, also a speaker at the conference, was asked if she saw coming a decline in trust in the

news media in the 1990s.

“It definitely felt like we were entering a transitional period,” she said, adding that things were different in her first campaign (Mondale in 1984) when they were communicating using a fax machine.

In addition, she said she was working on the California campaign before the development of a 24-7 news cycle, e-mail and the Internet.

She said that in less than a decade, with CNN and CNBC, “the news cycle started to stretch.”

“By the early ‘90s, it felt like technology was driving the transition,” Myers said. “I think technology has democratized everything including news. People can search for what they want and what they need.”

But in a social media world, she said, there is no longer a “filter” as to a set of facts.

Myers said in a “post-Watergate world,” Americans have seen things inside big institutions from government and the Catholic church to police organizations across the country that “shatter the expectations that we once had.”

In addition, people have had rising expectations about their ability to participate in the decision-making process, she added.

“Culture has changed dramatically,” she said, in a time that anybody with a cell phone can post a blog, something that clearly is a way for people to participate.

“But the cost of that is how do we have institutions and are they durable . . . in the era of mass me-

dia, globalization, rising expectations,” she said.

On the business climate in California, she said in her “fireside chat” format that amid claims California is driving business out of state, “California is not an inexpensive place to do business.”

“I think the business climate in the State of California is good,” she said. “I think it can always be better.”

She said California is the fourth largest economy in the world and the most innovative economy and diverse democracy.

Myers said 25 percent of the fastest growing new companies in the world are in California, according to a Fortune magazine annual listing, likely due to culture, innovation, the best higher education system in the world, robust technology transfer, more Nobel laureates and more patents than anywhere else.

“Part of the magic of California” is that the state has been one of the most diverse places in the country since the 1850s, and it has replaced all of the jobs lost in the pandemic “and then some.”

“On balance, I think we’re in good shape,” she said.

But she said that disinformation is always out there as “part of the landscape.”

“I think misinformation is a huge problem across government,” she said.

David Axelrod

Former Obama senior political strategist David Axelrod, also a “fireside chat” speaker, told the audience he went to work for the

Chicago Tribune as an intern two days after graduating from college.

“I have great reverence for news . . . and I have particular reverence for local news,” he said.

He said local news was different in the 1970s.

“There was no Internet,” he said. “There was this thing called editions and deadlines that don’t exist any more because you have to be constantly filing stories and doing video.”

And, he said, he was fortunate to apprentice under some really great journalists who “taught me a lot and kept me out of trouble.”

He said most newspapers can’t afford that today.

“The combination of speed and staffing has changed journalism,” he said. “news organizations large and small are just not as dominant as they were when I was working in Chicago and we were driving news.”

Plus, “this issue of trust . . . I think there was a greater kind of reverence for journalists and for journalism when I started than there is today.”

And on politics, “it was a lot less rancorous than it is today,” Axelrod said. “The change started before social media and before cable television really came into its full interation, but those exacerbated that trend.”

“When I was covering politics and when I got into politics, we did think of our opponents as opponents, not enemies,” he said.

“It is frowned upon to fraternize

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MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

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Casa Colina names Kelly Linden new president and CEO

Pomona's Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare has announced the appointment of Kelly Linden as its new president and CEO replacing its leader for the past 25 years Dr. Felice Loverso who retired last year.

Linden's appointment was effective Feb. 6.

She earned her bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis in marketing at Cal State University Fullerton and a master's

of business administration with an emphasis in finance at Loyola Marymount University, according to a news release.

Linden has had decades of leadership experience in the healthcare industry, including a strong background in operations, strategy and business development.

Most recently, she served as chief executive of Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center in Burbank from 2017 to 2021, providing leadership for a 392-bed



Kelly Linden

nonprofit acute care hospital.

From 2012 to 2017, she served as executive vice president and chief operating officer at St. Mary Medical Center in Apple Valley.

Prior to that, from 1997 to 2012, she served as vice president of business and strategic development and eventually senior vice president and chief operating officer at Methodist Hospital of Southern California in Arcadia.

"Ms. Linden brings such a wealth of diverse, relevant ex-

perience in healthcare management, and we are confident she will guide Casa Colina toward continued and longterm success," said Randy Blackman, chairman of the board of directors. "We look forward to her measured leadership as we pursue our vision to lead and define excellence in specialized medical, surgical and rehabilitative care, and we couldn't be more excited to begin this new chapter in Casa Colina history."

Linden was recognized by the Los Angeles Business Journal as one of the "Top Women in Healthcare" for 2020 and by The Pasadena Magazine in 2011 as one of "Fifty Women of Influence."

"I am beyond proud to be joining an institution like Casa Colina, which offers so much value to its patients and their families," Linden said, adding that she looks forward to carrying on its 85-year tradition of excellent, patient-centered care.

ily court system instead of trying them as adults in the criminal court system and sending them to prison.

"Children who have been victims of sexual assault and sex trafficking and who fight back against

their abusers deserve our understanding and empathy, not harsh prison sentences," Rubio said. "It is our duty to promote reintegration by responding with trauma-informed resources and common sense judicial practices"

She said S.B. 545 will require these children receive healing and the ability to live a full and successful life.

Sen. Rubio introduces child sex crime victim protection act

State Sen. Susan Rubio has introduced Senate Bill 545 which will provide child victims of sex trafficking who attack their abusers the opportunity to heal from their trauma with treatment and services in the juvenile or fam-

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Cal Poly's Soraya Coley gets 'vote of no confidence' from two campus employee unions

Two employee unions at Cal Poly University Pomona have reported they have issued "votes of no confidence" against President Soraya Coley because of what they termed "failures to appropriately address the needs and concerns of university employees" related to a recent million dollar embezzlement on campus and other incidents.

Announcing the action were Cal Poly members of the State-wide University Police Association, employed as campus police officers on campus, and members of the California State University Employees Union, including Cal Poly police dispatchers, along with custodians, nurses and clerical staff on campus.

A spokesperson for faculty members at Cal Poly, responding to an e-mail inquiry from La Nueva Voz, said neither Cal Poly's academic senate or the California Faculty Association Pomona, a faculty bargaining unit, "is taking a position or making a statement on these matters at this time."

Statements from the two unions

announcing their votes of no confidence cited Coley's apparent lack of leadership abilities in connection with allegations she ordered destroyed a police report regarding an embezzlement and then ordered changes to another police report.

Two embezzlement cases were included as subjects of a lawsuit filed against Cal Poly Pomona by Sgt. Marcus Simpson of the Cal Poly police department. A third embezzlement case, according to the police union statement, that was reported to the campus in February 2021 was not reported to university police until October 2022.

Coley also allegedly prevented press releases and police reports on criminal wrong doings and created a committee to decide whether or not criminal cases get reported to the district attorney's office.

"Whether incompetence or malfeasance, the members of SUPA believe that President Coley should either be fired, resign or

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Supervisor Solis appoints Councilmember Preciado to alternate spot on Metrolink board

Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado recently was appointed by Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis to serve as her alternate on the Metrolink Board of Directors, according to a news release.

“I’m very honored to serve on this board and represent Pomona,” Preciado told La Nueva Voz in an e-mail. “My wife is a regular commuter on Metrolink, and I am a big supporter of public transit.”

“I want to help people get to their destinations in the best way possible and encourage that destination be Pomona to as many as possible,” he added. “I also look forward to advocating more for the Downtown transit center and North Pomona station in terms of use, safety, (and) quality of service.”

Metrolink is a commuter rail system providing passenger rail service across the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura, as well as to Oceanside in San Diego County.

The agency’s commuter rail network operates seven lines and 62 stations with two of those stations located in Pomona – the Downtown Pomona station and a second station in North Pomona.

Its board serves Metrolink riders and keeps the rail system operating at peak performance, the release said.



**Pomona City Councilmember
Victor Preciado**



SWEARING IN -- Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, at left, was sworn in this month by Pomona Assistant City Clerk Karla Shipman for a seat on the Board of Trustees of the Pomona Public Library. She was appointed by Pomona City Councilmember Steve Lustro. She previously served on the library board from 2019 to 2020.





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March 5

RailGiants Train Museum
March 11-12

Fairplex Garden Railroad
March 12

NAGA Los Angeles Grappling Champions
March 18

CA Overland Adventure & Power Sports Expo
March 18-19

RCX - Radio Control Expo
March 18-19

LA County Fair Job Fair
March 25 & April 8

See all events at Fairplex.com

Biliteracy ceremony... from pg. 1

“I want to thank you guys for your hard work,” he added. “I want to thank your parents and your teachers and your administrators for supporting you. But I also want to encourage you to continue to develop your language in both languages, in Spanish and English.”

He explained that the skills of being bilingual and trilingual will help the students in the future.

“Congratulations, this is awesome,” Knowles said.

Pomona Unified Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman also congratulated the students on their accomplishment.

“We are so proud of you, this goes beyond your regular educa-



A GROUP PHOTO FOR MOM TO CUT OUT AND PUT ON THE FRIDGE -- Here's a group photo of all of the English learner biliteracy classification recipients and their official presenters at last month's ceremonies at Pomona's Garey High School.



Pomona's Garey High School Principal Roddy Layton, at left, congratulates the largest English learner biliteracy classification group ever at ceremonies last month in the high school gym. Claudia Ruelas, who teaches and helps with collaboration of the program, is pictured at rear.

tion, this is a huge accomplishment,” she said.

And Board member Patty Tye told students she worked for 19 years at Pomona's Diamond Ranch High School where one of her responsibilities was the “English Language Proficiency Assessments for California” (ELPAC) test, required in California for students in kindergarten through grade 12 whose

primary language is a language other than English.

“You are to be congratulated because you took the test seriously and you did your best and look where you are today,” she said. “So congratulations, I think this is phenomenal.”

She suggested the district begin holding completion ceremonies districtwide throughout all the grade levels.

The first student in a graduation-style line to receive a certificate of recognition was Dalia Licon, 14 and a ninth-grader of Mira Loma, who said his family is from Mexicali.

He was asked by La Nueva Voz what it means to him to pass the test.

“It is cool, I guess,” Licon said, adding that his teachers “helped me a lot.”

He had an advantage since he was not the first one in his family to speak English – he has two brothers and a sister who speak both English and Spanish.

The way the program works, students keep taking the ELPAC test until they pass it and most require about an average of three years, according to Jennifer Donastimento, one of the teachers.

Juan Ortiz, the district's director of curriculum and instruction who oversees the English learner program, said a total of 523 students out of a total of 1,500 students at Garey are taking the classes.

He explained it can take five to seven years to learn a language at an academic level, depending on how old the student is since younger students are a little quicker. And, of course,

Biliteracy ceremony... pg. 16

Free Citizenship Workshop

Pilgrim Congregational Church will host a Free Citizenship Workshop led by Attorney Nesa Targhibi, who specializes in U.S. citizenship and immigration law. Topics will include qualifications, timing, application, petition and testing. A Spanish interpreter will be onsite to translate during the question and answer session.

Saturday, March 25, 2023 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

(Coffee, donuts and registration begins at 9 a.m.)

The event is free and open to the public.

Taller para la Ciudadanía Gratuito

La Iglesia Congregacional de los Peregrinos presentaran un Taller para la Ciudadanía dirigido por la Abogada Nesa Targhibi quien es especialista en leyes de ciudadanía e inmigración. Los puntos a tratar incluyen los requisitos, el plazo, la aplicación, la petición y el examen. Un intérprete de Español estará disponible para traducir durante la sesión de preguntas y respuestas.

Sábado, 25 de Marzo, 2023 de 9:30 a.m. a 11:30 a.m.

(Café, donas y la registración empieza a las 9 a.m.)

Este evento es gratuito y está abierto al público.



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State Sen. Rubio tells Pomona Chamber help is on the way after natural gas price spike

State Sen. Susan Rubio told members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce this month that California legislators already have a “working group” in place on recent skyrocketing gas bills that have surprised many Californians in an effort to determine what happened and to see what can be done – apparently including expediting tax credits to help offset the payments.

Responding to a question from La Nueva Voz, Rubio said the working group is working with the state’s federal partners “trying to see what we can do.”

“We as legislators are as upset as you are,” she said after La Nueva Voz said the rising prices have been the subject of a lot of conversation in the community and asked what is already going on in Sacramento to address the issue.

The question itself prompted a widespread vocal response from many of the 100 chamber members at a special “meet and greet” luncheon with Rubio at Fuego Cocina and Cantina in Downtown Pomona.

Rubio said the higher prices – which have seemingly doubled

and even more in many instances – are an issue both throughout California and across the country, making it a federal concern.

“We want to help families that got hit really hard,” Rubio said, explaining that there may be state and federal funding available to help.

“We’re trying to solve the issue, we’re trying to see what happened,” she said, adding that the working group consisting of about 10 senators will “analyze the data (and) figure out what we can do,” making it possible for the senate to “optimize” an approach “to make sure it never happens again.”

According to a related report from California News Service, Gov. Newsom already has called for a federal investigation into possible market manipulation resulting in the price hike, and the California Public Utilities Commission already has held a hearing looking into what caused the increase.

Some of the reasons cited in the



POMONA CHAMBER MEET AND GREET FOR SEN. RUBIO -- The Pomona Chamber of Commerce this month held a “meet and greet” for Pomona’s new State Sen. Susan Rubio, pictured above. Rubio told Chamber members she is there to support them, particularly after they “went through a very difficult time during the pandemic.” She told members there are a lot of state grants for business that people are not aware of. “There’s a lot of (state) money there that has not been tapped into,” she added, such as tax credits for hiring the homeless. “I’m here to be your advocate,” she said.

hearing included high demand during cold weather and failure of utilities to store enough gas for the winter or hedge against problems with interstate pipelines.

And, according to the Califor-

nia News Service report, while prices now are coming down, the commission reported the price of natural gas on the West Coast peaked in December at eight times what people in the Southeastern U.S. were paying.

The agency voted to accelerate a tax credit for millions of Californians that will take \$90 to \$120 off their gas bills in March.

Dominic Frongillo, executive director and co-founder of Elected Officials to Protect America, said the best way to protect people’s pocketbooks and the climate is to transition away from oil and natural gas altogether.

“The fossil fuel industry’s volatility – and collusion, in many cases – is causing prices to spike,” he said. “And the only way to end this is to accelerate our transition to 100 percent clean energy.”

More than 440 California elected officials have signed an open letter to the governor, asking for a plan to phase out oil and gas production in the state, according to California

News Service.

According to a news release from United Way of Greater Los Angeles, United Way has partnered with So Cal Gas to help families struggling to pay what the release called “historically high gas bills.”

The agency, in partnership with the Gas Company, is assisting Southern California residents with up to \$100 to pay their gas bill for those who qualify based on income.

The funding comes from this year’s \$1 million “Gas Assistance Fund.”

Also according to this news release, the Gas Company is projecting that a customer who received a \$300 bill in January will, if usage remains the same, see the February bill drop to about \$135. However, prices in the western region are still higher than last year when the average residential bill for February was \$99.

For information, visit www.socialgas.com to find the So Cal Gas fund, click on “agency list” to identify the nearest agency in your county, and call for an appointment to fill out an application.

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Editor's Note: This page is the fifth in a series of nine special "Stop-the-Hate" features made possible by a La Nueva Voz grant awarded by the Latino Media Collaborative, a non-profit news media organization, and funded by the California State Library. The "Stop-the-Hate" program itself is administered by the California Department of Social Services as a statewide effort to increase public consciousness about hate incidents and hate crimes, their harmful impacts on individuals and communities, their prevention, and support and resources available for healing.

'Stop-the-Hate' -- A special La Nueva Voz feature series

Leave no one behind!

By **Jamie Lindsay, President**

National Council of Negro Women of Pomona Valley

The National Council of Negro Women of Pomona Valley Section has been serving the community for 37 years. Some of current projects include Human Trafficking Project with Everyone Free, Back to School Project, Turkey Giveaway and Coat Giveaway. These projects give back to our community.

When asked how I feel National Council of Negro Women could "Stop the Hate" in Pomona, my response would be that I believe in working with other organizations and helping them with their goals to help the residents of Pomona and surrounding cities.

And because this article is appearing during Black History Month, I believe this annual observance can send a message to the community and help educate the community that we need to try and work together in the community.

Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune was the 15th child of former slaves who rose from humble beginnings to become a world-renowned educator, civil and human rights

anti-hate sentiment out for all residents?

I think we need to work on that and be more involved in the city, but I do see the city coming together more.

In the area of law enforcement and the police department, I believe in the assessment that police in general – from individual officers all the way up to the chief and deputy chief – are making efforts to reach out and work with the community on a personal, cordial and productive level.

I feel after I attended a recent African American Advisory Alliance townhall meeting that we still have work to do in the community. But it could be better and it will get better.

Even in the area of opportunities for Pomona's Black residents – whether in the area of education, employment or housing – while we still have some work to do in these areas, we are moving toward the right direction.



Members of the National Council of Negro Women, Pomona Valley Section, are, front row, from left, Kathy Barnes, Barbara Emery, Jamie Lindsay, and Linda Wright-Lee. Back row, from left, are Vernell Charles, Lisha Lett, Lola Watkins, DeLoyce Freeman, Patricia Myers, Mary Shyne, Floyd Johnson, Natalie Shiras, M. Joyce Bakersmith, Victoria Rasshan, Adrienne McClinton, Autumn Washington, and Regina Wilson. At left is L'Mio Edwards.



leader, champion for women and young people, and an advisor to five U.S. presidents.

As Dr. Bethune said, "Leave no one behind."

So as an organization we follow that and we are proud to share our history and our heritage.

Then what has happened in the past 50 years in terms of racism directed at the Black community – both in Pomona and across the country?

I see more of the Black/Hispanic community coming together and working together. Fifty years ago, we were separated.

It is often said that the children are our future. Is hate and racism an issue today in our schools?

Yes, hate and racism is an issue of today. Change could come but I feel young adults and youth are in need to see everyone coming together.

Today's students need to know that they have the National Council of Negro Women organization there for them to talk to and that they are very much involved in the community, ready to provide a resource.

It is laudable that the City Council in the City of Pomona has voted to become a "Compassionate City." But does that mean efforts by the city will help get the

oneself ... are my reasons based on emotions or past unresolved issues? Did I eat so much squash as a child and now as an adult I hate it? Did I have a negative experience with someone from a different culture and now I know as an adult I've transferred it to hate others that look like that person? Did I read something, accept that it has fact without looking into the author's background and now I've developed hatred on issues? These are questions each person must answer individually. We can recognize institutional racism created to allow the rich to get richer. We can also recognize individual racism that's born out of hate. Change can happen, but it first must be identified and questioned before we can move into resolving issues among communities. To begin to make change we must have courage to look inside."

Black History Month

Gov. Newsom has proclaimed Black History Month for the month of February on the theme "Black Resistance," stating, "The history of democracy in the United States is one of struggle and triumph."

"Equality and freedom, denied from the beginning to Black Americans, were only made truer as our country made strides to embody our founding ideals," the proclamation continued. "Black History Month, first proposed by scholar Carter G. Woodson in 1926, seeks to rightfully center the role of Black Americans in our national narrative to tell a fuller story of our country."

Housing and rent is expensive for everyone. The education opportunity is there. Students need to lead to these opportunities.

The opportunities are there. The jobs are out there. It may not be the job you want but I feel you have to start somewhere to grow into the job you want.

In the words of our members

Linda Wright-Lee, NCNW: "In 2017, the Pomona Valley Section of National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) entered into a collaboration with Pilgrim Place, a retirement community, and the Pomona Valley Section of NAACP to explore dialogue with people of color. Sharing stories about our lives, about the positive values of our ethnic diversity, as well as the challenges, can heal misunderstandings, build friendships, and work toward a society where there is no racial discrimination. Therefore, the Living Room Dialogue, Circle of Chairs was birthed."

Victoria Rasshan, NCNW: "Hate is an emotion. We can control our emotions, but it's a choice. Why do we hate? I believe the why is what we must first identify. So how do we begin to choose not to hate? First, one must have an honest talk with



A pole dancer demonstrates her art for guests at the grand re-opening of Pomona's The Stage Global and, in a continuing celebration of Chinese New Year, a performer presents the song and dance of the season.



Downtown Pomona's The Stage Global studio held a grand re-opening and ribbon cutting ceremony this month in its new location at 161 W. 4th St. Pictured, from left, are Marco Argote of Downtown Pomona Owners Association; Jenae Noonan, an Olympic gold medalist in mixed martial arts and 2017 Pomona Christmas Parade grand marshal, an assistant at Stage Global; Zee Wolters, whose sister owns the studio; studio instructor Tatiana Salazar; owner Jehan Izhar, cutting the ribbon; Pomona Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Monique Manzanares; and Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz. Izhar opened The Stage in 2016 to focus on the challenge of pole and circus arts. The studio offers circus arts, fitness and dance classes for people of all backgrounds and levels of experience.

Sen. Rubio introduces bill targeting prevalence of human trafficking in California

State Sen. Susan Rubio has introduced Senate Bill 376 that aims to develop a data-driven study of the current state of human trafficking in California with the objective to identify early signs of trafficking and assess best methods for ongoing preventative efforts.

"This is a top priority for me, as I always strive to provide resources and support to victims, especially those who are exploited and often times neglected," Rubio said. "California has one of

the highest rates of human trafficking in the country, but now we must collect prevalent research in order to adopt a more comprehensive policy approach and prevent children and adults from being forced into modern day slavery."

In 2014, the International Labor Organization reported human trafficking as the fastest growing criminal industry in the 21st century, one that generates an estimated \$150 billion annually, Rubio said in a news release.

CORRECTION

A caption in the Jan. 26 issue of La Nueva Voz contained an editing error. At an event featuring Pomona's poet laureate and a drum circle at Ganesh High School, teacher Paul Knopf led the community drum circle and poet laureate Cesar Avelar led the spoken word poetry.

SATURDAY, APRIL 22 - EARTH DAY.

How do you plan on celebrating Earth Day 2023?

Locally, there are lots of ways to participate in Earth Day events, but remember, ***SAVING WATER should be an EVERY DAY activity.*** We have had some good snowpack and rain this year, but the statewide drought remains. We still have a long way to go!

To learn more about events or things you can do, visit: www.earthday.org

To learn about water conservation and rebates visit: www.bewaterwise.com



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Photo by Renee Barbee

HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR -- It was a celebration of Chinese New Year this month in Downtown Pomona. Pictured in Shaun Diamond Plaza kicking off the activities for the Downtown Pomona Owners Association is Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval with members of the Sunshine Women and LA Princess.

Thurmond launches effort to recruit teachers from pool of California ‘corps’ members

State Supt. of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond has announced a new partnership between the California Department of Education and California Volunteers in the governor’s office to promote new pathways for some 10,000 members of the various service corps members to become teachers.

Thurmond said while the state education department has not traditionally engaged in recruitment, he is elevating the educator crisis as a key challenge and made the support of local educational agencies a priority of his administration.

“Our teachers do incredible work in and out of the classroom every day, but this re-

mains a difficult time,” he said, citing teacher shortages which have been exacerbated by COVID. He is calling for career fair events to help connect future teacher candidates with schools experiencing shortages and help with access scholarships and grants.

Through his advocacy, he has helped secure a record \$3.6 billion in investments over the last four years designed to improve educator recruitment, retention and training statewide.

California Volunteers includes the California Climate Action Corps, AmeriCorps, Californians for All Youth Jobs and Californians for All College Corps.



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Services held for Sacred Heart's Rev. Father Mario Cabrera

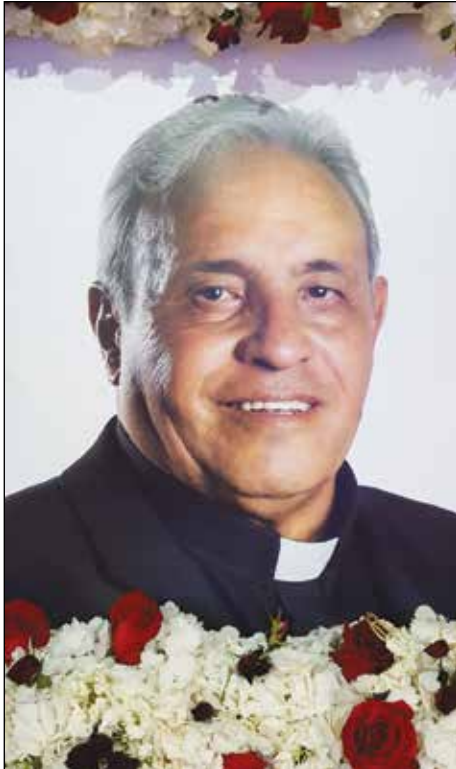
Services were held last month for Rev. Father Mario Cabrera, a long-time associate pastor at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Pomona, who died Dec. 29 following a brief illness. He was 72.

Burial on Jan. 20 was at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Culver City.

Father Cabrera was ordained a priest on Jan. 1, 1981, for the Misioneros de la Natividad de Maria, Mexico, and he was incardinated for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles on Aug. 17, 2016.

In addition to Sacred Heart, his assignments as priest included Senior Priest and Associate Pastor at Santa Rosa de Lima Church in San Fernando. He also served as Associate Pastor at St. Matthias Church in Huntington Park, St. Emydius Church in Lynwood, Mother of Sorrows Church in Los Angeles, and St. Malachy Church in Los Angeles.

Condolence cards can be sent in care of Bertha Cabrera, Santa Rosa de Lima Catholic Church, 668 S. Workman St., San Fernando, CA 91340.



Rev. Father Mario Cabrera



Photos by Renee Barbee
Pictured at the "Vintage Valentine Tea" are Assistance League committee members and board members. From left are Stephanie Roberts, Roger Krechmery, Jessica Ortega, Lupe Barker, Nitzzi Barker (tea chair), Cathy Harden, Lisa Frazier, Donna Spencer, Lynne Kirchhoff, Karen Procsal, Jane Hubbard (Assistance League president), Dawn Van Allen and Pam Heintz. The Assistance League provides services to the community including a dental center for both children and adults, assault survivor kits for women and children who are victims of trauma or assault, and "Operation School Bell," which provides new school clothing to children from low-income families.



Pictured are silent auction items on display at this month's annual "Vintage Valentine Tea" presented by the Assistance League of Pomona Valley at the Ebell Club in Pomona. The guest count was 144 at the Assistance League's first "live" tea in two years, and it is one of the club's primary fundraisers each year, according to President Jane Hubbard.



Members of the JOI Club (Junior Optimist International) from Pomona's Village Academy High School were among the servers at this month's Assistance League "Vintage Valentine Tea." Pictured are JOI volunteers Juan Chavez, 11th grade, at left, and Karen Jimenez, 10th grade. Rotary "Interact" club members of the Rotary Club affiliate for youth also helped out.

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ORDER TO GO

Recent mass shooting in Monterey Park prompts L.A. County supervisors action to strengthen gun regulations

In response to the recent mass shooting in Monterey Park that took the lives of 11 people, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has unanimously approved a series of motions to strengthen gun safety regulations in the county and support gun safety legislation.

The motions, authored by Board Chair Janice Hahn, Supervisor Hilda Solis and Supervisor Lindsay Horvath, follows recent

board action to declare gun violence a public health crisis in the county.

"We know that blame for the gun violence epidemic lies with the failure of congressional leaders to pass even the most basic federal guns laws," Hahn said. "Because they have not acted, we have found actions we can take at the county level to protect lives."

Included are ordinances to prohibit the sale of .50 caliber

firearms and ammunition in unincorporated areas, require all firearms in a residence to be securely stored in a locked container or disabled trigger lock, and strengthen conceal-carry laws. Supervisors also will call on U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein supporting federal legislation to raise the minimum age to purchase assault weapons from 18 to 21 and ban the sale, transfer, manufacture and importation of military-style assault weapons.

What Is hyperbaric oxygen therapy, and who can benefit from it?

By Yahaira Serrano, LVN

Hyperbaric Medicine and Wound Care Clinic
Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare

If you ever heard the term “hyperbaric oxygen therapy,” there is a good chance it was in reference to treating decompression sickness, or what’s known in deep-sea diving as “the bends.” It’s true that HBOT is the go-to for decompression sickness, but it’s also an extremely effective application for conditions where our body’s tissues have been deprived of oxygen, including amputation sites, radiation damage, and chronic wounds.

Hyperbaric oxygen treatment works fairly simply: The patient is put into a sealed structure called a hyperbaric chamber, and 100 percent pure oxygen is received (compared to roughly 20 percent oxygen in the air we breathe). Strong air pressure within the chamber allows the body to derive a much higher concentration of oxygen, increasing the amount our blood cells can absorb and transport throughout the body. The oxygen-rich plasma in our bloodstream helps new blood vessels to grow and, in turn, expedites tissue healing.

Now if you’ve ever actually seen a hyperbaric chamber, you may have reservations. Rest assured, it’s not as scary as it looks. The procedure is painless – many patients compare the changes in pressure to the experience of ascending and descending during air travel. For this roughly 90-minute treatment, patients enter the sealed chamber, lay on their back, and are able to listen to music or watch TV through a glass layer or window. If concerns arise, they are able to speak to the technician or supervising physician at all times via a two-way communication device.

Chronic, non-healing wounds are a primary target for this type of therapy. Such wounds can result from a variety of causes, including radia-



Yahaira Serrano, LVN

tion damage from cancer treatment, compromised skin flaps following a surgery, and foot ulcers that are the result of diabetes. The commonality among these very different injuries is oxygen-deprived tissue. By delivering concentrated oxygen to the bloodstream, HBOT allows patients to benefit from the therapeutic effects of higher tissue oxygen levels.

If you’re unsure whether you would benefit from HBOT, ask your doctor for a referral to a specialist. Led by a Certified Wound Specialist with more than 20 years’ experience, Casa Colina’s Hyperbaric Medicine and Wound Care Center offers comprehensive wound care services to heal your body and get you back to the things you love. To learn more, call 909/596-7733, ext. 3611.

No confidence... from pg. 6

retired,” Simpson said in a telephone conversation with La Nueva Voz.

State and federal law enforcement officials have declined to confirm or deny whether Coley is being investigated for obstruction of justice or any other charges.

The \$1 million embezzlement case, which took place over a 10-year period and involved Cal Poly Foundation funds generated by the Kellogg West facility on campus and owned and operated by the foundation, resulted in a plea bargain by a former foundation employee who served a 16-month sentence and was re-

leased in December.

Her arrest, plea and sentence were never reported to the news media or made public until just prior to her release and then, apparently, only because of information contained in Simpson’s civil suit.

Coley and her staff have continued to deny covering up or impeding any investigation and claim Simpson’s civil action contains allegations that “have no merit and substantially misrepresent the facts.”

Coley took office as president of Cal Poly University Pomona in January 2015.

Assemblymember Rodriguez introduces legislation to fight the ongoing opioid epidemic

Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez has introduced Assembly Bill 474 working to combat the ongoing opioid epidemic affecting California.

The legislation would require the State Threat Assessment Center within the California Office of Emergency Services to prioritize cooperation with state and local efforts to illuminate, disrupt, degrade and dismantle criminal networks trafficking opioid drugs that threaten California.

“As we are facing an opioid crisis, it is critical that we do everything we can to protect our state from threats to our public health,” he said, adding that “transnational” criminal organizations have generated \$100 billion from drug-related crimes alone.

The bill would require the preparation and sharing of intelligence products for public safety entities and analyze criminal tactics and trends.

Harriet Tubman statue, expected to be permanently in place, scheduled for dedication in March

Dedication ceremonies for the statue of American icon and abolitionist Harriet Tubman – unveiled in Pomona’s Lincoln Park last year on the Fourth of July and then placed in storage – are scheduled for Saturday, March 11, back at Lincoln Park where organizers told La Nueva Voz it will be in place and permanently installed on its pedestal.

The statue was commissioned by Ray Adamyk, of Pomona’s Spectra Company, who funded about two-thirds of the \$119,000 project with the remainder coming from the city’s contribution.

The Independence Day observance last year was held before final city approvals were obtained, resulting in the statue, mounted on a trailer, to be rolled out until details on permits for placement of the pedestal and the city’s cost sharing out of its public art fund could be worked out.

Tubman, whose likeness is depicted by the 80-inch bronze statue,

was known in American history as the “conductor” of the Underground Railroad aiding slaves escaping to the North in the 1800s.

Activities will begin at 10 a.m. with a 1.3 mile walk to the park from Pomona’s African American Advisory Alliance community cultural center at 406 W. 2nd St. in Downtown Pomona.

The actual dedication ceremonies will get under way at noon in the park, followed by what promoters are calling a “Unity Day LA” event at 3 p.m. at Pomona’s Fox Theater, billed as family fun and entertainment that is free and open to the public.

A benefit concert featuring Alejandro Aranda, Pomona’s American Idol television show Season 17 runner up, a comedy act and more is scheduled for 6 p.m. Tickets for that event range in price from \$25 to \$75, with proceeds going to the Salem Chapel, the last stop on the Underground Railroad, in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada.



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Important to democracy... from pg. 5

with people of the other party.”

He said the “lack of consistent mentorship of young reporters” has “contributed to in some cases a mis-impression of about what the role is.”

“The role is not in each and every case to try to write an ‘aha’ story, a ‘gotcha’ story,” he said. “Sometimes I feel like there’s more of an impulse to do that now because there’s less guidance.”

He cited one story in 2011 when Trump was questioning whether Obama was born in this country.

“It was a parable about disinformation,” he said.

Axelrod told a story about presidential candidate John McCain who was at a rally in St. Paul in 2008 when a lady said she was afraid of Obama because he was not an American.

“No, ma’am, that’s not true, he’s a great American, he’s a good family man, we just happen to disagree,” Axelrod quoted McCain as saying. “I thought it was the finest moment of the campaign for John McCain.”

Axelrod said Obama did not believe voters would believe the non-citizenship claims, but then it began to take hold with 25 percent of the republicans believing it.

“We should have been more aggressive more quickly,” he said, even though by itself it would not have made much difference.

He said today, as another example of disinformation, 69 percent of the republicans still believe Biden is not the legitimate president, adding that “it really matters

where people are getting their information.”

“I fear that we’re in a long term struggle,” he said. “I believe in truth. I believe in facts. I don’t believe in alternative truths and facts.”

“But in the world in which we live, I think that’s going to be hauntingly persistent,” he said.

Brian Karem

Brian Karem, author, CNN contributor and White House correspondent, also a speaker at the conference, said the American reader suffers from information illiteracy and that a class in media literacy should be required in college.

Karem said every president since Ronald Reagan has contributed to the demise of the press.

And he pointed out that concentrated ownership of newspapers has to end, and that the people who run these large corporations don’t care about journalism.

“We’re not dead yet and you can change it,” he told the roomful of publishers, suggesting that editors require more of their reporters and that they run an investigative piece once a year.

“We’re (journalists) not responsible to our owners or ourselves,” he said. “We’re responsible to our audience.”

Dr. Benjamin Toff, project director with Reuters Institute, who followed Karem on the podium, said the U.S. is at the lowest in the world in trust in journalism, based on a survey that was part of a three-year project.

And although the same pattern is happening in many other places around the world, including the United Kingdom, Brazil and India, he said the public needs to know that truth matters.

Toff said the survey was funded by Facebook but claimed Facebook had no control over the project.

Conference participants learned at the event that a recent Gallup public opinion survey showed only 16 percent of adult Americans have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in their newspapers.

The conference was billed as an effort by CNPA to engage newspaper publishers and editors in a meaningful examination of the problem, the disinformation in the media that helped create it, and ideas on what might be done to restore the public’s faith in the news.

Biliteracy ceremony... from pg. 8

other factors include whether English is spoken in the home or whether the student has returned to the home country and returned.

“But I think what Gary is doing really well is they are focusing on them (the English learner students) and they are really connecting with them,” he added.

He said Gary also is doing a good job of explaining to the students what it means to reclassify.

“All English learners are an umbrella but each student is individual,” Ortiz said.

He said districtwide PUSD generally has between 5,200 and 5,500 English learner students depending on total enrollment.

Each student received a certificate of recognition signed by Principal Roddy Layton for

“outstanding achievement in reclassifying to fluent English proficient during the 2022-23 school year.”

Layton told La Nueva Voz after the event that the students who reclassify have mastered two languages “so those are highest achieving students.”

“But not only have these students mastered two languages, they go on to be our highest academic students when it comes to our data (district and state assessments), so you’re really looking at a group of students that have proven to be bilingual,” Layton added.

“Now some of the students will want to go for a biliteracy seal which is on the high school diploma in the State of California where a student can reclassify and then take like four years

Biliteracy ceremony... pg. 17

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- American Legion Post #30, 239 E. Holt Ave., Pomona
- Pomona Eagles, 854 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona





Photos by Gia Bao-Le Thanh
VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY CELEBRATES LUNAR NEW YEAR -- City and county officials turned out this month to celebrate Lunar New Year with the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley at the Phap Van Cultural Center in Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Pomona City Councilmember Nora Garcia, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department East Patrol Division Chief Jorge Valdez, Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval, Pomona's Dr. Huu Vo, President of the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley, Thich (Reverend) Chon Tri, of the Phap Van Buddhist Temple, and Pomona Police Chief Mike Ellis.



Dr. Huu Vo, President of the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley, wishes celebrants a happy Lunar New Year at festivities this month at Pomona's Phap Van Cultural Center. This year's observance marked the 45th anniversary of the local group and the 40th anniversary of Dr. Vo's service as President. The event included music, dragon dancing, special gifts of rice cake to seniors over 70 years old and "lucky money" to children under 18.



GRAND RE-OPENING AND RIBBON CUTTING -- Downtown Pomona's Mi Havana Cigars held a grand re-opening and ribbon cutting last week in its newly remodeled location. A fire soon after its original opening last year caused Mi Havana to move back into its original location on First Street while undergoing nine months of renovations. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Chamber of Commerce Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, the Reyner family, owners of Mi Havana (daughter Suzel and Maritza and Raul Reyner), at rear, Aldo Macias Arellano, representing Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang; Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares, Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado, and Chamber Board member Frank Guzman, of Pomona Pride Center. Mi Havana is located at 261 S.Thomas St., Pomona.

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Biliteracy ceremony... from pg 16

in an AP (advanced placement) advanced language class," he said.

Knowles said some students come to Pomona who do not speak any English.

"They go through the process, they take their core classes,

this is the culmination of that activity when they reclassify," Knowles added.

"They no longer have to participate in the (English learners) program, which frees them up

to take other electives and other things like that," he said.



COMMUNITY SWEARING IN -- A "community swearing-in ceremony" was held Saturday in Morgan Auditorium at the University of La Verne for State Sen. Susan Rubio as she begins her second term in office. Rubio's representation has been expanded to include Pomona, La Verne, Chino, Montclair and Ontario because of redistricting. Pictured administering the oath of office is California Lieutenant Gov. Eleni Kounalakis, who said she calls herself "the fourth Rubio sister." And on Rubio's many accomplishments to date, Kounalakis said "the best is yet to come." From left are Rubio, her parents Estela and Sabino Rubio, her sister, Assemblymember Blanca Rubio, and Kounalakis. The Rubio sisters are the first sisters to serve in the California legislature.

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Tickets, sponsorships available for House of Ruth's 45th anniversary gala

Pomona's House of Ruth, a Los Angeles County-based domestic violence non-profit organization, is scheduled to host its 45th anniversary fundraising gala next month honoring more than four decades of life-saving services and advocacy against intimate partner violence.

Keynote speaker for the event will be Jackie Aina, a digital creator, entrepreneur and survivor, who will share her impact-

ful story.

The event will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. Thursday, March 9, at Padua Hills Theater, 4467 Padua Ave., Claremont.

Theme for the evening will be "Voices from the Heart" highlighting stories of those who have experienced and overcome the trauma of domestic violence.

Tickets and sponsorships will help enable House of Ruth

survivors receive emergency shelter, counseling, housing, educational classes and other supportive services.

Individual tickets are \$150 per person. To purchase tickets or to become a sponsor, visit the web site at www.houseofruthinc.org or call Rhonda Beltran, chief development officer, at (909) 868-8007 or e-mail development@houseofruthinc.org.



RIBBON CUTTING FOR NEW TACOS N' WINGS RESTAURANT IN DOWNTOWN POMONA -- An official ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremony was held last month for "Tacos N' Wings," Downtown Pomona's newest restaurant, located at 341 S. Garey Ave., Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Chamber Board member Frank Guzman, of Pomona Pride Center; Chamber board member Joe Perez, of Credit Union of Southern California; Chamber President and CEO Monique Monzanares; owners John Pena, Javier Lopez and Alejandra Gonzalez; Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado; and Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz.



PROJECT STICKER SHOCK -- Volunteers with Partnership for a Positive Pomona (P3), a drug-free communities coalition, conducted its week-long annual "Project Sticker Shock" campaign in Pomona this month by placing a total of 2,400 stickers on bottles and coolers in liquor stores reminding shoppers that it is illegal for underage youth to obtain alcohol from adults 21 or older. The program got under way in Pomona in 2013 and this year 16 alcohol retailers participated. Pictured placing the stickers, from bottom right to back, are Dylan Rodriguez-Romero, Diamond Ranch High School; Tina Phan, Village Academy High School, Jenifer Phan, Emerson Middle School, and Angelica Hernandez, of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence East San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys, which created P3. Also helping out this year were representatives of Prototypes, Project Sister Family Services, Day One, Pomona's Youth Prevention Council, and Supervising Agent Esmeralda Reynoso of the State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.



Photo by Renee Barbee

COFFEE CONNECTION AT HOLY MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH -- Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce held a Friday "Coffee Connection" meeting last month hosted by Pomona's Holy Missionary Baptist Church. Pictured, from left, are the pastor's wife, Lori Lacey, Senior Pastor Etienne Lacey, Sr., and Chara Swodeck, a Pomona Chamber member, of Pomona's African American Advisory Alliance. The church is located at 1013 San Bernardino Ave., Pomona.

State Sen. Rubio's new bill will support cancer research, advance quality of care

State Sen. Susan Rubio has introduced Senate Bill 344, a bill which will support cancer research and advance the quality of care for cancer patients by improving the effectiveness of the California Cancer Registry, the statewide cancer surveillance system.

"Cancer is a disease that impacts all of us – and there is still much more we can do to strengthen cancer research," Rubio said. "Since I was first elected to the California State Senate, I have worked hard to improve the quality of care for cancer patients, and expand resources for cancer research and treatment."

She said included was her authoring of the Cancer Patients Bill of Rights in 2021 and the California Childhood Cancer Research Fund Act in 2022.

"Senate Bill 344 will expand treatment equity for families impacted by cancer, ensuring our brightest minds can effectively use data collected by the State of California to develop innovative cancer treatments," she said.

"The California Cancer Registry is vital to advance our vision of ending cancer as we know it, for everyone," said Autumn Ogden-Smith, state legislative director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. "The registry's vast data allows researchers to identify disparities

in cancer incidence, diagnoses and outcomes, and informs policymakers, as well as the public, on how to better address the gaps in cancer prevention and care."

She said with appropriate and on-going funding, the registry could provide real-time data, facilitating researchers' access to potential participants, including those from underrepresented communities.

"Clinical trials often provide the best, and sometimes only, treatment option for patients with life-threatening diseases like cancer," she added.

Matthew Marsom, senior vice president of the Public Health Institute, applauded Rubio for "championing this vital legislation."

"SB 344 will ensure that we have the accurate, comprehensive, demographically diverse and up-to-date surveillance data that serves as the foundation for cancer research," he said.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT SAN GABRIEL VALLEY YWCA -- The San Gabriel Valley YWCA held its first Black History Month celebration at its Covina headquarters this month with traditional African dancing by the Umoja Ensemble, an Inland Empire group, pictured. Community members representing 40 cities participated at the special event on the theme "Love Yourself" in which the Foothill Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., partnered with the YWCA to explore self-care, how we love ourselves, how we express ourselves and what positive affirmations do we use. "Engaging in self-care is an act of justice," said Jonathan Wicks, an equity and social change specialist. "Self-care is a great tool for anyone seeking ways to heal and transcend racial and social injustice." Also included were workshops, drummers, a stilt walker, and a glass walking fire dancer, along with painting on canvases as a means of expression through art. The YWCA is committed to holding space for people to come together and explore themes of social justice and equity, according to a news release. The YWCA is located at 101 S. Barranca Ave., Covina.

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Pomona's Dr. Vo congratulates San Bernardino's first Vietnamese American mayor at swearing in

Pomona's Dr. Huu Dinh Vo, President of the executive committee of the United Council of Vietnamese Homeland and Overseas, who last month attended the "community swearing in" in San Bernardino of new San Bernardino Mayor Helen Tran, commended Tran for "bringing honor to Vietnamese people at home and abroad."

Tran, who was elected in her first run for office with 68 percent of the vote, is the city's first Asian-American mayor and the first female Vietnamese American mayor in the U.S.

California Attorney General Rob Bonta, the first person of Filipino descent and the second Asian-American to serve as attorney general, administered the oath of office for Tran.

Vo, one of seven officials speaking to about 500 supporters attending the event, thanked America "for helping refugees so we and our children have a duty to contribute to the prosperity of this country."

He presented Tran with the medal of commendation of the United Council of Vietnamese Homeland and Overseas.

The event was held in the Cal State University San Bernardino auditorium.



CONGRATULATING SAN BERNARDINO'S FIRST ASIAN-AMERICAN MAYOR -- Pomona's Dr. Huu Dinh Vo, at left, President of the executive committee of the United Council of Vietnamese Homeland and Overseas, congratulates San Bernardino's Mayor Helen Tran on her election at her swearing in. She is the city's first Asian-American Mayor and is the first female Vietnamese American Mayor in the U.S.

About 10 percent of San Bernardino's 220,000 residents are Vietnamese.

Vo also serves as President of the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley.

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