



La Nueva Voz

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

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Thursday, February 23, 2012 www.lanuevavoz.net



LA NUEVA VOZ GOES TO SACRAMENTO

Torres backs Ontario Airport, supports governor's budget, needs further review of high-speed rail

SACRAMENTO -- In an exclusive interview in her Capitol office last month with La Nueva Voz, Assemblymember Norma Torres (D-Chino) said she continues to support local control of LA/Ontario International Airport, believes Gov. Jerry Brown "is being realistic about our money problems," and argues that the governor is doing his part to reduce the size of state government.

Torres, former Mayor of Pomona, spent an afternoon in Sacramento with La Nueva Voz in a wide-ranging interview that covered tough topics



REVIEWING THE ASSEMBLY DAILY FILE -- La Nueva Voz publisher Jeff Schenkel, seated at Assemblymember Norma Torres' desk on the floor of the California Assembly in the state Capitol, reviews the Assembly Daily File, known as the "bill list," essentially the day's agenda, during last month's visit to Sacramento. Pictured, from left, are La Nueva Voz Advertising Manager Renee Barbee; Schenkel; and Assemblymember Torres.

sembly District -- which includes Chino, Montclair, Ontario and Pomona -- for the past three years, Torres characterizes herself as a "moderate" and is a member of the Assembly's moderate caucus.

She is continuing to support efforts by the City of Ontario to take over the local airport and, in fact, was co-author of a bill introduced a year ago that would make the local takeover possible.

"Obviously, a deal has to be made between Los Angeles city and Ontario, as long as the right price is negotiated," she said, adding that two members of the Los Angeles City Council have requested that the item be placed on the Los Angeles City Council agenda.

"I think that's a good step in the right direction," she said.

Any agreement would have to be between the two cities, although she said if there is anything she could do to help, she "would absolutely."

The City of Ontario currently has a \$250 million offer on the table to transfer title and operations of the facility.

Sacramento... pg 10



State Capitol
Sacramento

Retired Police Chief Joe Romero remembered for his love of Pomona

Retired Pomona Police Chief Joe Romero is being remembered for his work in and his love for Pomona following his death Monday in an Ontario rehabilitation hospital apparently of complications associated with kidney failure and related medical issues. He was 57.



Joe Romero

He had been ill since late last summer.

Romero, who was born and raised in Pomona and graduated from Ganesha High School in 1973, received a bachelor's degree from the University of La Verne and a master's degree from Boston University.

He started his career in law enforcement as a police explorer long before he was hired by the department.

Romero... pg 4

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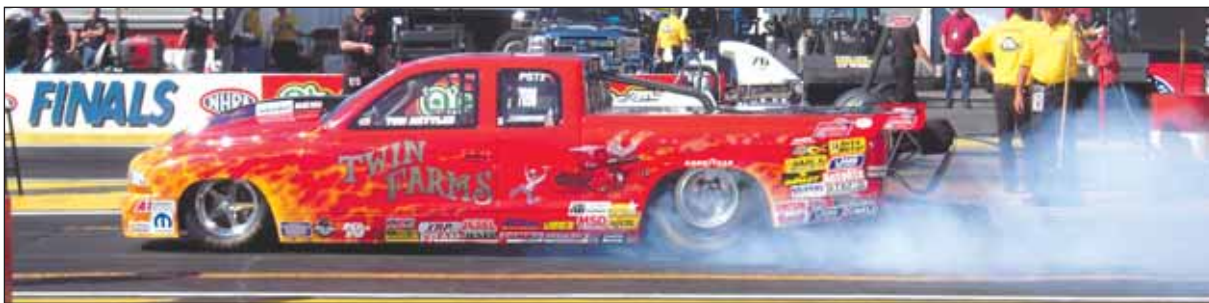
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including the shut-down of California's redevelopment agencies, "true" government reorganization, costs to taxpayers of state pensions and even the controversial issue of Sacramento returning to a part-time legislature.

Representing California's 61st As-



NEW MISS POMONA CROWNED -- Diamond Ranch High School junior Danielle Garcia is crowned 2012 Miss Pomona last week by last year's Miss Pomona, Mansi Patel. (See story and more photos on page 2.)



COMP ELIMINATORS -- A comp eliminator burns a little rubber before opening it up down the quarter-mile track on opening day of the 52nd Winternationals at the Auto Club Raceway in Pomona. The season opener included everything from five-second Top Alcohol Dragsters and Top Alcohol Funny Cars to 15-second Stockers. (See more photos on page 7.)



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Diamond Ranch junior Danielle Garcia crowned 2012 Miss Pomona

Diamond Ranch High School junior Danielle Garcia was crowned Miss Pomona last week at the 2012 Miss Pomona Scholarship Pageant at the Pomona Fox Theater, sponsored by the Downtown Pomona Owner's Association.

The 17-year-old Garcia was named Miss Pomona by Pomona Mayor Elliott Rothman. She was crowned by Mansi Patel, last year's Miss Pomona.

Garcia, one of three contestants competing in the final round, said in her presentation she has had the opportunity to serve her community and "to be a partner with those who want to make a change."

"It's amazing to see just how many people are proud of our beautiful city," she said, referring to her volunteer work on Pomona Beautification Day.

She also addressed the topic presented to the three finalists this year – "Given the current economic situation, how do you feel the youth in our community can better promote Pomona in becoming a more vibrant, safe and successful city?"

"By giving back, by stepping up and taking back what's ours... (from) those

who for their own personal gain continue to tell us we are not old enough to make change and our ideas are not important enough to listen to," she said.

She said those words mean "nothing," adding that "rather than being tombstones of our dreams, I'm using



MISS POMONA FINALISTS -- The three finalists in the 2012 Miss Pomona competition -- pictured before the final round last week in the "green room" upstairs above the stage at the Pomona Fox Theater -- are, from left, Jasmine Rojas, Miss Pomona Danielle Garcia, and Jelitza Herrera. Former Miss Pomona Lorena Matarrita chaired the Miss Pomona Pageant Committee and Andre Robinson, owner of Pomona's two UPS Stores, served as master of ceremonies.



JUDGES AT THE MISS POMONA PAGEANT -- This year's judges, hard at work during the final round of competition last week, are, from left, Pomona City Councilmember Danielle Soto; Pomona businesswoman Catherine Tessier; Victor Caceres, executive director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Pomona Valley; Pomona Unified School Board Member Frank Guzman; and Dr. Philip Pumerantz, President and founder of Western University of Health Sciences.

them as stepping stones to a great future."

"Those of you here tonight devoting your time and effort to this worthy cause have started the ball rolling to improving our community and we, the youth of today, must continue that momentum," she said.

"It truly takes a village to raise a child," she added.

"And if we are going to make our city a vibrant and safe place for your youth, our future, we

need to get back to what we all learned in kindergarten, the golden rule – to treat others the way you want to be treated."

"You can listen to what we have to say, and make us part of the solution, not the problem," she continued.

The remaining two finalists, who will serve during the year as mem-

bers of her court, were Jelitza Herrera, 16, a junior at Pomona High School, and Jasmine Rojas, 18, a senior at Diamond Ranch High School.

Garcia, who maintains a 3.8 grade point average and holds a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, also excels in both basketball and softball.

She was a 2011 Miss Pomona Princess.

Rectificacion

El anuncio de Western University que se publicó el mes pasado en La Nueva Voz sobre la feria comuni-

taria gratuita que se llevará a cabo el 3 de Marzo ofrecía una lista de servicios que incluía exámenes dentales y limpieza de dientes.

Los exámenes dentales se llevarán a cabo, sin embargo la limpieza de dientes no se podrá realizar.

El evento se llevará a cabo de 9 a.m. a 2 p.m. en la iglesia ubicada en el 1100 al este de la Avenida Holt en Pomona.

Para mayor información, llame al (909) 469-5340.

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'Bright Prospect' students have their 'college life' questions answered at annual 'Old-New Meeting'

More than 175 high school seniors and college students in the Bright Prospect Program gathered last month at Pomona's Village Academy High School for an annual "Old-New Meeting" to learn from college students who have gone before them everything they wanted to know about college and college life.

Questions of the college students participating in the Bright Prospect Program ranged from "how demanding are the academics" to "how was your freshman year roommate."

The program broke into small groups based on college type and covered everything from the college decision process, professors and students loans to extracurricular activities.

Pomona students participating in the program were from Ganesha, Garey, Pomona and Village Academy High Schools, as well as the School of Arts and Enterprise.

Other schools represented included Montclair, Ontario, Fremont, Palomares, Chaffey, Chino and Charter Oak.

"I feel more secure about the transition to college and look forward to coming back to see friends at next year's Old-New Meeting," said Pomona High School senior Albert Guadarrama. "I am also proud of

my peers. We should get ready to change the world because together we can make a huge difference."

Bright Prospect helps low income students from California's Inland



SHARING BENEFITS OF BRIGHT PROSPECT PROGRAM – Tessa Lopez, a senior at Pomona's Ganesha High School, speaks at this month's Bright Prospect "Old-New Meeting" discussing what she has learned through the program.

Empire region prepare for, gain admission, and graduate from four-year universities by providing information, counseling and a comprehensive support system of peers and professionals.

Students enroll in the program in the summer after their ninth grade year and are mentored up until college graduation.

For more information, contact Bright Prospect in Pomona at (909) 623-9007 or visit the web site at www.brightprospect.org.



POMONA'S PALOMARES ACADEMY OPENS RECREATION EQUIPMENT TO THE COMMUNITY IN OBESITY PREVENTION EFFORT -- Pomona Unified School District's Palomares Academy opened a recently completed outdoor fitness area to the public last month as part of an obesity prevention effort targeting both students and members of the community. The strength and cardiovascular equipment will be available to the public during non-school hours through a joint-use agreement. The \$42,500 cost of the equipment was paid by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health using federal grant funds, some of which came from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Pomona Unified provided the installation. Palomares teachers also participated in an obesity prevention program funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, part of a \$1.8 million contract over two years involving 146 teachers in seven school districts throughout Los Angeles County. Trainings were administered by the Los Angeles County Office of Education to increase teacher capacity to teach physical education in line with California's Physical Education Content Standards, giving students in grades 7 through 12 the opportunity to receive at least 400 minutes of high quality physical education instruction every 10 school days. Pictured at the ribbon-cutting for the new fitness area are, from left, Joanie Verderber, Ph.D., a project director with the Los Angeles County Office of Education School Health and Physical Education Programs; Dr. Eloisa Gonzalez, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Physical Activity and Cardiovascular Health Program; Pomona City Councilmembers Paula Lantz and Steve Atchley; Pomona Mayor Elliott Rothman; Pomona Unified Supt. Richard Martinez; Monica Principe, Pomona Unified's director of secondary curriculum and instruction; and Pomona Unified Board members Adrienne Konigar-Macklin and Frank Guzman. Palomares Academy is located at 2211 N. Orange Ave., Pomona.

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Pomona's Relay for Life looking for participants, supporters for June event at Fairplex

Committee members are already at work lining up participants, volunteers, sponsors and supporters for Pomona's 2012 Relay for Life, an annual event to raise money and awareness to help make a difference and save lives in the fight against cancer.

This year's event – billed as part of the world's largest grass roots fundraising movement – is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 23, and continues through Sunday at the Pomona Fairplex.

Registration is \$10 per person.

"We want to put Pomona on the relay map by growing our relay with more teams and participation," said community volunteer Virginia Madrigal, this year's chairman of the fourth annual Pomona event. She said she hopes it will be the best year ever.

Madrigal, of Pomona, who has lost two family members to the disease, said this will be her fourth year with the event as either a participant or a committee member.

The next team captain meeting for



SIGNING UP FOR RELAY FOR LIFE -- Rick Elias, at right, this year's event co-chair for the Pomona 2012 Relay for Life, and his daughter, Marlene Elias, chairman of the Luminaria Ceremony, which remembers those who have fallen ill with cancer or those whose lives were lost, go to work signing up participants at last month's Pomona Pride event in the Pomona Civic Center. The Relay for Life, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, helps raise money and awareness to make a difference in the fight against cancer.

the Pomona event is scheduled for March 20. Sponsorships and in-kind donations are also needed.

The Relay for Life, with events nationwide and in 20 other countries, is sponsored by the American Cancer Society.

Communities throughout the country will celebrate survivors who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and provide participants with an opportunity to fight back against the disease.

For more information, contact Madrigal at (909) 627-4450 or visit the web site at www.RelayForLife.org.

He worked in all of its divisions at one time or another in his 33-year career after he was sworn in at age 21 in 1975 by then-Police Chief Richard Slaght.

In 1994, he became the department's first Latino police captain.

He was sworn in as police chief in 2006 and retired in 2008. He was succeeded as chief by Dave Keetle, who was assistant chief at the time.

"It's been an honor to serve this community," Romero said at the time.

Romero said in a 2007 interview that in the aftermath of the 9/11 (2001) terrorist attacks he was proud of Pomona's ability to spread the word about emergency preparedness at the neighborhood level.

He was active in Pomona Rotary, Pomona Breakfast Optimists, the Community Engagement Group, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Pomona Valley and much more.

Pomona Police Chief Keetle, who had worked with Romero since Keetle joined the department in 1984, said the entire police department "was saddened to hear of the passing of Chief Romero."

"Joe dedicated his life to police work and to the community," Keetle said. "Throughout his 30-plus year career, he had an impact on many

Romero... from pg. 1

lives."

"Joe's death is a great loss to the city and the police department in particular," Keetle added. "He will be missed."

Janet Roy, general manager of Pomona Valley Memorial Park and a fellow Rotarian and Rotary Board member with Romero, called him a "very good man."

"I was thinking how fortunate we all are that got to know this man," she said. "He had virtue, character and lived what he believed. He saw the world through the eyes of a child at times."

M. Joyce Bakersmith succeeded Romero last fall as president of Pomona Breakfast Optimists, although she said she met him while still secretary for the Willie White Park Focus Group.

"Even prior to becoming chief he was very supportive of our group because we were trying to make it a better place," she said. "He loved Pomona and everything he did was for the betterment of Pomona. He loved the police department. He knew the people of Pomona. He had very high standards. He always loved the children."

"He's an example of what can be achieved in Pomona," Bakersmith said.

Community volunteer Virginia Madrigal, treasurer of Pomona Breakfast Optimists, said Romero started an annual overnight campout for Pomona's kids, for two years held in the Pomona Civic Center but for the next four years held at Fairplex.

The event, now known as the Youth Campout at Fairplex, provides sleeping bags, dinner and breakfast, games and more for 300 of Pomona's kids each year. The campout is sponsored by the Community Engagement Group and numerous other organizations in Pomona.

Madrigal worked with Romero to set up the GREAT program, or Gang Resistance Education and Training, a program created by the U.S. Department of Justice to help at-risk youth make better choices, stay out of gangs and off drugs.

"Joe was the kind of guy that really had a love for his family and they were very, very important to him," she said. "He also loved the City of Pomona. He was dedicated to his community."

"Joe was the best person in law enforcement I have known," said Frank Garcia, Executive Director of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce.

Romero's younger brother
M i c h a e l
Romero... pg. 6

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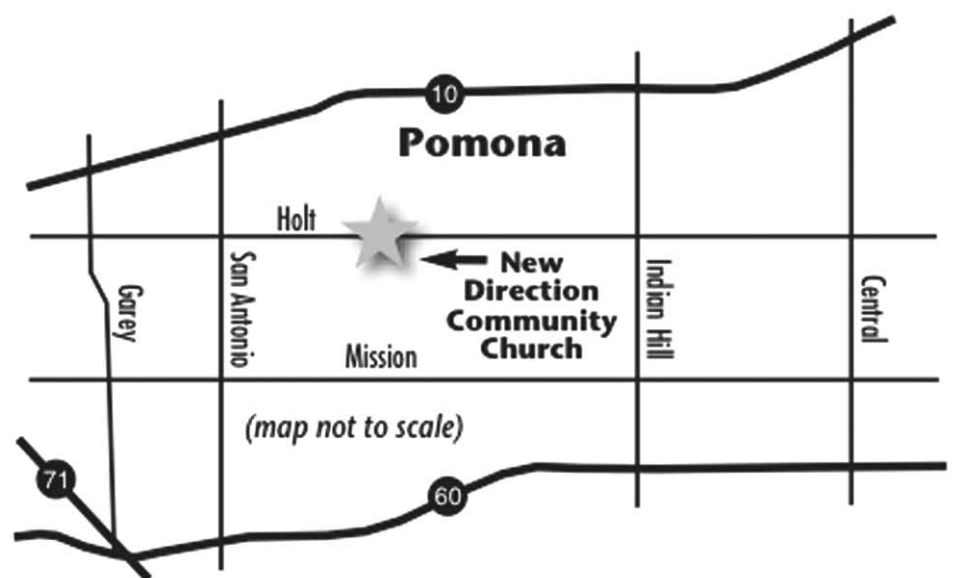
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Jicamexx Tacos opens second location – back at its original site!

As yet another sign that the economy is bouncing back, Jicamexx Tacos has opened its second location—right here in Pomona and, interestingly, at the site of its original store.

The new restaurant – where the entire menu ranks among the best in Pomona and tacos cost only \$1—is located at 1076 W. Phillips Blvd., in front of M & H Market and near Palm Lake Golf Course.

Jicamexx has operated for the past

three years out of the “Big Yellow House” at 604 E. Mission Blvd., Pomona.

The taco stand operated out of the front of M & H Market for 10 years before that after running a taco truck that started doing business about 20 years ago.



JICAMEXX TACOS -- Jicamexx Tacos opens its second location in South Pomona -- and it is back in its original spot at 1076 W. Phillips Blvd. (at Hamilton Blvd.) in front of M & H Market.

Owners Jesus and Ellie Fernandez have attempted to create a quality restaurant with a good family environment that is “down to earth,” Ellie said.

Jesus and Ellie also cater for groups of all sizes.

Romero... from pg. 4

Romero, a former Marine who also went into a career in law enforcement and is now a minister, said his brother received two medals of valor from the City of Pomona.

“Joe believed in what he set up about COPS – community oriented policing,” he said. “My brother believed in community. He worked in the youth programs and not being a father I believe he was a father to many.”

“He was definitely a devoted family man, devoted to his wife, to his parents when they were alive,” he said. “He was always there for us.”

He said his brother and his wife

were never able to have children, apparently due to injuries resulting from a car accident years ago, but that his widow currently is pregnant and is expecting a child in April.

Romero is survived by his widow, Carolyn, brothers Michael and Timothy, and sister Laurie Silva-Romero.

Viewing is scheduled for 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 1, at Todd Memorial Chapel in Pomona.

Funeral services – which will be open to the public – are set for 9 a.m. Friday, March 2, also at Todd Memorial Chapel. Burial will follow immediately at Forest Lawn Covina Hills.



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Inter-faith mental health conference set for next week in Pomona

An inter-faith mental health conference on the theme “Widening the Welcome and Deepening the Support: Faith Communities Responding to Mental Illness” will be held Tuesday and Wednesday at Temple Beth Israel in Pomona.

The event, scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, is a follow-up to the group’s first conference held last May.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and Tri-City Mental Health Center partnered to form the Inter-

Faith Collaboration on Mental Health, and local faith communities, community based organizations and mental health providers have come together to respond to the growing need for effective responses to mental health needs.

The evening session on Tuesday, Feb. 28, is free. Tickets for Wednesday’s session are \$15.

For more information and registration, contact NAMI Pomona Valley at (909) 625-2382 or by e-mail at namipv@verizon.net.

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JUNIORS RACING -- Visitors get an up-close look at some of the "juniors" cars assembled for this year's Winternationals at the Auto Club Raceway at Pomona's Fairplex. The NHRA Junior Drag Racing League offers kids ages 8 to 17 a chance to race a half-scale dragster in a controlled environment.

Boy Scout Aleksandre Howes named 'Scout of the Year' by Pomona's Troop 101

Star Scout Aleksandre Howes has been awarded the title "Scout of the Year, 2011" for Pomona's Boy Scout Troop 101, the oldest scout troop west of the Mississippi River.



Aleksandre Howes
Scout of the Year

The award was presented recently at an awards banquet at Pomona First Baptist Church.

To earn the title, Howes, 12, a seventh grade student at the California Virtual Academy in Los Angeles, advanced two ranks, earned 30 merit badges and logged more than 60 hours of community service during the year.

A resident of Pomona, Howes is a member of the National Junior Honor Society. His parents are Chris and Dr. Carrie Howes.

Pomona's Troop 101 currently is celebrating its 102nd birthday this month.



BODY CHECK -- Drivers line up for body checks before opening day of this year's four-day O'Reilly Auto Parts National Hot Rod Association 52nd Winternationals at the Auto Club Raceway at Pomona's Fairplex.



WINTERNATIONALS OPENING DAY -- Drivers warm up their tires before a run down the quarter-mile track on opening day of this year's 52nd Winternationals at the Auto Club Raceway in Pomona. The Winternationals kicked off the 2012 racing season.

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EXHIBITION BOXING -- Youth boxers demonstrate their skills in one of Sugar Shane Mosley's practice rings that was set up in the Pomona Civic Center for the Pomona Pride event last month. The event was presented by Diamond's Love Foundation, in association with Sugar Shane Mosley. The purpose was to bring pride back to Pomona through community awareness, education, health, nutrition and peace awareness. For more information, contact (909) 622-9092.

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

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- Pomona library
- Pomona Chamber of Commerce, 101 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona
- Downtown Pomona Owners Association, 119 W. 2nd St., Pomona
- Pomona Unified School District administration building lobby
- Western University of Health Sciences Administration Building & Patient Care Center
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Pomona Valley, 1420 S. Garey Ave., Pomona
- Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center main lobby, maternity lobby
- My Bakery Group, Inc. Panaderia, 782 E. Arrow Highway, Pomona
- Fairplex Chevron, Fairplex Drive and San Bernardino Freeway, Pomona
- American Legion Post #30, 239 E. Holt Ave., Pomona
- La Verne City Hall lobby
- La Verne Senior Citizens Center
- La Verne library
- Claremont library
- Claremont City Hall lobby
- The UPS Store, 168 W. Willow St., Pomona
- Gold Strike Market Carniceria, 412 N. Park Ave., Pomona
- Jicamex Tacos Y Carniceria, 604 E. Mission Blvd., Pomona
- Central Market, Towne Avenue and Phillips Boulevard, Pomona
- Discount Market, Philadelphia Street and Towne Avenue, Pomona



A NEW CHAMBER IN TOWN -- Leticia Torres and Vanessa Pacheco, both of Pomona, staff the booth of the new Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Pomona at last month's Pomona Pride event in the Pomona Civic Center.

FAMILY SUPPORT CLASSES

Project: Caring & Sharing provides various support services to local churches, school-age children, ex-offenders, DCFS, DPSS and Probation Department clients.



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- **MOTHERHOOD:** A 26-week class that supports and prepares mothers looking for ways to help their children cope with the fears and uncertainties that are a natural part of our world and its many crisis situations. The curriculum was developed with the intentions of empowering the participants with information and helping the mother support, educate, nurture and discipline children. The methods work well with children ages 12 and under. The groups are taught under two different categories: married and single mothers. The classes are facilitated by certified counselors.
- **FATHERHOOD:** A 26-week class where fathers can deal with and heal unresolved issues that disrupt their relationships with their children and others. The Fatherhood Curriculum is designed to help fathers engage and support their children and simply be better fathers. The curriculum can and will endorse decision making, unselfish discussion, communication, and real relationship building. There are far too many children raised with little or no involvement from their biological fathers. There are far too many of these young men and women becoming parents without knowing how to raise a child because they were never fathered by a responsible male.
- **STRENGTHENING FAMILIES:** The Strengthening Families Program is a 14-session, science-based parenting skills, children's life skills, and family life skills training program specifically designed for high-risk families. Parents and children participate in SFP, both separately and together. Group Leader Manuals contain a complete lesson for every session. Parents' and children's Handbooks/ Handouts are also provided for every session.
- **ANGER MANAGEMENT:** A 26- to 52-week class, depending upon the needs of the individual. The groups are taught under two different categories: children and adults. The class will define anger, the difference between anger and aggression, positive ways to deal with anger and more. The classes are facilitated by certified counselors.
- **THE TRUTH ABOUT DRUGS:** An 18-week class for youth, ages 12 years to 18 years old, that gives an up-front approach to presenting facts about the most commonly used drugs, how to get help and guide the individual to a healthier lifestyle. The curriculum was designed to help students gain a thorough understanding of the short-term and long-term health impact of the most commonly abused substances. Our hope is that this information will help the individual make the decision to create a healthier life by joining the growing number of individuals abstaining from drug abuse. The classes are facilitated by certified counselors.

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iPoly High School receives \$75,000 iPad grant from Verizon Foundation

International Polytechnic High School (iPoly) at Cal Poly Pomona has been named one of six national demonstration schools by the Verizon Foundation to pilot the use of two classroom sets of iPad tablets in conjunction with research resources provided on Verizon's educational portal Thinkfinity.org.

The school received a \$75,000 grant following a site visit by Verizon last year. The grant made possible

the purchase of the iPads, software and wi-fi carts. It also included stipends for teachers.

The award was based on the school's pre-existing expertise in technology, according to a school spokesperson.

Resources included in the package range from interactive lesson plans, activities, videos and webinars for teachers, as well as activities, educational games and resources for students and parents.

The web site also connects students and faculty to a network of professional content partners including National Endowment for the Humanities, National Geographic Society, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and iPoly's key content partner the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.



STUDENTS BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH iPADS – David Lara, of Ontario, a 10th grader at iPoly High School, and his classmates in two classrooms get used to working with iPads in a pilot project made possible by a \$75,000 grant.

Teachers will be testing the iPads to determine the utility of mobile tablets in classrooms. They will also videotape lessons that integrate the resources and give feedback to an evaluation team from Pace University in New York.

The school has committed to a one-year partnership with the Verizon Foundation, with discussions under way to extend an additional year after initial evaluation.

Administered by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, iPoly partners with Cal Poly Pomona. It is a specialized public college prep high school serving 500 students from more than 40 cities representing Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange and San Bernardino counties.

For more information, visit the web site at www.ipolyhighschool.org.



Photos by Peter Dumauval

CLAREMONT SYMPHONY CONCERT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE -- Members of the Claremont Symphony Orchestra presented a free concert for young people last month in the Bridges Hall of Music in Claremont. Featured performers were So Jeong (Alicia) Lee on the violin, at left, a native of Seoul, Korea, and an 11th grader at Etiwanda High School in Rancho Cucamonga, and Jahnvi Curlin, on the flute, an 11th grader at Claremont High School. The two were winners of the Claremont Youth Symphony Orchestra concerto competition. Gary Iida and Brandon Johnson were conductors for the evening's performance.

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La Nueva Voz goes to Sacramento... from pg. 1

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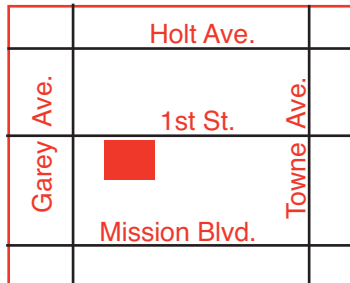
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The future of the airport – where airline traffic is down and flights are being reduced – would be uncertain if left under the control of the City of Los Angeles, Ontario officials have said.

Governor's budget proposal

Turning her attention to the governor's budget proposal, she said California has "this huge hole" in its finances.

"It's been difficult all three years I've been here," she said. "I think (the governor) is being realistic about our money problems and I'm encouraged by how aggressive he has been... in public."

Torres said nobody likes to cut programs that help California's residents, and particularly the poor.

"Look at who I represent – I represent some of the poorest communities in the state," she said. "The most disadvantaged areas are in my district. So it's really difficult."

"But we needed that," she added. "We needed somebody who is able to communicate with the public and was serious about not living on a credit card. I think we have lived on a credit card for too many years."

"The voters have a lot of blame to share because they've approved a lot of these bond initiatives without a real source of funding," she said.

"It sounds really sexy to add mental health programs, it's great, we need them, we look at our jails, our streets, homeless, drug abuse, we absolutely need it," Torres said. "But as voters we just can't say this is a great program, we want it, but you figure out how to pay for it. That's not reality."

The governor's budget proposal – a \$137 billion state spending plan – includes a combination of budget cuts and proposals to temporarily increase California's sales and income taxes to help solve the state's budget crisis. The proposal assumes the tax increase initiative will be approved by voters and includes numerous additional built-in program cuts – including more cuts to K-12 education, community colleges and public universities – if it fails.

And, while the governor's office claims the state's fiscal condition is improving, the state still faces a \$9.2 billion budget shortfall this year and future annual budget gaps of \$5 billion or less (compared to a \$26.6 billion shortfall last year).

The governor's revised budget will be available in mid-May.

High speed rail proposal

Then what about the high-speed rail proposal, which calls for a system of electrically-powered 220 miles per hour trains initially running from San Francisco to Los Angeles and Orange



RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS -- Assemblymember Norma Torres responds to questions in an interview in her Capitol office with La Nueva Voz.

County in two hours and 40 minutes and, later, to Sacramento and San Diego?

The project is currently estimated to cost \$99 billion – a cost that has tripled since voters approved the project in 2008.

Gov. Brown has continued to support the proposal.

"I think that his vision is creating the jobs," Torres said. "He's looking at it from that perspective and the possibilities of having that many jobs... and what that could do to our economy."

Asked if she would support it, she said that she did not in the beginning but today wants to continue to explore it.

"I don't think that we're ready to throw it out yet," she said.

Torres explained that some of the reasons for the dramatic increases in costs on the project came from law-

Sacramento... pg 12

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'Give Kids a Smile' day a success at Western University's Dental Center

It was "Give Kids a Smile" day at the Western University of Health Sciences Dental Center this month as more than 230 children lined up for free dental exams and cleanings.

About 100 College of Dental Medicine students volunteered for the day.

The annual one-day volunteer event, held in conjunction with the American Dental Association and the Tri-County Dental Society as a part of National Children's Dental Health Month, provides free educational and preventive oral health services to children. At Western University, that included sealants and fluoride treatments as well, according to Veronica Lozano, of Pomona, a registered dental assistant at the dental center.

Lozano said this was the program's second year, adding that she is "very appreciative" of the services offered at Western University. She said the low-cost dental center – which provides services for patients with or without insurance – needs more patients year-round.

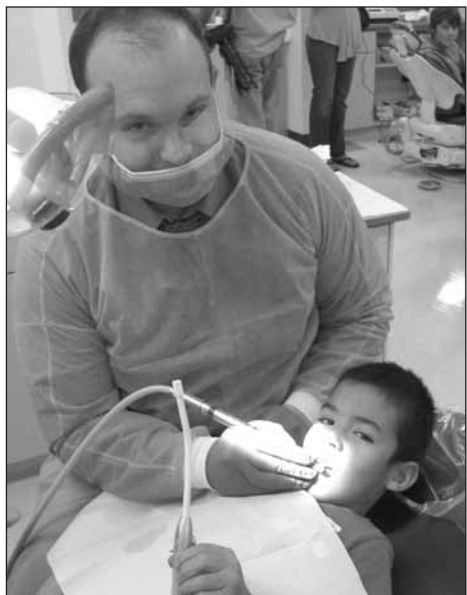
Dental students provided services to the children this month, supervised by faculty members, working at all of the dental stations in the state-of-the-art facility throughout the five-hour event.

The students' efforts were appreciated by parents bringing their kids in for treatment.

Pomona resident Alejandra Fuerte brought her three children in for the second consecutive year.

"A lot of parents cannot afford dental insurance," she said. "It's a struggle to have kids go through pain. I think this is really wonderful. I think (Western University) made a difference in these kids' world."

The program places emphasis on providing health care to the less fortunate and



GIVING KIDS A SMILE – Western University of Health Sciences dental students provided free dental exams and cleanings this month as part of a national program to provide educational and preventive oral health services to children. Pictured is third-year dental student Dr. Chad Gage, of Rancho Santa Margarita, who expects to graduate in 2013. He is working on Ronald Jimenez, 5, of Pomona.

Regalando sonrisas - En la foto aparece el Dr. Chad Gage, estudiando en su tercer año para dentista y quien espera graduarse en el 2013. El Dr. Gage trabaja en los dientes de Ronald Jimenez de 5 años, de Pomona.



SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY THE TOOTH FAIRY – Even the tooth fairy (Western University's Patricia Walker) turned out this month – just in case – for the "Give Kids a Smile" dental health event at Western University of Health Sciences. Pictured with the tooth fairy is Registered Dental Assistant Veronica Lozano.

Hada de dientes - Se aparecio la hada de dientes (Patricia Walker) en el evento de la salud oral. Con la hada aparece la asistente dental registrada Veronica Lozano.

to those with limited access to care, according to Dr. David Lazarchik, assistant dean for patient care and clinical education.

"Students learn the value of helping these patients who probably don't have access to regular dental care," he said. "It's part of the solution to a national problem dealing with access to care. It's training them as students and hopefully they will carry these habits when they become practitioners."

Lozano said the school's dental training facility includes a total of 73 dental stations including the surgical stations.

Free dental screenings for adults also will be available throughout March on an appointment basis.

Western University's Dental Center is located at 795 E. Second Street, Pomona. Parking is free. For more information, call (909) 469-8488 or visit the web site at www.westernupcc.com.

Regalando Sonrisas

Mas de 230 niños recibieron servicios gratuitos de exámenes dentales y limpieza bucal en el evento "Give Kids a Smile" ofrecido por el Centro Dental de Ciencias de Salud Western University. Alrededor de 100 estudiantes del Colegio de Medicina Dental rindieron servicio voluntario.

El evento anual, en conjunto con la Asociación Dental Americana y la Tri-County Dental Society, provee educación y servicios de salud oral gratuita. La Universidad Western también proporcionó selladores y tratamiento con fluoruro, de acuerdo a Veronica Lozano, residente de Pomona, una asistente dental registrada.

Lozano dijo que es el segundo año que se ofrece este servicio, agregando que se siente muy agradecida por los servicios que ofrece Western University. Lozano dijo que el centro dental de bajo costo – el cual provee servicios para pa-

cientes con o sin seguro – necesita más pacientes a través del año.

Los estudiantes proveyeron servicio a los niños bajo la supervisión de los miembros de la facultad en establecimientos de alta tecnología.

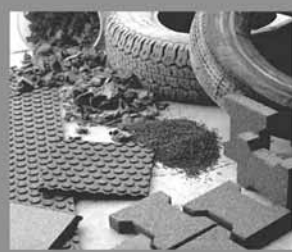
El programa pone énfasis en proveer cuidado médico a pacientes de bajos recursos y a aquellos que tienen acceso limitado al cuidado médico, de acuerdo al Dr. David Lazarchik, decano asistente para el cuidado del paciente y educación clínica.

"Los estudiantes aprenden el valor de ayudar a estos pacientes quienes probablemente no tienen acceso básico al cuidado dental. Educamos a los estudiantes con la esperanza de que ellos se lleven el habito de rendir servicio público cuando se conviertan en profesionistas."

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suits resulting from the proposed rail line going through individual communities.

"If voters approved such a project, you would think that voters would support such a project going through their community, but that didn't happen," she said. One major area of concern, she said, was in the Central Valley area where farmers said they objected to the rail line splitting their farms.

Elimination of redevelopment agencies

In another sweeping move to balance the budget, the governor approved legislation last year eliminating all redevelopment agencies in California cities – more than 400 of them statewide – and returning redevelopment funds to the state.

The governor's current budget proposal includes full credit for tax revenues that would have gone to redevelopment agencies – a move that already has been upheld by the California Supreme Court.

The governor's budget includes a reference that because of this move, an estimated \$1.05 billion in additional property tax revenues will go to K-12 schools, an additional \$340 million will go to counties, \$220 million to cities and \$170 million to special districts – all numbers that are expected to increase in future years as property tax values increase and additional redevelopment agency debt is retired.

Redevelopment agencies have been allowed under California law since the 1950s, originally as a way of eliminating blight in communities – redevelopment areas are identified, property taxes are frozen, redevelopment bonds are issued and those bonds are repaid based on tax incre-

ment financing, or the difference in property taxes on the project sites after redevelopment is complete.

Torres' position is that the redevelopment funds in the hands of local redevelopment agencies are not "everybody's money," but that the state created the entire redevelopment agency process and "made a promise" to school districts that proceeds would help finance education in California.

Instead, the state began the practice of allowing the cities and counties to keep the money for economic redevelopment that the state would "backfill."

"So in the good days, when we were issuing half a million dollar checks to our cities, that was fine, because we had the money in the state to do that," she said. "But in this economy the reality is that the state can no longer continue to backfill that."

Torres added that unfortunately, the cities characterized this as "they're raiding our funds."

"And I was there, too, as Mayor of Pomona. I was there fighting that fight, too," she said.

But "the reality is it wasn't your money to keep, the money was supposed to go to the schools. None of that money is coming to the state to be put in our general fund."

"All that means is that the state will save that portion from having to backfill that to schools," she explained.

Even so, "for me, the reality is that folks in the district need some type of program for economic redevelopment."

A couple of bills currently are making their way through the Assembly that would retain some re-

Sacramento... from pg. 10

maintaining money for affordable housing.

Currently, Torres said, "there's no funding source for affordable housing."

"My district has been a champion in building affordable housing units but it's still not enough," she said. "There's a lot of seniors that still can't afford a place to live."

True government reorganization

Where does Torres stand on efforts to bring about a true reorganization of California's government to reduce costs?

"This is a key topic that I think (the governor) needs to do a lot more work in getting the information out to the public as to how much we have decreased our state government in the last three years," she said.

Torres provided numbers that show in the 2011-2012 budget alone, the state's work force was reduced by more than 15,000 positions.

In addition, some 20 boards, commissions, task forces, offices and departments also were eliminated.

One problem she pointed out is that the more staff cuts in state government, the higher the overall unemployment rate appears in California – something that becomes an even greater concern when combined with cuts at the federal and local level in California.

But, she admitted, "you can't continue to keep employees on the payroll if the money isn't coming in, and you might need the services but you have to understand that it's going to take a little longer."

"What I don't understand is places like DMV (California Department of Motor Vehicles) – it doesn't make sense to shut down DMV offices. That's customer service," Torres said.

"And if we need to pay another dollar for a driver's license, then that's what we need to do. But when I need to make an appointment, I don't want to wait three months to make an appointment."

She also talked about emergency "911" telephone calls which, in many instances under Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's administration, she said, were going unanswered because there were not enough 911 dispatchers.

Her Assembly Bill 912 created a pilot program that ended last December allowing local police departments to apply for funding for training and recruitment of 911 dispatchers.

She said the bill created 500 jobs in the 911 sector.

"These are positions that were needed but police departments were not hiring because they did not have the funding to train their folks," said Torres, who served as a 911 dispatcher herself for more than 18 years with the Los Angeles Police Department.

"It's made a huge difference because part of the requirements for the local departments to apply for this money (is) they have to agree to answer their 911 cell (phone) calls," she said, adding that many departments allow those calls to go straight to the California Highway Patrol, requiring an additional transfer to the local department.

State pension costs

What about spiraling pension costs for retired state employees?

Torres said state legislators themselves do not have a pension through the state, adding that those were eliminated when term limits were approved under Proposition 140 in 1990.

"But pension reform (for employees) is at the top of the list this year," she said. "The issue that you have there is you have people that have already retired from their position."

Obviously, she added, to go back and "undo those retirements" would result in lawsuits.

"So whatever reform and however the reform shapes in this coming year is going to have to be for future employees," she said. "The savings will be five, 10, 15 years from now. We won't necessarily see the savings now but it needs to happen absolutely."

Part time legislature

Then what about the possible savings to the taxpayers from a ballot initiative currently being proposed

that would return the California legislature to a part-time legislature – as it was in 1966?

Proponents would need more than 807,000 qualified signatures to get the proposal on the November ballot.

Torres answered the question with a question:

"Are you OK with running the eighth largest economy in the world on a part time basis?"

"I think that we need full time," she said, "when I look at even the time that I spent on the Pomona City Council."

"Whether you like the current council members or not, the oversight that is needed at that level requires full time work."

She said she worked the graveyard shift as a 911 dispatcher so she could be there during the day.

"I just think that it's a lot to ask people to hold a full time job and then to be full time, it's not a part time position," Torres said. "Then what you're asking is for only certain folks to be able to serve. You'll have only retirees serving and only wealthy individuals so working moms like me, I couldn't afford to serve."

"As it is, when our pay gets cut, it's illegal for me to work my job as a 911 dispatcher," she continued. "But it's not illegal for a lawyer or for a doctor to go and work at their practice or run legislation for their employers, that's not a conflict of interest, but it is for me to answer a 911 call because I work for a governmental agency."

Pending legislation in the works

Torres has been working for the past four months on a bill she hopes to introduce that would provide guidelines for driving under the influence of marijuana.

She said she is still in conversation with different organizations on this, but said currently there are no standards.

"DUI (driving under the influence) is DUI whether it is Tylenol with codeine, whether it is an alcoholic beverage or whether it is marijuana," she said. "It is very difficult for law enforcement to cite on those because marijuana stays in your system for longer than you are high."

Today, law enforcement can use a blood test, look at the driver's pupils and test reactions.

"But they need to have some guidelines," she said, to standardize the process.

For more information or to contact Torres, contact the Capitol office at (916) 319-2061, the district office at (909) 902-9606, or visit the website at <http://asmcd.org/members/a61/>.

For information on the governor's proposed budget, visit www.ebudget.ca.gov.

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING SUBJECT OF NEW MOVIE SCREENED IN POMONA DURING 'HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH' LAST MONTH -- "Flesh -- bought and sold in the U.S.," an original film focusing on the global and local issue of human sexual exploitation and forced labor, was presented at Pomona's Fox Theater last month by Mosaic, a new community faith-based organization. The film's public screenings began last year. The documentary was developed over the past six years. Director Kristin Lauterbach told La Nueva Voz that a girl in Compton needs the same compassion as the 13-year-old girl in Thailand who is being exploited, since human trafficking presents the same issues on the street in this country. According to Lauterbach, the average age of entry into prostitution in the U.S. is 12 to 14. She said human trafficking is the largest source of illegal income worldwide, exceeded only by drug trafficking. Pictured during an interview with La Nueva Voz at the Fox are, from left, producer Christina Lee Storm and Lauterbach. For more information on Mosaic, contact Pam Neighbor at (909) 519-4309.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK -- Father Rick Van De Water of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Pomona celebrates a special mass at Pomona Catholic to commemorate the beginning of Catholic Schools Week last month. He said the special week gives the community "an opportunity to remind ourselves what Catholic Schools are all about." He added that Catholic schools are known for their academics and high standards, and that even non-Catholics often send their children to Catholic schools for these reasons. The mass kicked off an entire calendar of activities the students had planned for the week -- including collecting 500 pairs of socks for the homeless. Pomona Catholic currently has an enrollment that has grown to 310 students, including 70 middle school and 240 high school students.

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WHEN I GROW UP -- Professional road (track) American Motorcyclist Association Pro Superbike racer Dean Mizdal visited with the kids at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Pomona Valley last week to give them a close-up look at his motorcycle and to tell them the importance of finding something in life they really love. Mizdal, who owns M Racing and Performance in Glendora, told the kids it also helps to find a mentor to help them live their dream. Mizdal, who has been racing for 20 years, said he reaches speeds of nearly 200 miles per hour on his bike, riding on a closed asphalt track. "Motorcycling is a very exciting sport but it's not for everybody," he said. He appeared as a "spokesracer" with Racers Who Care to share with the kids his own personal life skills secrets for meeting and beating challenges. Pictured with Mizdal on the bike is Daisy Gomez, 11, of Pomona. Racers Who Care is a West Hollywood-based non-profit charitable corporation dedicated to making a positive difference for the next generation.



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Heart Association, Cardenas Markets partner to help raise heart disease awareness in Latino community

The American Heart Association teamed up with Cardenas Markets for the first time this month – during American Heart Month – to kick off a comprehensive program to help raise heart disease awareness and funding to fight heart disease and stroke in the Latino community.

American Heart Association volunteer Ninfa Delgado, speaking at a news conference in the market's Ontario store, said many women are unaware of the threat of heart disease, particularly to Latino women.

And "the woman in the household is the leader in health," she added. "Heart disease can be prevented."

Ontario Mayor Paul Leon said he has been working for the past eight years on a health initiative which recently resulted in Kaiser Permanente granting \$1 million to work on healthy eating and active living in Ontario to "change the mindset of our families."

"We are becoming more aware that we are what we eat," he added. "This store has plenty of opportunities for us to make wise decisions about what we eat."

Cardenas spokesman Marco Robles said the news conference marked the launch of a number of activities throughout the month of February at several store locations to help raise awareness



of heart disease which, he said, is the number one killer of Latino women.

Included was everything from check-



CARDENAS TAKES AIM AT HEART DISEASE -- Cardenas Markets did their part for American Heart Month this month, kicking off events with a news conference at the Ontario store. Pictured, clockwise, from top right are Ontario Mayor Paul Leon, at left, and Marco Robles, public affairs director for Cardenas Markets; Alma Orozco rolls out the pandulce, Hispanic sweet bread, full of healthy ingredients; Dr. Antemio Millot, of Las Palmas Dental Group, performs a dental screening on Arcelia Chavez, of Rancho Cucamonga, pointing out the relationship between gum disease and heart disease; and Abby Chupina, at left, performs a blood pressure check for Isabel Chavez, of Rancho Cucamonga.

out stand television monitor messages about heart disease prevention, displays of heart-healthy foods throughout the store, and more.

The event also featured a mini-health fair with medical providers offering everything from free blood pressure and blood sugar checks to dental screenings. Health screenings were scheduled to be offered at store locations throughout the Inland Empire.

"We are very proud to join the American Heart Association and many other organizations across the nation in this very important effort to prevent heart disease and save lives," said Cardenas founder and senior vice president Luz Cardenas.

The company, a family-owned business headquartered in Ontario, operates 28 stores throughout Southern California and Las Vegas.

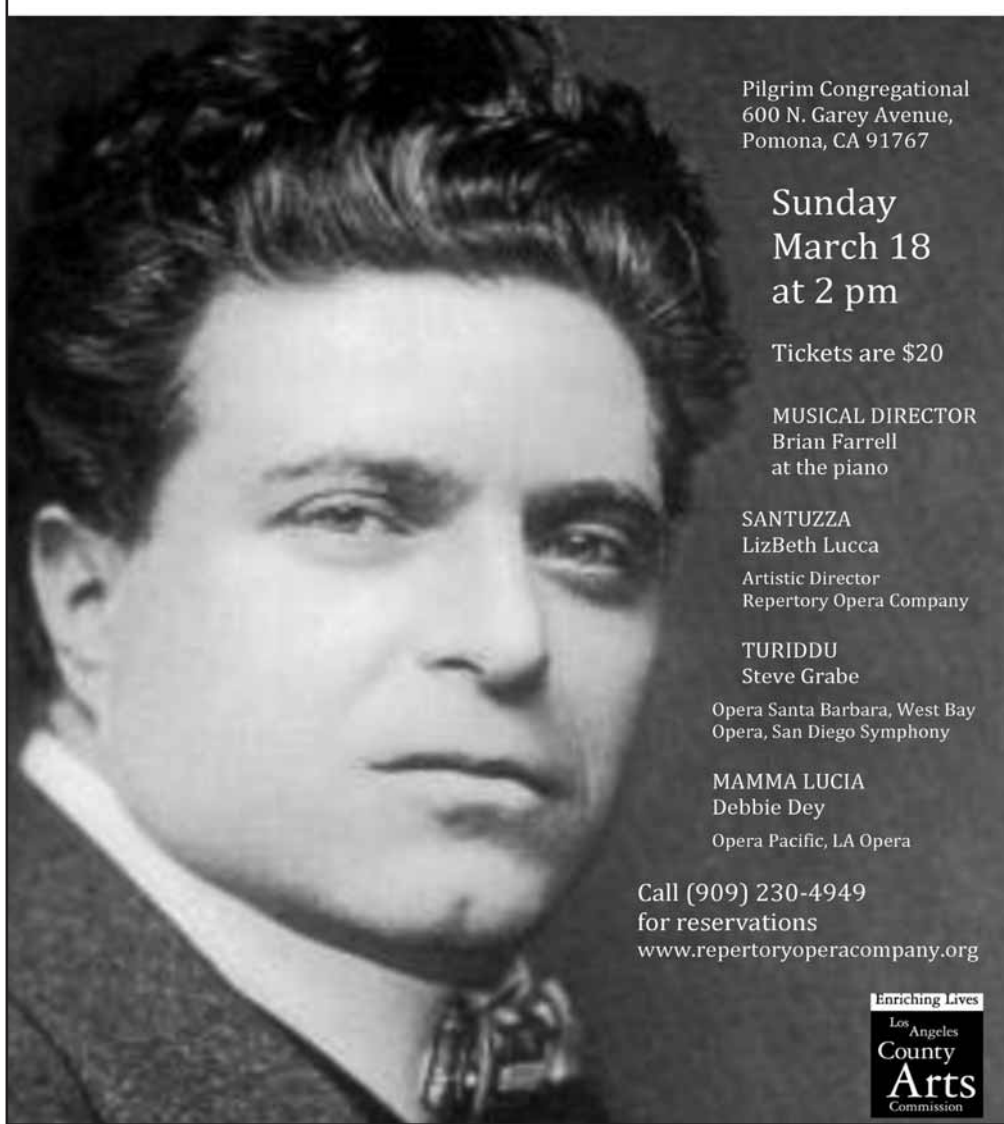
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