

# The San Bernardino County Sentinel

News of Note  
from Around the  
Largest County  
in the Lower  
48 States

Friday, October 24, 2014 A Fortunado Publication in conjunction with Countywide News Service 10808 Foothill Blvd. Suite 160-446 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 (909) 957-9998

## Scray-Brown Gives Surveillance Firm \$340 K Not Due It Under Contract

The county this week agreed to pay Sentinel Offender Services, LLC another \$340,000 as an add-on to its ongoing three-year, \$1 million contract for probationer/parolee monitoring.

According to San Bernardino County Chief Probation Officer Michelle Scray-Brown, "on June 26, 2012 the board of supervisors approved

a three year agreement with Sentinel Offender Services, LLC for global position system tracking services. This contract, which took effect July 1, 2012, is currently approved in the amount of \$1,000,000. The probation department's use of global positioning system tracking services as a supervision tool for a variety of offenders, as

well as a form of house arrest for high-risk juvenile offenders, is a means of enhancing public safety while reducing costs of the juvenile detention system."

Curiously, Scray-Brown indicated that Sentinel Offender Services, LLC knew the parameters of the deal it was entering into when it accepted the terms of the



Michelle Scray-Brown  
2012 contract.

"On April 5, 2011,

the Governor of California signed Assembly Bill 109," Scray-Brown said. "This legislation shifted responsibility for supervision of low level offenders and the adult parole population from the state to local jurisdictions. Because of this 'realignment,' the department's need for additional services, including global posi- See P 9

## CUP Converts Déjà Vu Into Sports Bar



The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors this week approved a conditional use permit that brings down a permanent curtain on the topless performances at the Déjà Vu theater in the unincorporated county area between Montclair and Chino.

The Déjà Vu, which was established as a club featuring topless dancing in the 1980s, became the object of dispute with the county's planning division more than two decades ago over activity in and around the club as well as its location at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Mission Boulevard. In 2002, after legal sparring between the county and the club's ownership, Michigan-based Tollis, Inc., a legal settlement was arrived at by which Tollis agreed to raze the adjoining motel which rented rooms by the hour and make changes to the landscaping, lighting and maintenance and security of the property in exchange for being able to continue to operate as a strip club for ten years.

In 2012, the county moved to enforce the provision forcing its cessation as a strip club and Tollis reluctantly acceded to transforming the club into a non-adult entertainment venue or sports bar, while maintaining its liquor license.

The conditional use permit for the sports bar or comedy club called for further changes See P 3

## Conaway Campaign Hugely Reliant On Making Contrasts With Cook & GOP

Bob Conaway is bearing the Blue Democrat Standard in this year's election in California's 8th Congressional District against the incumbent member of the House of Representatives, one-term Republican Congressman Paul Cook.

Conaway insisted he is the superior choice, and sought to make a

case that his adherence to the principles of the Democratic Party will better serve not only the constituents in the 8th Congressional District but citizens throughout San Bernardino County, California and all of the United States.

Conaway agreed to outline for the *Sentinel* the issues he believes are of the most importance



Bob Conaway

to the district and its voters.

"Our county should avoid needless conflict and not start or maintain conflicts overseas without making the commitment to take care of the returning servicemen, their families and veterans," Conaway said.

He was critical of legislation supported by Cook that was ostensibly aimed at reforming the much maligned Veter-

ans Administration but which in effect, Conaway said, sold veterans short.

"Paul Cook voted for HR 4810, which creates a budget to build more buildings and to provide assistance with appointments to outside vendors for veterans," Conaway said. "What was missing in HR 4810 was a budget for the Veter- See P 5

## Old Guard Seeing Challenge From Young Turks In YV

Of the nine candidates vying in the race for the three positions up for grabs in this year's Yucca Valley Town Council race, four appear to have secured the inside track, that is, the greatest degree of viability when measured by the criteria traditionally applied in determining frontrunner status. By virtue of high name recognition and proven records of impacting the political direction of this physi-

cally isolated patch of humanity in the vast Mojave Desert, incumbents Merl Abel and Bob Leone along with challengers Ron Cohen and Lori Herbel appear to have advanced to the front of the pack.

Given the matrix of the nine candidates vying for the three seats, a real horserace is in play, complete with its intrinsic septic challenges, that is ones that are literally septic as See P 2

## Hesperia School Bond Committee Files Inaccurate Campaign Finance Statements

By Gail Fry  
Staff Writer

In the upcoming November 4 general election, the voters located within the boundaries of the Hesperia Unified School District are being asked by the district's leadership to approve a \$207 million bond measure to improve local schools.

At its August 4, 2014, regular board meeting the Hesperia Unified School District govern-

ing board approved a resolution ordering a school bond election for Measure M and authorizing necessary actions connected to the bond election. School district governing board members Hardy Black, Nicole Childs, Ella "Lee" Rogers and Eric Swanson voted in favor of the resolution with Cody Gregg dissenting.

The proponents of the bond measure, Measure M, have formed a recipi-



Lori Mente

ent committee entitled "Committee For Yes On M 4 Hesperia" for the purposes of collecting contributions See P 2

## San Bernardino County Embracing, Indeed Facilitating Food Truck Culture

One illustration of the contrast between metropolitan Los Angeles/surrounding Los Angeles County and its little brother to the east, San Bernardino/surrounding San Bernardino County, played out this week at the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors meeting when the board took up the issue of food truck regulation.

Food trucks, it seems,

are a quintessentially Southern California phenomenon. While lunch trucks have existed for over a half century, the concept was reinvented and enlarged upon in a major way just a decade ago, when the idea of vending cuisine from a truck took hold.

A pioneer in this movement was Roy Choi, who immigrated to America from Korea



with his parents at the age of two in 1972. After

graduating from California State University

at Fullerton with a degree in philosophy and attending Western State University School of Law for a semester, Choi abandoned all that book learning for something immediately practical: the art of food preparation. He started with watching chef Emeril Lagasse's television show and then took a culinary class at a local night school. In See P 5



### Handicapping The Yucca Valley Council Race *from front page*

the major issue facing the 20,700 person community is a projected bill of over \$135,000,000 for only the first phase of sewage treatment facilities needed to keep the California Water Quality Control Board from taking drastic action against the city in May 2016.

In a town long heavily dominated politically by the Gemini Star person-

ality machines of Pastor Jerel Hagerman and Congressman Paul Cook and their tight knit affiliates such as the father and son politicians, of Pastor Roger Dean Mayes and his son, Chad, only one of the four frontrunners bubbles automatically to the top of that largest chamber of voters: incumbent Merl Abel.

The others seemingly holding strong in the race so far, incumbent Bob Leone, past Councilwoman Lori Herbel, and the freshman politi-

cian Ron Cohen, have all built their voting blocks from a more diverse crowd influenced less by star personalities and more by issues. Not surprisingly, all three of these have criticized major decisions by Merle Abel such as the payment of over \$120,000 to disgraced ex-town manager Mark Nuaimi, and a failed ballot initiative to impose an additional one percent sales tax for the town council to spend at its discretion.

Ron Cohen quite vis-

ibly became the lead spokesman for an initiative to recall present councilmen Huntington and Lombardo. He and his wrestling cohorts were seen defending the impromptu free speech encampment created by Ed Montgomery at the intersection of 247 and Highway 62 against a hammer-wielding thug. Fellow recall organizer Lori Herbel likewise walked door to door and others manned tables at the local Stater Broth-

*Continued on Page 7*

### The San Bernardino County

## Sentinel

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### Hesperia School Bond Advocates File Erroneous Campaign Disclosure Documents *from front page*

to pay for campaign expenses.

The committee supporting Measure M consists of its member Lori Mente, who holds the title executive assistant to the superintendent at the district, and its treasurer

Gina Turner. According to documents obtained from the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters, the committee has collected \$55,500 from its contributors and expended \$9,389 for signs, voter slates, electricity, government filings and miscellaneous office supplies.

In an October 16 email to the *Sentinel*, Mente refers to herself as a "volunteer" and not "representing" the committee Yes on Measure

M.

Documents filed with the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters Office show the committee supporting Measure M were ten days late in filing its 460 pre-election statement and inaccurately reported its contributions received as being \$13,500 when in fact they were \$55,500 based on six 497 contribution reports filed with the registrar of voters in September and early Oc-

tober.

Five 497 contribution reports filed by the committee Yes on Measure M indicate that on September 18, Erickson Hall Construction Co. contributed \$10,000, on September 26, Holman Capital Corporation contributed \$2,500, on October 2, Frick, Frick & Jette contributed \$2,500, on October 6, Copier Source Inc. contributed \$5,000, on October 8, LPA, Inc. contributed

\$10,000, on October 2, Amber Mooney contributed \$2,500 and on October 8, Atkinson, Anderson, Loya, Ruud & Romo contributed \$5,000. The total of the contributions shown on the five 497 contribution reports equals \$37,000.

One 497 contribution report filed by the Hesperia Teachers' Association PAC and filed with the registrar of voters indicates that on October 9, it gave a \$5,000 campaign contribution to the

Committee for Yes on M Hesperia.

However, when the committee supporting Measure M filed its late 460 pre-election statement, it indicated that its total campaign contributions were \$13,500 for the period of July 1 through September 30, 2014 with its 460 form showing a total of \$13,500 in campaign contributions from Erickson Hall Construction Co. in the amount of \$10,000, Holman Capital Corporation in the amount of \$2,500, Certified Air Conditioning in the amount of \$500 and Thomas R. Dorow Inspectors in the amount of \$500.

Erickson Hall Construction Co., headquartered in Escondido appears from its website to specialize in school construction projects. Holman Capital Corporation is a California corporation located in Rancho Santa Margarita and according to its website provides "value added taxable and tax-exempt financing solutions to federal, state, and local governments." Certified Air Conditioning, Inc., is a California corporation located in San Diego, according to records with the California Secretary of State. Thomas R. Dorow Inspectors is a property inspection company located in the city of Hesperia, according to numerous references found on the internet.

Frick, Frick & Jette is an architectural and engineering firm located in the city of Temecula and

*Continued on Page 4*

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## Glimpse Of SBC's Past

### The Red Car Line In SBC County 1911-1950

San Bernardino County was a participant in Pacific Electric's Red Car Line, the privately owned mass



**Isaias W. Hellman**

transit system in Southern California that emanated from Los Angeles consisting of electrically powered streetcars, light rail that existed between 1901 and 1961. Ultimately, organized around the city centers of Los Angeles and San Bernardino, by the 1920s it was the largest electric railway system in the world.

Electric trolleys first traveled in Los Angeles in 1887. In 1901, the Pacific Electric Railroad was by railroad executive Henry Huntington and banker Isaias W. Hellman after they had success developing a trolley system in San Francisco. Together, Huntington and Hellman purchased some existing

rail lines in downtown Los Angeles, which they standardizes and organizes into one network called under the Los Angeles Railway.

They tasked engineer Epes Randolph to survey and lay out the company's first lines which would be to Long Beach. The line to Long Beach opened for business in July 1902.

The enterprise involved not only passenger transportation but carrying of freight as



**Henry Huntington**

well as supplying electric power to the communities along which the lines extended. Huntington and Hellman and their investors picked up large chunks of real estate along the way. A fling out between Huntington and Hellman oc-

curred as the result of Huntington's insistence on reinvesting profits into costly expansion rather than paying any



stockholder dividends. Consequently, the Hellman investment group sold their share of the company to E.H. Harriman, essentially trading Harriman's Wells Fargo Bank to Hellman for his railroad holdings.

As partners Huntington and Harrington cooperated with regard to the Red Car venture but were wary of one another because Harrington did not want the

line to interfere with his Southern Pacific line operations. In 1906, Moses Sherman sold his Los Angeles Pacific Railroad

the Red Car line expanded eastward to Monrovia, Azusa, Pomona, Cucamonga Etiwanda, Fontana, Colton

the dismantling of the streetcar lines, replacing them with buses that could run on both local streets and on the new express roads.

When the freeway system was planned in the 1930s the city planners planned to include light rail tracks in the center margin of each freeway but the plan was never implemented.

The Whittier and Fullerton was cut in 1938, Redondo Beach, New-



**E. H. Harriman**

port Beach, Sawtelle via San Vicente, and Riverside in 1940. When the San Bernardino Freeway

*Continued on Page 11*

#### County CUP For Sports Bar Closes Déjà Vu For Good from front page

with regard to the property, in particular the demolition of the large billboard sign at the front of the property and a change in the external lighting, which entailed a rotating projector which transformed the color of the building from red to pink to purple to blue to green at night.

Tollis appealed the planning commission's action to the board of supervisors in October 2012. The public noticing of the appeal did not specify the grounds for Tollis' request, leading to some speculation that an effort was underway to reestablish the 7,048 square foot nightclub building at the 1.22-acre site as a strip club. In effect, Tollis was seeking to transition it to a topless/bottomless dance review that would not feature the availability of alcohol on the premises.

This week, the county and a lawyer for Tollis gave indication that the issues in the appeal had been amicably resolved, with the county making concessions with regard to the outward appearance of the structure as well as signage, but that the night club will no longer be a venue for adult entertainment.

As a consequence of this week's public hearing, Tollis was given a conditional use permit calling for the change of use from a nightclub with adult entertainment to a nightclub and tavern with on-site sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages and non-adult entertainment, including a sports bar, comedy club.

In her staff report on the matter, county planning director Terri Rahhal wrote, "The Applicant, Tollis Inc., submitted an application for the change of use of the existing 7,048 square foot, two-story building from a totally nude adult entertainment facility, without alcohol, to a nightclub and tav-

ern with on-site sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages and non-adult entertainment, including a sports bar, comedy club and live music. The application proposes interior remodeling of the building, adding booths and open seating on the first floor and a sports bar and lounge, dance floor and open seating on the second floor. The project plans do not include removal of the existing performance stage and dance pole on the first floor."

At the hearing on Tuesday of this week, however, it was reported that Tollis has now agreed to remove the dance poles, which are associated with nude or semi-nude dancing from the premises as well as the pre-existing booths, which were associated with "lap dances."

Rahal's report also stated that "the applicant/appellant now also objects to 14 other conditions of approval, as detailed in the appeal."

At the hearing this week, it was revealed that the county had come

to an accommodation on those objections, the most significant of which related to the color of the building, currently pink; and colored projection lighting that at night is capable of shifting the color of the building from pink to red, to green, to purple to blue; as well as the sign in front of the building, which exceeds the county's size and height standards. As a consequence of the compromise, the building will be painted in "neutral tones" and the "light reflected on the building will be restricted to white light, with color permitted for some holidays, such as green and red on Christmas and red, with and blue on July 4." The sign is to remain in place for five years, after which time it must be replaced with one that conforms with size and height restrictions.

Tollis's attorney, Alice Wong, was present at the hearing and indicated the company was amenable to the newly arrived-at terms specified by Rahal.

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## School Bond Advocates File Incomplete, Misleading Documents from page 2

according to its website, "we specialize in educational construction." Copier Source, Inc., is a California corporation located on Hospitality Lane in the city of San Bernardino. Entries of the business name, location and phone number are found on the internet, but no website for the company was found. LPA, Inc. is a California corporation located in Irvine that specializes in "integrated collaboration" and "sustainable services" according to its website. Atkinson, Anderson, Loya, Ruud & Romo is the Hesperia Unified School District's attorney firm.

The contribution reports and pre-election statements filed with the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters by The Committee For Yes On M 4 Hesperia and by the Hesperia Teachers' Association PAC can be viewed at the registrar of voters website: <http://ssl.netfile.com/Pub2/AllFilingsByFiler.aspx?id=152573692>.

In an interview with the *Sentinel* regarding the late filing of the committee's 460 pre-election statement, San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters Mike Scarpello acknowledged that Committee For Yes On M 4 Hesperia's 460 forms were "filed late" as they were due on October 6 and when they "turned it in on October 10 they filed it without a signature." Scarpello explained his office contacted the committee, which then filed its signed 460 forms on October 16, according to information on the registrar of voters' website.

"Filing a few days late is not uncommon," Scarpello acknowledged, explaining that the registrar of voters maintains a list of those that have campaign filings due and its staff calls to "remind them" that there is a filing due.

The statement by proponents/authors of

arguments submitted to the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters and signed by Jessica VanOverbeke, Percy L. Bakker, Amanda Macias, Thomas J. Kerman and Edward Valenzuela claims, Measure M will "improve classroom education, test scores, and help attract/retain quality classroom teachers" and the upgrades will expand "career and vocational education programs that train students for jobs in automotive, agriculture, manufacturing, health care, and technology."

Specifically, the Argument in Favor of Measure M claims funds from Measure M will upgrade "classrooms, science and engineering labs, computers and libraries" and "insufficient security features including security fencing, cameras, lighting, and security systems to keep students safe and prevent destruction of school property."

"Fiscally Accountable!" the argument in favor proclaims of the measure, claiming that required "independent financial audits" and a citizens' oversight committee will "ensure funds are spent as promised."

The Argument in Favor of Measure M submitted by its proponents claim, "Every penny is required by law to be spent locally on upgrading our schools."

However, in an email response to questions by the *Sentinel*, Committee for Yes On Measure M 4 Hesperia admitted, "As discussed in open session with the governing board and presented to the school facilities committee, a portion of the general obligation bonds authorized by Measure M may be used to pay-off a lease obligation of HUSD."

The email response sent by Lori Mente assured, "The use of general obligation bonds to pay-off a lease obligation will require future approval of HUSD's governing board and will be dependent on future economic conditions of HUSD."

Information provided on Measure M included on the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters' website in an "impartial" analysis provided by San Bernardino County Counsel's Office states, "Issuance of all of the authorized bonds might require the outstanding debt of the district to exceed its statutory bonding limit of 2.50 percent of the total assessed valuation of taxable property in the district."

San Bernardino County Counsel's impartial analysis explains, "Principal and interest on the bonds will be payable from the proceeds of tax levies upon the taxable property in the district, which is estimated at 5.858 cents per \$100 (\$58.58 per \$100,000) of the assessed valuation." To view these documents visit the registrar of voters' website: <http://www.sbcountyelections.com/Elections/PastElections/20141104/Measures.aspx>

In other words, if the voters within the Hesperia Unified School District vote in favor of Measure M at the November 4 general election, the school district would be authorized to annually assess each property owner within the district \$58.58 per

\$100,000 of property value.

As an example, if your house was valued at \$300,000 the school district could assess your property at \$175.74 a year until those bonds have been paid off with the loan term going as long as 25 years, the statutory limit. Additionally, the bonds can be refinanced extending their payoff even further.

The resolution passed by Hesperia Unified School District at its August 4, 2014 meeting indicates that the district, in issuing these bonds, may require the outstanding debt to exceed the legal limit of two and a half percent of its net valuation of the value of the property located within the district.

According to records obtained from the San Bernardino County Assessor's Office currently, the value of the property located within the boundaries of the Hesperia Unified School District is \$5,248,752,411 net for fiscal year 2013/14.

Therefore, two and a half percent of the value would have equaled \$131,218,810 in fiscal year 2013/14. In order to exceed the statutory limit, the school district would need to obtain a waiver from the State Board of Education,

which according to records shown on its website have a tendency to approve the requests for waivers with conditions.

In her email to the *Sentinel*, Mente explained, "HUSD does not believe the total amount of general obligation bonds issued under Measure M will exceed 2.50% of the total assessed valuation (this test occurs each time bonds are sold). This is due to bonds being sold in multiple issues as opposed to a single issuance. As total assessed valuation grows within HUSD, additional series of general obligation bonds authorized under Measure M will be sold."

The 2.50 percent limit, i.e., "the value of taxable property in the district" on the amount a unified school district can borrow, is set by California Education Code Section 15106.

Other restrictions were placed on school bond financing when California Governor Jerry Brown, in response to concerns about creative financing being conducted by school districts, signed legislation (Assembly Bill 182) on October 2, 2013, requiring the ratio of total debt service to principal for each bond series to not exceed 4 to one among

other legal requirements and restrictions included in the bill.

In other words, if 55 percent of the voters within the boundaries of Hesperia Unified School District approve Measure M at the November 4, general election and the district issues \$207,000,000 in bonds, it can legally indebt the district up to \$828,000,000 in debt service requirements.

Keeping within these statutory restrictions will be challenging for the Hesperia Unified School District and that is when school districts have been getting creative in how they structure their financing and how they project to pay-off the debt.

For instance, when Mente explained the district's decision to pay off a lease obligation "will be dependent on future economic conditions of HUSD" it suggests the district may be projecting rising property values in their calculations on how to pay off the school district's debt.

There is a variety of bonds from which the district would choose from if Measure M passes in order to structure its financing to keep within these legal restrictions, such as Build America

*Continued on Page 7*

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# Upland Council Race Devolving Into Sign Stealing, Vandalizing Frenzy

Politics in the City of Gracious Living have proven less than gracious in the last fortnight. With eight candidates vying for three positions on the Upland City Council, determination, emotions, and tempers have run high, and the competition between the parties, seven of whom are running spirited campaigns, has been pitched.

As is typical in any electoral season, signs

touting the various candidacies are visible all over the 15.6 square mile city of 73,732, having sprouted along the roadway vistas and intersections like toadstools at the base of a tree in a thick-growth forest after a spring rain.

A rash of vandalism to and theft of the signs has taken place over the last few weeks, with that activity intensifying in recent days.

At least three of incumbent councilman Gino Filippi's signs, which were in prominent spots along Euclid Avenue last week, have gone missing.

Susan Berk, whose campaign has used a mix of four-foot by four-foot signs on heavy wood bases as well as smaller yard signs, was hit with the theft or destruction of ten of its signs around the city early this week.

Bill Schuessler told the *Sentinel* on Tuesday that nine or ten of his signs were removed, destroyed or taken early this week.

The candidate most heavily hounded by the sign thefts was Rod McAuliffe, who reported on Monday that nearly 50 of his signs had been removed or destroyed.

Reports of the thefts have been made to the police department in at

least two of the cases, the *Sentinel* is informed.

Moreover, a private security camera in a residential neighborhood caught moving images of the removal of one of Schuessler's signs.

Schuessler said that theft occurred sometime between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. in the morning of October 20. The perpetrator appears to be a young male, Schuessler said. The video shows

him taking the sign and placing it in a vehicle, Schuessler said. The video is clear enough for the make and model of the car to be discerned, Schuessler said.

Shuessler said the video has been provided to a forensic analyst capable of enhancing the images on the video even further.



## Conaway from front page

ans Administration hiring the additional doctors and medical support staff needed, like what is proposed in the McCain-Sanders bill. I would not have voted for HR 4810, but would have insisted that an up-or-down vote be done in the House on the McCain-Sanders bill, which has passed the Senate, and that the money used for building more brick-and-mortar facilities and outsource-

ing care be put into hiring more professional staff, which will also add jobs at the VA facilities locally.

Without passing judgment on the Affordable Care Act, which has been subject to withering criticism by Republicans and lampooned by those critics as "Obamacare," Conaway asserted that the concept of providing universal health coverage to all Americans is a worthy goal and that efforts to work toward that ideal must be main-

tained.

"For the sake of discussion, if the Affordable Care Act got repealed, we would still need to make sure that insurance carriers don't discriminate based on a citizen's gender and whether they have pre-existing conditions," Conaway said. "Paul Cook voted for HR 3522, which allows insurers to discriminate based on gender and pre-existing conditions. I would vote to keep those protections, whether or not the Affordable Care

Act remains in place."

Conaway told the *Sentinel* that it is his position that "working moms still need access to child care tax credits. We all know the economy is in flux. More women are the bread winners in families and need to pitch in to make ends meet even with the significant other working. We need to not discriminate against entry level women employees. Paul Cook voted for HR 4935, which would eliminate \$1,725.00 dollars in child care tax

credits for five million single parents with two children to care for, reduce it for six million other working moms, while increasing the child care tax credit for those earning \$150,000 by an additional \$2,200. I would have voted against HR 4935 to make it possible for women with families to afford entry level minimum wages. The savings of not putting HR 4935 into effect, is saving \$100 billion over ten years per the Congressional Budget

office."

Conaway said he stood for "not increasing taxes for the working poor. HR 4935, by eliminating the child care tax credit, increases a single mom's tax bill by up to \$150 per month or a week of food and household supplies for most working families. I would have voted against HR 4935 and saved \$100 billion over 10 years."

Conaway said he is in favor of increasing the

*Continued on Page 6*

## County Liberalizing Food Truck Regulations from front page

1996, Choi transferred to the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, and then served as an intern chef at Le Bernardin in New York City. A relatively few years later Choi had become the chef de cuisine at the Beverly Hilton. He would later hold similar posts with the Embassy Suites in Lake Tahoe and the Rock Sugar Pan Asian Kitchen in Los Angeles. Growing bored with four and five star cooking that catered to the upper crust, Choi made a radical transition, preparing his particular brand of food, one that a style fuses Mexican and Korean flavors and dishes, and selling it from a food truck which he typically parked on Abbot Kinney Boulevard in Venice. In 2008 he took his show onto the road and began parking the truck outside nightclubs on Sunset Boulevard late

at night, selling Mexican tacos stuffed with Korean-style meat. His approach was so successful it spawned literally hundreds and then thousands of imitators. The city and county of Los Angeles rushed to accommodate the new business phenomenon, and by 2010 there were 4,000 licensed catering trucks operating in Los Angeles County, including 200 "specialty" trucks which featured high end five star cuisine surpassing the typical fare in most restaurants and rivaling that available in the finest restaurants in the city. This created controversy, as the established "brick and mortar" restaurants saw first their profitability and eventually their survival as being threatened. The restaurant establishment and the politicians who were answerable to them began to pound back and soon a round of efforts to intensify the regulations on food trucks were served up. Many of those, as would be logically anticipated, were

aimed at the health related issues pertaining to the trucks, sanitation, refrigeration, etc. In 2012, the Los Angeles City Council upped the effort to bring them to heel by using both land use and traffic considerations as operations restrictions. In one instance, the trucks, characterized as "over-sized" were restricted from parking on Wilshire Boulevard near the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, one of the most popular venues for the trucks, ostensibly as a means of increasing visibility for drivers in the area. The ordinance banned food trucks from parking along Wilshire, between Fairfax and La Brea between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

In Los Angeles, city officials see further restrictions and regulations on food trucks as a blow for the public good.

Some 59.7 miles to the east, in San Bernardino, the flow is away from regulation. A case in point is this week the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors

took a second look at the ordinance it passed in 2012 regulating food trucks.

According to Tom Hudson, the director of San Bernardino County's Land Use Services Department, "Currently, Chapter 85.19 Food Truck Event Permits allows food trucks to operate only at designated, organized events at pre-approved fixed locations, subject to the operator obtaining an approved Food Truck Event Permit. The code definition of a food truck event in Chapter 810.01 includes any food truck service, regardless of the number of attendees or location of the event. Currently no provisions exist in the code for small, incidental food truck uses. Employers, contractors and persons hosting private parties with a small number of attendees have expressed a concern that the food truck event permits process is too restrictive and costly. The proposed amendment to the code re-defines the minor food truck event

and adds exemptions to the food truck event permits in order to address these concerns."

Hudson continued, "This amendment to the code proposes to modify the definitions of major and minor food truck events to specify that only food truck events which are open to the public require permits. Private parties and other uses that are not open to the public are excluded from food truck event permitting. In addition, staff is recommending a minimum threshold of 100 attendees to require a permit. Therefore, an amendment is proposed to define the minor food truck event as an event for 100 to 499 persons. The major food truck event is defined as an event for 500 or more

persons. Public events for fewer than 100 persons would be comparable to a private event and, therefore, would not require a permit. This modification of permitting requirements applies only to the food truck event permits issued by

the county land use services department. All existing requirements of the San Bernardino County Environmental Health Services Department with respect to inspection and permitting of food trucks relative to public health requirements remain in effect and are not affected by the proposed ordinance."

The policy change applies to the county's unincorporated areas. The trucks are subject to any applicable municipal regulations in cities that have put them in place. Many San Bernardino County cities have yet to regulate them.

The board directed staff to go even further in the liberalization of the regulations by looking into the consolidation of the food truck inspection process so that if a truck is given certification by the health departments in either Riverside or Los Angeles counties it will be deemed licensed in San Bernardino County.





# VVUHSD To Pay County/Sheriff \$1,000 Per Day For Resource Officer At Adelanto High

The county and the sheriff's department will charge the Victor Valley Union High School District over \$130,000 for the services of a single school resource officer to work the Adelanto High School campus for the slightly more than six months of instructional time before the end of the current school year.

According to sheriff's  
captain Shannon Dicus.

“On September 18, 2014,  
the Victor Valley Union  
High

School District Board of Trustees approved the addition of a school resource officer to be assigned at Adelanto High School. School resource officers work closely with school administrators in an effort to create a safer environment for both students and staff. In addition to

typical peace officer duties, School resource officers provide mentoring to students and conduct presentations on youth-related issues.”

The services provided by the resource officer will cost the taxpayers in the Victor Valley Union High School \$968.94 per day.

The proposed contract provides revenue in the amount of

\$130,807 to provide a full-time deputy sheriff as a school resource officer for the balance of the school year. The rate charged provides full recovery of both the direct and indirect costs of this contract.

According to Dicus, "Services will be provided by existing staff; however, budget adjustments will be necessary cover anticipated overtime


and equipment costs. The sheriff's department will receive \$130,807 for providing a school resource officer for the period of November 3, 2014 through May 29, 2015. The proposed contract provides for school resource officer services at Adelanto High School for the remainder of the 2014-15 school year. This contract benefits the district by having a dedi-

cated law enforcement presence on campus and the department is benefited by freeing up patrol deputies from having to respond to numerous issues on campus.”

Dicus told the *Sentinel* the \$130,807 cost of providing the deputy's services to the district reflects the annual \$ 224,240.57 annual cost to the department of employing a single deputy.

# Ruth MUSSEY-LOPEZ

Candidate for State Senate District 16



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**Conaway** *from page 5*  
minimum wage to \$10.16 by 2016.”

He said, “No matter how you calculate it, minimum wage has flat-lined over the past 50 years. A 2012 study from

the Center for Economic Policy Research reads, 'By all of the most commonly used benchmarks - If wages had kept up with productivity gains since 1968, it would be nearly \$22 dollars an hour.' Paul Cook voted

against increasing the minimum wage to \$10.16 in 2016. I would have voted to increase the minimum wage to \$10.16 by 2016.”

He would, Conaway said, work to “help our college students get the

education they need. Paul Cook voted for passage of HR 3393, which eliminated some tax credits and deductions for education expenses and took benefits away from graduate students. In addition to this, Paul

Cook voted to increase the student loan interest rates to 3.4%, even though passbook rates are at a record low. I would vote to reduce the interest rate and create realistic payment plans that do not discriminate

on prior credit history and which can be adjusted based on changing conditions like job loss or income reduction.”

On one issue, at least, Conaway said he was on the conservative side of the divide, while Cook was, by contrast, a liberal. Specifically, Conaway said, he was a states' rights advocate, while his opponent was a creature of the federal government establishment.

“We need to control our state’s water resources and protect California jobs,” Conaway said. “Paul Cook voted for HR 3964, which will preempt state water law and state court decisions, eliminate protection needed to California’s salmon industry and other commercially valuable species. HR 3964 will federally take over our water and cost us thousands of jobs. I would have voted against HR 3964 as a federal grab of in state water resources.”

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## Lawsuit, Including \$500K-plus Embezzlement Accusation, Explicates Blough Departure

Details relating to abrupt parting of the ways between the San Bernardino Public Employees Association and its general manager, Bob Blough in the summer of 2013, a development shrouded in some degree of mystery, have emerged with the association's filing of a lawsuit against Blough on October 17.

According to San Bernardino Public Employees Association President Ron Dunn, during Blough's tenure as general manager "money" was "unaccounted for and misappropriated by Mr. Blough," action which Dunn said "cannot go ignored."

The complaint against Blough, filed on behalf of the San Bernardino Public Employees Association (SBPEA) by attorneys Dennis Hayes and Michelle Hribar of the San Diego-based law firm of Hayes & Cunningham, states "In 2013 SBPEA hired new auditors Ahern Adcock Devlin LLP. In June 2013, during its audit of SBPEA, Ahern Adcock Devlin discovered that there was a large disparity in the amount of

SBPEA's recorded cash receipts and the amount of deposits made to SBPEA's bank account at Security Bank of California. The amount of SBPEA's recorded cash receipts appeared to far exceed the amount of cash deposits that had been made."

The lawsuit continues, "Ahern Adcock Devlin asked Blough to provide the keys to SBPEA's safe, where presumably cash making up the difference between SBPEA's cash receipts and cash deposits would be located. Blough reluctantly provided Ahern Adcock Devlin with the key to SBPEA's safe. Upon review of the cash in SBPEA's safe, Ahern Adcock Devlin found only approximately \$40,000 in cash, which was far less than the amount of cash received by SBPEA that was not deposited in SBPEA's bank account. SBPEA immediately placed Blough on administrative leave without pay and shortly thereafter, terminated Blough's employment. SBPEA also terminated from employment Blough's assistant, Jeannie Marquez."

The association undertook a more extensive investigation of the matter after Blough had departed, according to the lawsuit.

"SBPEA then hired Ahern Adcock Devlin to perform an audit of SBPEA's records for the time period from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013, in order to assist SBPEA with its investigation of Blough and Marquez," the lawsuit states. "On October 1, 2014, Devlin provided the final results of its audit to SBPEA. Ahern Adcock Devlin's audit revealed that between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2013, a total of \$595,444.82 in cash received by SBPEA was missing because it was never deposited into SBPEA's bank account and was not in SBPEA's safe. SBPEA is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that Blough misappropriated, converted, and embezzled cash in the amount of \$595,444.82 from SBPEA."

In addition, according to the lawsuit, there were other financial irregularities that occurred during Blough's tenure as

general manager.

"Ahern Adcock Devlin's audit also revealed that during the time frame of July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013, there were numerous charges on SBPEA's credit cards, including those held in Blough's name, which appeared to be personal-in-nature," the suit states. "The purchases appearing to be personal-in-nature amount to \$108,345.14. SBPEA is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that in addition to the \$595,444.82 in cash, Blough also misappropriated, converted, and embezzled \$109,345.14 of SBPEA's funds by using SBPEA's credit cards in order to pay for his own personal

expenses."

According to the suit, there were other questionable credit card expenses by Blough for storage units, tools, paper, grills and other supplies, which had no supporting documentation available.

According to the suit, "Blough intentionally concealed his misappropriation, conversion and embezzlement of funds from SBPEA's executive committee and members. SBPEA is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that Blough falsified and altered SBPEA's records in order to conceal his misappropriation, conversion, and embezzlement of funds from the SBPEA executive com-

mittee and members."

Efforts to locate Blough for comment were unsuccessful.

The San Bernardino Public Employees Association represents and handles collective bargaining for over 11,000 employees working for San Bernardino County and 3,000 others working for 16 of the county's cities – Barstow, Big Bear, Chino, Chino Hills, Colton Fontana, Hesperia, Loma Linda, Montclair, Needles, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Rialto, San Bernardino, and Upland, as well as three cities in east Los Angeles County, Claremont, Pomona and West Covina, and Banning in Riverside County.

### Yucca Valley Race

from page 2

ers to collect over 2,700 signatures of town citizens who were "mad as hell and not going to take it anymore" about numerous policy blunders made by Abel and three of his council colleagues. Incumbent Bob Leone's

support for the recall was much more circumspect but he made clear his sustained disagreements with all the other members of the council at the time. Leone served on the council in previous years but left the council two election cycles ago, only to return in a special election held last

year. During his most recent tenure on the council, Leone was the lone negative vote on several decisions of the council firmly aligning Leone, whether he wants to publicize it or not, with the new powerful voting block that Herbel and Cohen congregated against the established

*Continued on Page 8*

### Hesperia School Bond Support Group Botches Campaign Finance Reporting Filing

Bonds or BABs, current interest bonds or CIBs, capital appreciation bonds or CABs, convertible capital appreciation

bonds or CCABs.

According to Mente's email, "HUSD anticipates using both current interest bonds and capital appreciation bonds when issuing general obligation bonds under the authorization of Measure M" and "current interest bonds will be issued to the fullest extent possible."

"The use of capital appreciation bonds will be only to maximize the efficiency of the tax revenues," Mente explained adding that the school district would "adhere to all legal requirements."

Capital appreciation bonds are known to have extended maturities now up to 25 years, included compounded interest,

which is interest on top of interest and have been known to have no payments due until maturity date resulting in exorbitant payoff amounts.

"The use of bond anticipation notes is not expected at this time and not needed to accomplish the goals of HUSD's Governing Board and the School Facilities Committee," Mente concluded.

Mente in her email to the *Sentinel* explained, "HUSD will adhere to all parameters and requirements set both in AB 182 or any other legal requirements in place at the time of each bond issuance when issuing general obligation bonds authorized under Measure M."

"If the district receives voter approval, the district will analyze the issuance of each bonds based on the planned facilities improvements,

the requirements of the law, and the economic conditions at the time," Mente asserted, explaining, "There is, therefore, no way to know today, all details of bond issuances five to 10 years into the future."

As far as the existing debt of Hesperia Unified School District, Mente responded "HUSD does not have any outstanding general obligation bonds."

However, Mente revealed, "HUSD has entered into two (2) lease arrangements which are making lease payments on certificates of participation." Certificates of participation are another type of debt instrument which is sold on Wall Street to investors without voter approval.

"In addition, HUSD has formed a number of community facilities districts," Mente said, adding that "Two (2) of

the five community facilities districts have issued special tax bonds."

When the *Sentinel* asked for the names of the community facilities districts and details on the special tax bonds, Mente explained "our consultant cannot meet your deadline."




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## Newest Prisoner Transportation Bus For Sheriff's Office To Cost County \$603,000

The board of supervisors this week approved a no-bid contract with an Illinois-based company for the purchase of a bus for the sheriff's department to use to transport prisoners, including forays between detention facilities and back and forth from jail to court.

While modern busses used for passenger transport in the United States typically cost from \$300,000 to \$400,000, the bus San Bernardino County taxpayers are buying for the sheriff's department will run more than \$600,000.

A report dated October 21, 2014 ostensibly from sheriff John McMahon to the board of supervisors that was actually written by sheriff's captain Shannon Dicus states "The sheriff's department is requesting a non-competitive procurement with Motor Coach Industries in order to maintain a standardized fleet of jail buses. The department strives to replace inmate security transportation buses when they reach the one million mile mark. The department has worked to standardize its fleet of jail transportation buses and has found that Motor Coach Industries is a reasonably priced bus that meets its specifications required for reliable short and long distance prisoner transportation needs. The last purchase of inmate transportation buses was previously approved by the board of supervisors on November 27, 2012

The advantages of having a standardized fleet from Motor Coach Industries include providing the drivers a more predictable operating environment with familiar controls and handling capabilities, which in turn increase safety while the buses are in operation. In addition to the capability of the Motor Coach Industries buses to carry twice as many people compared to other manufacturers, the department also saves time and money on the maintenance as mechanics and motor pool personnel can more predictably assess common maintenance issues without additional training, and take advantage of interchangeable parts and equipment. Motor Coach Industries buses are also currently being used by San Diego County, Riverside County, Orange County, Los Angeles County, and the California Department of Corrections. Security and reliability are the department's highest priorities for bus design and the Motor Coach Industries bus has been specifically designed according to the department's requirements and specifications. Motor Coach Industries jail transportation bus design features, maintenance record, reasonable price, and long life have made it a consistent replacement choice. Purchasing concurs with the non-competitive justification as the functionality of the bus provides a predictable operating environment with familiar controls and handling capabilities. The department is continually kept up to date on other manufacturers' products and will competitively solicit when safety and other specifications can be met."

Dicus told the *Sentinel* that the busses contain a number of features that are not available on typical busses. "It has a bathroom, which is necessary for prison runs to the northern part of the state," Dicus said. "The busses have automatic transmissions, which fits with our effort to standardized them. The floor plan features internal security which allows us to separate high security inmates from other inmates. It has individual areas that can be secured."

In compliance with the sheriff's department recommendation, the board of supervisors authorized the county's purchasing agent to issue a purchase order to Motor Coach Industries for one D4000 inmate security transportation bus in the amount of \$603,058.59.

### Yucca Valley Race from page 7

old guard block steered by Hagerman/Cook.

The calculations of the vote include a total registration pool of about 10,000 registered. Significantly, Herbel and Cohen and their fellows added about 500 votes to the rolls during the recall campaign. Presumptively, a large percent of those voters remain interested in changing Town Hall. In a presidential year, the total number of voters is near 4,000 votes, of which the "Pastor Block" is about 2,500 votes depending on the threat level of the non-block candidates.

With a candidate pool of nine candidates, many of whom are themselves Pastor Block candidates but with low name recognition outside the block, the potential for dilution and softening of the block is high despite the weighty opposition such as Cohen and Herbel.

New candidates Rick Dennison, Jeff Drozd, Charles McHenry, Susan Simmons, and to a much lesser extent the "I did and do inhale marijuana" Brian Watson, all will draw some votes from the Pastor Block if for no other reason than a vote for "someone like me" identity politics.

Dennison: local firemen, Drozd: special education teachers, McHenry: friends of the Library and National Parks, Simmons: small business owners.

So with three lead

Continued on Page 10

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## Probation Department Surveillance Contract Enhancement from front page

tioning system tracking, increased significantly.” Indeed, Scray-Brown said, it was “as a result” of the realignment that the county entered into the contract with Sentinel Offender Services.

At this point, Scray-Brown said, it has become apparent that Sentinel Offender Services bit off more than it could chew when it agreed almost two-and-a-half-years ago to complete three years worth of probation tracking for a mere \$1 million.

“As of August 2014, 8,316 post release community supervision offenders have been released by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to the county.

This number is approximately 35% higher than was previously projected,” Scray-Brown said. “In addition, cases have also been received from the court and other counties (573 cases), bringing the total number of cases to 8,889.”

For that reason, Scray-Brown said, the

county should cut Sentinel some slack and not hold it to the terms of its 2012 contract. “Due to the increased number of post release community supervision offenders, the department now requires a related increase in the contract with Sentinel,” Scray-Brown wrote. The additional \$340,000 would be sufficient for the increased contract monitoring services needed through June 30, 2015, the agreement’s scheduled expiration date.”

This clashes with what Scray-Brown said in 2012 when she recommended that the county, which had entered into a probationer monitoring contract with Sentinel in 2005, intensify its arrangement with Sentinel based upon the realignment. As a consequence of Scray-Brown’s recommendation, the county in the summer of 2012 entered into a three-year contract with Sentinel. At the June 26, 2012 board of supervisors meeting, Scray-Brown, who at that time went by the name Michelle Scray, insisted that Irvine-based Sentinel Offender Services had successfully outcompeted CMG Safeguard Electronic

Monitoring, Inc. of Fullerton and Rocky Mountain Offender Management Services of Westminster, Colorado for the contract. At that time Scray indicated one of the criteria in the competition was “cost. Contract services, in the maximum amount of \$1,000,000 over the three year term of the agreement, will be fully funded from either AB 109 revenues or fees collected from referred offenders who pay for monitoring services on a sliding fee scale based on their ability to pay,” Scray said more than two years ago.

This week, Scray-Brown cited no provision in the original contract for realignment prisoner releasee monitoring that specified limits on the numbers of prisoners Sentinel would be responsible for tracking. No such limitation was specified in the public documents related to the 2012 contract.

Deputy chief probation officer Dan Bautista acknowledged that Sentinel had committed to provide global positioning tracking of prisoners released under the realignment through June 30, 2015 and that based

on the prisoner releases that occurred under the realignment beginning in 2011, both Sentinel and the county had not entered into a blind arrangement in 2012. Nevertheless, Bautista said, the numbers of releases anticipated under the project at that time “were just projections.” Bautista said Scray Brown had sought greater remuneration for Sentinel “basically because of the increased usage.”

As to whether allowing Sentinel out of the terms of its original contract and conferring upon it a \$340,000 increase constituted a gift of public funds, Bautista declined comment.

“Any statement will have to come from our media relations division,” he said.

Chris Condon, the media relations specialist for the probation department said “Basically, what happened was Sentinel was given the contract to monitor as many released prisoners as we needed to have monitored. It could be two. It could be a thousand. The problem is with AB 109 [i.e., realignment legislation], we didn’t know how many more. The Department of Cor-

rections did not give us that information. What ended up happening was we gave Sentinel a three-year contract for a million dollars. In fiscal year 2012-13 we paid them \$429,831. In 2013-14 we paid them a total of \$422,314. For the first two years we paid a total of \$852,145. That left us with a remaining \$147,855 for the final year. We are only three months into the third year and we are now nearly out of money and we have to continue to fund the monitoring program. The board agenda item was to increase the amount of the contract by \$340,000. We arrived at \$350,000 because the cost of the monitoring is 34 percent higher than we anticipated in 2012. The million dollar figure in the original contract was just a projection. If we had known what the actual costs are, the contract would have been \$340,000 higher.”

Despite other indications that Sentinel had taken on the project to provide full monitoring across the board for three years and that under the contract Sentinel agreed, in Condon’s words, “they will provide as much monitor-

ing as was needed for a cost,” Condon said “We can’t enter into a contract in which it would be for an unlimited amount of electronic monitoring... The company would go bankrupt.” Condon said he did not have immediate access to the contract but that a commitment by Sentinel to monitor an unspecified number of released prisoners at a fixed total cost “would not have been included in the contract.”

The county, Condon said, is “billed by them monthly, and we only pay for what we use.”

At present, Condon said 230 to 280 released prisoners are monitored on a daily basis, 90 to 120 of whom are homeless.

According to Condon, 10,982 inmates formerly housed in the state prison system have been released into county custody and of that number, 3,606 are currently out of custody and under the supervision of the probation department. Among those 3,606 are the 230 to 280 being monitored electronically. The cost of monitoring each of those individuals costs between \$109 and \$110 per month, according to Condon’s calculations.

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# San Bernardino County Coroner Reports

Coroner case #701407871 On 10/22/14 at 5:18 AM, the California Highway Patrol began receiving calls of a head-on collision on Interstate 15 northbound just south of the Baseline Ave. exit in Rancho Cucamonga. When officers arrived they found that a silver 2012 Toyota Prius had been traveling southbound in the northbound lanes of traffic and struck a semi-tractor trailer that was traveling northbound in the lane closest to the shoulder. The Prius suffered total damage as the result of the collision. Paramedics from the Rancho Cucamonga Fire Department arrived shortly after receiving the call and pronounced Liam Niemeyer, an 18 year old resident of Lancaster [102214 1649 SY], the male Prius driver dead. The Rancho Cucamonga Station of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, Major Accident Investigation Team is investigating the incident. [102214 1412 SY]

Coroner case # 701407865 On October 18, 2014, at 6:45 A.M., San Bernardino County Sheriff Department Personnel responded to a report of a single vehicle traffic incident on Caliente Road at Joshua Street in Hesperia. Sheriff personnel found 45 year-old Hesperia resident Tamara Sigmund, the sole occupant of a 2002 Chevrolet, had been traveling northbound on Caliente Road when for unknown reasons the vehicle rolled over multiple times. Sigmund was transported to the Arrowhead Regional Medical Center. On 10/21/14 at 10:57 P.M. died of her injuries. The San Bernardino County Sheriff Department, Major Accident Investigation Team is investigating the incident. [102214 1404 SY]

Coroner case #701407836 On 10/21/2014 at 12: 05 AM, Upland Police Department officers responded to a 911 call in the area of N. 13th Avenue and E. San Bernardino Road for a traffic collision. Officers arrived on scene and located a Honda that had struck a tree at a high rate of speed. The right front passenger, 22 year-old Montclair resident Stephen Noel Ortiz, was pronounced dead at the scene. Three other occupants of the vehicle were transported to local hospitals for treatment of their injuries. The Upland Police department is investigating this incident.[102114 0830 SY]

Coroner case #701407816 On 10/20/14 at 10:46 AM, 911 calls were received from Fawnskin area residents advising of a plane down near the Grout Bay campsite area on the north side of Big Bear Lake. Deputies from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Big Bear Station and from the Aviation Division responded to the location. Paramedics from the San Bernardino County Fire Department also responded to the area. When they arrived at the crash site, the paramedics immediately pronounced death. The plane was occupied by a pilot only and no other passengers The plane was described as a single engine "experimental" style aircraft. It was believed that the pilot had just taken off from the Big Bear Airport when he experienced unknown problems causing the plane to go down. Investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Aviation Administration along with deputies from the San Bernardino County Aviation Division are investigating the cause of the accident. The pilot's name will be released when the positive identification has been completed. An autopsy will be conducted to determine the exact cause of death. [102114 0823 SY]

Coroner case #701407800 On 10/19/2014, at 9:00 P.M., 22 year-old San Bernardino resident Rodolfo Ramirez was riding his motorcycle eastbound on G Street in Ontario when the motorcycle struck a 2010 Infiniti SUV north on Grove Avenue in the intersection. Ramirez was pronounced dead at the scene. The Ontario Police Department's Traffic Detail is investigating. [102114 0753 SY]

Coroner case #701407793 On Sunday, October 19, 2014, at about noon, Florentino Reyes, a 54 year old homeless man living in the area of S. Valley View Ave. (south of Mill St., east of Waterman Ave.) in San Bernardino, was found dead by friends. Examinations will be conducted to attempt to determine his cause of death. The incident is under investigation by the San Bernardino Police Department. This department is seeking public assistance to locate Florentino's family. Anyone with information is requested to call the San Bernardino County Sheriff Department - Coroner Division (909-387-2978). [102114 0739 SY]

Coroner case #701407747 On 10/17/14, at 2:50 PM, a Ford Bronco with five occupants was involved in a single-vehicle rollover accident along Fuente Street, just north of Muscatel Street, in Hesperia. A back seat passenger, Andrew Derrill Wilson, age 16 of Hesperia, was pronounced dead of his injuries at the scene. The accident is under investigation by the San Bernardino County Sheriff Department, Major Accident Investigation Team. [10/17/14 2215 VN]

Coroner case #701407758 On 10/18/14, at about 9:45 AM, 24 year-old Beaumont resident Andrew Meza, was traveling westbound on Interstate 10 on a motorcycle. Upon approaching the 215 freeway, it appeared he lost control of the motorcycle and was ejected. Meza was pronounced dead from his injuries when the CHP and fire department personnel arrived. [101814 1340 TC]

The Coroner Reports are reproduced in their original format as authored by department personnel.

Yucca Valley Race from page 8

and powerful dissenters in the race for three seats, the probability appears that at least two of the counter-reactionaries will progress to the dais, perhaps all three.

Random fortune placed past-council-member Lori Herbel's name at the top of the list on the ballot and political mavens say that alone will produce a few percentage points of advantage. Bob Leone has already served on the council four separate times and while he makes his own decisions, he has not raised so much of the ire of the

Continued on Page 11

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## County Wildlife Corner

## Botta's Pocket Gopher (Thomomys bottae)

Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*), which is also known as the valley pocket gopher is a highly adaptable small mammal that has found a home, among,



other places, in the expanses of San Bernardino County.

Botta's pocket gopher is a medium-sized gopher, with adults reaching a length of roughly seven to ten-and-a-half inches, including a two to two-and-a-half inch tail. Males are larger, with a weight of 5.6 to 8.8 ounces, compared with 4.2 to 7.1 ounces in the females. Coloration is highly variable, and has been used to help distinguish some of the many subspecies; it may also change over the course of a year as the animals molt. Both albino and melanistic individuals have also been reported. However, Botta's gopher generally lacks the black stripe down the middle of the back found in the closely related southern pocket gopher. They have furlined cheek pouches.

In addition to being native to California, these creatures are present in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah and southern Colorado and Mexico. Within this geographical area,

they inhabit a range of habitats, including woodlands, chaparral, scrubland, and agricultural land, being limited only by rocky terrain, barren deserts, and major rivers. They are found at elevations up to 13,800 feet.

There are roughly 195 subspecies of the Botta's pocket gopher, and many of these have evolved because of their geographical distribution and the differences in climate and habitat. California boasts 43 subspecies.

Botta's pocket gopher is strictly herbivorous, feeding on a variety of plant matter. Shoots and grasses are particularly important, supplemented by roots, tubers, and bulbs during the winter. An individual will often pull plants into the ground by the roots to consume them in the safety of its burrow, where it spends 90 percent of its life.

Main predators of this species include American badgers, coyotes, long-tailed weasels, and snakes, but other predators include skunks, owls, bobcats, and hawks. This species is considered a pest in urban and agricultural areas due to its burrowing habit and its predilection for alfalfa. Paradoxically, it is also considered beneficial as its burrows are a key source of aeration for soils in the region. Digging by Botta's pocket gophers is estimated to aerate the soil to a depth of about eight

inches and to be responsible for the creation of Mima mounds up to six-and-a-half feet in height. Populations of the species have been estimated to mine as much as 28 tons of soil per hectare per year, much of which is moved below ground, rather than being pushed up into the mounds. On the negative side, the species has been associated with the deaths of aspen in Arizona and creates patches of bare ground that may limit the establishment of new



seedlings.

The Botta's pocket gopher is highly adaptable, burrowing into a very diverse array of soils from loose sands to tightly packed clays, and from arid deserts to high altitude meadows. They are able to tolerate such a wide range of soils in part because they dig primarily with their teeth, which are larger and with a thicker layer of enamel than in claw-digging gophers. In comparison, gophers digging with their claws are generally only able to dig in softer soils, because their claws wear down more quickly than teeth do in harder materials.

Botta's pocket gophers are active for a total of about nine hours each day, spending most of their time feeding in their burrows, but are not restricted to either daylight or night time. They make little sound, although they do communicate by making clicking noises, soft hisses, and squeaks.

Their burrows include multiple deep chambers for nesting, food storage, and defecation, that are as much as five feet below ground. A series of tunnels close to the surface are used for feeding on plant roots, and have shorter side tunnels for

disposal of excavated soil. On the surface, the burrows are marked by fan-shaped mounds of excavated soil, with the actual entrance usually kept filled in for protection. Population densities of between 10 and 62 per acre have been reported.

Above ground traces of these burrows are sometimes called "gopher eskers."

Outside of the breeding season, each burrow is inhabited by a single adult, with any young leaving once they are

weaned. Male burrows extend over a mean area of 5,100 square feet, and those of females 3,080 square feet. The gophers aggressively defend a larger exclusive area, of up to 8,700 square feet for males and 4,200 square feet for females, around the burrow entrance.

Tunnel systems more than 450 feet in length are not rare. These ramified travelways assist the occupants in avoiding predators that try to search them out; they are equally important in permitting the gopher to forage over a considerable area without exposure to undue danger. In winter, if snow covers the ground, the gophers often extend their burrows into the snow and can then forage aboveground in safety.

Although pocket gophers are active the year round, they store food to carry them over periods of scarcity, especially periods of drought when food is scarce and burrowing a difficult task. Usually, only one adult animal occupies each burrow system except for a short time in the breeding period. Associated with this solitary habit is a ferocious and seemingly fearless disposition. When two

gophers encounter each other, they will fight or meticulously avoid each other. Desire for companionship seems to be completely lacking in their makeup.

In areas with sufficient food, such as agricultural land, breeding can occur year round, with up to four litters being born each year. In the north, and other, less hospitable, environments, breeding occurs only during the spring. The local habitat also affects the age at which females begin breeding, with nearly half doing so in their first year in agricultural land, but none at all in desert scrub.

Gestation lasts eighteen days, and results in the birth of a litter of up to twelve pups, although three or four is more typical. The young are born hairless and blind,

and measure about two inches in length. The first, silky coat of fur is replaced by a coarser coat of grey hair as the pups age, before the full adult coat develops.

Botta's pocket gophers are capable of breeding with southern pocket gophers, and, until the 1980s, were often considered to belong to the same species. However, male hybrids are sterile, and females have greatly reduced fertility and rarely have offspring of their own. Hybridization with Townsend's pocket gopher has also been reported, and it too appears not to extend much beyond the first generation.

The specific and common names of this species honor Paul-Émile Botta, a naturalist and archaeologist who collected mammals in California in the 1820s and 1830s.

### Red Line from page 3

opened in 1941 but was not yet connected to the Hollywood Freeway, while the "Four Way" overpass was being constructed, westbound car traffic from the SB freeway poured onto downtown streets near the present Union Station. PE's multiple car trains coming and going from Pasadena, Sierra Madre, and Monrovia/Glendora used those same streets the final few miles to the 6th and Main PE terminal and were totally bogged down within this jammed traffic. Schedules could not be met, plus former patrons were now driving. The San Bernardino line, Pomona branch, Temple City branch via Alhambra's

Main St., San Bernardino's Mountain View local to 34th St., Santa Monica Blvd. via Beverly Hills, and all remaining Pasadena local service were all cut in 1941.

The last vestige of the Red Car system into San Bernardino County was the interurban Railroad post office service operated by Pacific Electric on its San Bernardino Line. This was inaugurated comparatively late, on September 2, 1947. It left LA's Union Station interurban yard on the west side of the terminal turning north onto Alameda Street at 12:45 pm and San Bernardino at 4:40 pm, taking three hours for the trip. It did not operate on Sundays or holidays. This last Railroad post office was pulled off May 6, 1950.

### Yucca Valley Race from page 10

establishment to anger too many people. So the likely wildcards for the third seat appears to include Abel whose normal voting block is diluted, and Cohen whose voting block is new and untested.

And between Abel and Cohen are some in-

tense contrasts of attributes which some voters use to make their selection to represent them: soft-spoken/outspoken, Christian faith/Jewish faith, public employee/corporate employee, "people skills"/"systems skills," political conservative/political liberal.

—*Sentinel Morongo Basin Correspondent*

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# California Style American Gentleman

By Grace Bernal

spired women around the globe and they were full of dignified grace just as the De La Renta persona. This gentleman built a name for himself and will always be remembered for the elegant and strong style he introduced to the fashion world. Oscar De La Renta was diagnosed with cancer in the 2000s and died of complications from the disease surrounded by his family, and dogs on October 20, 2014 at the age of 82 in Kent, Connecticut. He is remembered for the gracious lovely human being he was. Mr. De La Renta you leave behind



Laura Bush

The world has lost the gentleman of fashion. Oscar De La Renta has left the fashion scene. Ironically he succumbed to the deadly disease cancer in the midst of cancer awareness month. Oscar was a true gentleman who devoted his life to the fashion world. He started his business by making clothes that were meant for everywoman. Oscar then became the talk of the town and his empire was born. This



Jacqueline Kennedy



Hillary Clinton



Michelle Obama



Princess Di



Jennifer Lawrence

As always, if there's anything you need, I'd love to hear from you: [Greygris@aol.com](mailto:Greygris@aol.com) or visit my page I Love Your Style on Facebook  
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a legacy of couture and America is proud to have had you.

*"Yes, I had cancer. Right now I am totally clean. The only realities in life are that you are born, and that you die. We always think we are going to live forever. The dying aspect we will never accept. The only thing about having this kind of warning is how you appreciate every single day of life." ~Oscar de la Renta*



Everyday Woman



column is dedicated to Mr. De La Renta for his love of fashion and his devotion to the art. He dressed many first ladies and celebrities. But his true love for dressing the everyday woman was what mattered to him. Because of his passion to reach out to the typical lady, he launched his clothing line called O Oscar. His pieces in-

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