

Friday, March 13, 2015 A Fortunado Publication in conjunction with Countywide News Service 10808 Foothill Blvd. Suite 160-446 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 (909) 957-9998

Search On For Two Women Missing Under Separate Suspicious Circumstances

The worst is feared as two women from geographically disparate areas of the county have gone missing recently under suspicious or troubling circumstances. The personal effects of each turned up in a way that could suggest either one or both could have hastily fled or encountered someone who might have taken them hostage.



Krystie Stuart

Twenty nine-year-old Krystie Stuart left her

home in Lucerne Valley for a dentist appointment in Apple Valley on March 2. She never returned home and on March 8 her white Dodge Dakota was found near a burned-out structure in an unincorporated area in northern Apple Valley. Sheriff's department investigators combed through the vehicle, seeking possible clues



Sahray Barber

relating to her disappearance or whereabouts but

had little success finding possible evidence or information about her whereabouts. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department declared her officially missing on March 11 and brought in one of its helicopters to carry out an aerial search of the area surrounding where her car was found.

Twenty two- See P 8

SB Bankruptcy Burns Out Yet Another City Official



Scott Williams

The county seat's seemingly interminable and intractable financial challenges have claimed yet one more city official, as Scott Williams, San Bernardino's finance director hired in December, has been placed on administrative leave pending his separation from the city.

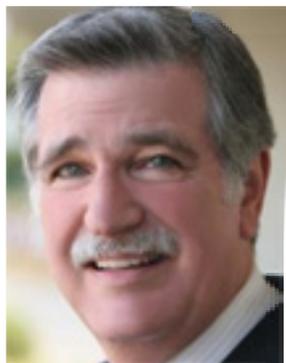
Williams' short tenure is a barometer of how much stress municipal officers face in attempting to right the city's listing financial ship.

Williams' predecessor, David Cain, lasted 18 months in the position, having been hired in March 2013 and exiting in September 2014.

While the city in the current 2014-15 fiscal year is functioning under a nominally balanced budget - one that anticipates \$123,809,391 in revenue into the general fund and expenditures of \$117,354,540 out of the general fund - that budget was strenuously reworked last year by Cain and city manager Alan Parker, entailing drastic cuts to bring the spending plan into the black after a previous draft reflected a \$22.8 million deficit. The provisionally balanced budget represented a considerable feat for the city which filed for Chapter 9 bankruptcy protection in August 2012.

The budget, however, was reworked See P 2

Upland City Council Votes To Postpone Medical Marijuana Initiative Until 2016



Richard Adams

UPLAND—The Upland City Council in

a 3-2 split decision on Monday March 9 voted to postpone a citywide initiative on permitting three medical marijuana dispensaries to operate in a confined district at the extreme west end of the city along Foothill Boulevard until the November 2016 election.

Proponents of that initiative had gathered 6,865 signatures of city



Randy Welty

residents between October 21 and January

14 endorsing a petition for that initiative under the expectation that the vote would take place in a special balloting this year. That special election, which had been given a tentative date of June 16, would cost as much as \$180,000 to hold, according to the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters Office. The city would have

been responsible for covering that cost.

But city attorney Richard Adams found a loophole in the initiative's language that he said could be interpreted as requiring that the vote be held during a regularly scheduled municipal election.

The initiative calls for an automatic "fee" of \$75,000 be- See P 7

Charter School Officials' Sacking Costs Undisclosed

VICTORVILLE—The Excelsior Charter School Board and its interim top administrator have declined to clarify what form of a severance package was conferred upon former superintendent Bill Flynn and former assistant superintendent of student services Minda Stackelhouse when they made their departure from Excelsior last month.

The board was equally vague about what

prompted it to put Flynn and Stackelhouse on administrative leave in early February, although unofficial statements emanating from faculty members indicated Stackelhouse had been overbearing and unduly insulting in dealing with employees and Flynn had indulged her in her management style. In the immediate aftermath of the board's action, Flynn and Stackelhouse retained the See P 6

SBPEA Board Pushing Teamster Affiliation

The San Bernardino Public Employees Association began sending out mail ballots to its members on Thursday to ascertain if a majority of them are in favor of affiliating with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The push to form an alliance with the Teamsters is led primarily by the association's board, which has drafted a 9-page affiliation agreement. The board and association president

Deidre Rodriguez have been reeling and trying to regroup ever since a secession effort last spring by dissident association members. The dissidents expressed dissatisfaction with the San Bernardino Public Employees Association's efforts in representing them in contract talks with the county. Beginning in 2011, county chief executive officer Greg Devereaux began seeking across-the-board contract concessions from all of the

county's employee bargaining units to offset skyrocketing governmental operating costs and end what he termed an "institutional structural deficit" plaguing the county. Several of the county employee unions came to some form of terms or compromise with Devereaux, though not all were ready to accept the economies he proposed. Devereaux scored a major coup when he convinced the county firefight- See P 6

Needles Extends Closing Date On CRMC Land Purchase to August 31

NEEDLES—The Needles City Council has extended until August 31 Community Healthcare Partners, Inc.'s deadline for closing the final element of the sale of Colorado River Medical Center.

The city took on ownership of the Colorado River Medical Center in April 2008 after Brentwood, Tennessee-based Lifepoint Hospitals, a

for-profit corporation, embarked on an effort to move the institution's equipment and personnel to another hospital it owned in Arizona, roughly 12 miles from Needles.

Because of long-running inadequate billing practices, including failures to invoice Medicare and Medi-Cal as well as insurance companies and patients in a timely

fashion, the hospital under the city's guidance had lost money. To redress the financial liability to the city, the city council created a board of trustees to oversee the hospital, and that panel, together with the city council, came to a consensus that spinning the facility off to an independent operator was the best solution for ensuring that the community

has adequate medical care without soaking the taxpayers.

In June 2010, Needles voters passed Measure Q, which called for keeping the hospital open and absolving the city of the financial burden of subsidizing the facility by having a non-profit entity selected to run the hospital.

In 2011, a nonprofit group, Needles Hospi-

tal, Inc., led by former Needles councilwoman Rebecca Valentine formed. Needles Hospital, Inc. offered to purchase the Colorado River Medical Center and the 5.71 acres it sits upon for \$3,587,002. For that amount, Needles Hospital Inc. was to take possession of most assets and liabilities of the hospital, including accounts receiv- See P 4

Riverside County Takes Fontana Animal Control

The county of Riverside will provide animal shelter service for the city of Fontana pursuant to a February 24 decision of the Fontana City Council.

The Fontana City Council elected to contract with Riverside County for the service after the county of Riverside tendered a \$679,932 annual bid, which was nearly \$70,000 lower than the city of San Bernardino's \$747,947 overture.

The city of Fontana's most recent agreement for animal sheltering services with the city of San Bernardino expired on June 30, 2014, and the city was operating

under a month-to-month agreement for animal sheltering services. The city of San Bernardino increased costs for its services by an additional fifteen percent as of July 1, 2014. As a result, staff sought out sheltering services bids from the city of Rancho Cucamonga, the county of Riverside, and the city of San Bernardino. The city of Rancho Cucamonga was not able to offer services due to the limited size of its facility and number of animals the city of Fontana shelters on average. The city of San Bernardino provided a bid of \$747,947 annually for sheltering services only.

On February 24, the

city council voted 5-0 to discontinue using the city of San Bernardino for animal services, and enter into a contract with the county of Riverside, allowing Fontana to save nearly \$70,000 annually. Mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats was a component of the new contract. As part of the new agreement for animal shelter services with the county of Riverside, Fontana is paying the county of Riverside a service fee of \$49,393 monthly for animal sheltering services. In addition, the city is paying a monthly shelter operational and maintenance fee of \$4,485 and an additional \$2,783 a month

for the deployment of the mobile clinic. The total amount of the contract through June 30, 2018 is \$2,266,422. The cost for all services will be billed monthly throughout the term of the agreement.

Beginning on Monday, March 9, the Fontana Police Department's animal services division began using the Western Riverside County/City Animal Shelter as the drop off location for lost and found pets.

Animals are no longer being transported to San Bernardino. The shelter is located at 6851 Van Buren Boulevard (south of Limonite Avenue) in Jurupa Valley. The phone number is (951)

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SB Finance Director Out After Three Months from front page

from previous drafts, which at reflected a \$22.8 million deficit.

The Herculean task of arriving at a budget for the county seat took its

toll on Cain, who upped and quit three months later. A telling feature of his exhaustion was that in June, after having put the unwieldy fiscal figures onto paper, Cain was not up to the task of attending the city council meeting where the budget was passed,

where he would have needed to withstand the firestorm of protest over the cutting he had done. Parker did not attend that meeting either.

Both of Parker's predecessors as city manager, Charles McNeely and interim Andrea Travis-Miller, were undone by

San Bernardino's financial challenges. McNeely left just prior to the city's bankruptcy filing. Travis-Miller was understandably overwhelmed at taking the helm of a financially foundering city. She has since moved on to become the executive director of the San

Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, a regional joint powers planning agency.

Williams was riding herd on a team of auditors and financial consultants seeking to put together a bankruptcy exit plan and its attendant documentation for presentation to

As part of its services, Riverside will provide 12 deployments of its mobile clinic, comprised of six spay and neuter clinics and six shot clinics for pets.

U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Meredith Jury, who is overseeing the city's bankruptcy case.

Jury has set a May 30 deadline for the presentation of that plan. Parker gave indication that assistant city manager Nita McKay will now take on Williams' assignment.

Given the manner in which William's change of active status with the city was announced, there was a suggestion that he was being relieved for some act of misfeasance. City officials would not go beyond stating that he had been placed on administrative leave. None denied that like his predecessor Cain, who had been driven to distraction in attempting to lift the city out of its financial abyss, Williams, who had been the lead financial adviser for the Regional Governmental Services Authority in Napa and the finance director in Sonoma before coming to San Bernardino, was overwhelmed by the crush of putting a bankruptcy exit plan together while seeking to administer a porous budget, which included deferring \$10.6 million in payments being demanded by creditors, many of whom have been lined up for two years in seeking payment following the city's bankruptcy filing.

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**Bill Dineen
1931-2015**

Bill Dineen, who made his mark in the Inland Empire first as a banker and later as a commercial real estate broker, died peacefully at age 83 on February 25, 2015.

Born on May 15, 1931 in Torrington, Wyoming, Bill was raised on a farm in Scottsbluff, Nebraska with seven brothers and



Bill Dineen

sisters. He graduated from Scottsbluff High School, and joined the Air Force in 1951, and was stationed in Alaska. He would later characterize his service in the Alaskan Territory as "the time of my life."

Successful in the banking industry for several years, he worked at the First national Bank in Fontana and at Southwest Bank in Carlsbad. Subsequently he became

a commercial real estate broker, a profession he flourished in for 30 years. He was also active in local politics.

His brothers Jack and Patrick were the progenitors of Dineen Trucking.

Dineen's favorite rejoinder to things good and bad was "This is life... Life!"

He is missed by many friends and associates.

He is remembered by his sons; Mark (Roxanne) of Westville, Indiana; Greg of Wrightwood, Calif.; Jon (Mary) of Alta Loma, Calif; Bill Jr. of Oceanside, Calif; Jim (Jodi) of Spokane, Wash.; Tom of Oceanside, CA.; along with 15 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren.

He is also remembered by sisters Maryanne Gable; Margaret (Roy) Phieffer; brother Patrick Dineen; sister-in-laws Virginia Dineen and Audrey Dineen; and brother-in-law Chuck Caringella.

Services will be held March 20, 2015, 10:45 am at Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside. Reception to follow at Jon and Mary Dineen's home in Alta Loma. Friends and family are welcome to attend.

In lieu of flowers the family is asking that donations be made to Wounded Warriors or the Alzheimer's Association.

**SCE Soils Test
Punctures Water
Line**

Soils Testing Southern California Edison was doing on Monday March 8 resulted in the perforation of a 16" water main in Chino Hills.

Edison had originally gained permission to put electrical lines for the Southern California Edison Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project, which is to bring electricity generated at a wind farm in Kern County to the Los Angeles Basin, on 197-foot high towers. But in 2013, the California Energy Commission reversed itself, calling upon Edison to put the lines underground through Chino Hills and de-erect 18 of the towers the company had already put up.

The waterline, which runs in a north-south alignment at a depth of 8 feet and crosses the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project right of way, was damaged during geotechnical boring. The water supply to some residences and Boys Republic was completely cut off and water pressure to some nearby homes was reduced. By 1:00 a.m. Tuesday morning, however, water service to the area was restored.

The city of Chino Hills utilized public works crews to pump the water from a pit near the line break close to Cork Street.

**Barstow
Principal
Arraigned**

VICTORVILLE—Mark Lesley Hassel, the former Barstow Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Academy principal who was arrested on January 16 and accused of having a sexual relationship with a 17-year-old girl, has been charged with eight felony criminal charges.

Hassel came before

Judge Raymond Haight for his arraignment on March 9 and pleaded not guilty to four counts of oral copulation with a minor, two charges of sodomy with a minor and two statutory rape charges. He is represented by attorney Jeffrey S. Bullard. He is being prosecuted by deputy district attorney Kathleen DiDonato.

Haight ordered Hassel to return to court on April 6 for a disposition hearing and to have no contact with the alleged victim, a student within the Barstow Unified School District, and no contact with any girl under the age of 18, except for his own children.

**Buhagiar Leaving
As Upland's
Finance Manager**

UPLAND—(March 13) Upland finance manager Christa Buhagiar has ended her tumultuous 22-month long tenure with the City of Gracious Living. Never truly comfortable in the position from the outset, her time with the city was rocky in no small measure because two of those serving over her had more financial management experience than she did. Over the last several months, her lack of imaginative approach to her assignment began to tell and when the opportunity for her to move on in the form of a job offer from the city of West Covina came her way, she submitted her resignation to city manager Rod Butler.

Buhagiar was hired as finance manager in June 2013 to relieve some of the burden on then-city manager Stephen Dunn. Dunn had been the city's finance director since 2001 and remained in that post when he had been elevated to city manager in 2011. Dunn was struggling with dwindling revenues and a city staff that had excessive redundancy and was top heavy management-wise. Overly generous salaries that had been doled out to city employees under the regime of former Upland

Continued on Page 9

**Forum... Or Against 'em
Observations from a
Decidedly Continental
Perspective**

**By Count Friedrich
von Olsen**



Here are a few things I have picked up pertaining to some goings-on from around the largest county in the United States...

One close to home is that Lake Arrowhead Village was on the brink of being sold at a trustee sale that was scheduled for March 6. That was staved off, apparently, when the consortium that owns and operates the village, Roseville-based Pacific Capital Investments, managed to secure a new loan on the property. The loan was for enough, reportedly, to carry out some capital improvement projects which will, supposedly, transform it into a truly-world class resort, generating the income needed to keep this newest set of wolves, i., the lenders, that will be buying at the door in about 18 months from seizing the property. We shall see...

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Deputy Jon Thorp did yeoman's work in helping to reunite Art Traendley, who had served aboard the USS Wexford County LST-1168 during the Vietnam War, with one of his shipmates, Don Kowalski. Traendley, who lives in New Jersey, was trying to see how many of his roughly 150 fellow sailors on the Wexford County he could find for an upcoming 50-year reunion. His only lead was that Kowalski might be living in Yucaipa. He sent a letter to the sheriff's department, which serves as the police department in Yucaipa and inquired to see if he could be put in contact with Kowalski. Thorp somehow ended up with the letter and cut through the red tape that disallows the sheriff's office to get involved in personal information requests. The deputy took it upon himself to get in touch with Kowalski, who owns the Yucaipa Lawn Mower Shop, and let him know Traendley was seeking him out. He passed along Traendley's contact number and the shipmates of a half century ago have been reunited...

The McDonald's Operators' Association of Southern California, you know, the collective of McDonald's restaurant franchise owners, has stepped up and provided \$1 million to enlarge the Loma Linda Ronald McDonald House. The Ronald McDonald House for almost 20 years now has been a great place where families whose seriously ill children are being treated at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital can spend the night so they can be together during such unspeakably difficult times. The expansion will more than double the number of rooms available to families from 21 to 54; increase the size of the kitchen and dining areas; and expand the common areas, such as the playroom and business office. The house is conveniently located near the children's hospital. It serves more than 1,000 families each year. This is a wonderful thing and really shows the world the good side of San Bernardino County, the community of Loma Linda and McDonald's. Now, if McDonald's could just figure out what they did to change their Quarter Pounders several years ago and change it back. Maybe it's just me, but they just don't taste as good as they used to...

All the way up here in my mountain redoubt word has reached me that things this week took a turn toward the uncivil in the City of Gracious Living. The Upland City Council on Monday had to choose whether to put an initiative relating to making medi-

Continued on Page 10

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Adelanto Clean Focus Solar Plant Now Activated And Generating

ADELANTO—Clean Focus, Inc.'s 3.75 megawatt Adelanto solar plant began operations last week.

Located at 9001 Cassia Road, the facility was given its note of occupancy on March 3. The plant, which was built by Sol Construction, of Riverside according to a design developed by the engineering firm MPE Consulting, covers 20 acres.

Clean Focus CEO Stanley Chin asserted that the plant will offset carbon dioxide 4,934 tons annually.

Chin and Clean Fo-

cus were the object of derision by the project's detractors who said that

assertions that the project would create hundreds of jobs was belied

by the consideration that the facility employs a total of one-and-one half

employees.

Chin downplayed the criticisms, saying

that the property upon which the solar facility is located would have otherwise lain "underutilized."

The construction of the facility, which was financed by Seminole Financial Services, entailed scores of workers, whose temporary employment on the project ended when the ground-mounted system was interconnected in late January.

Under the California Renewable Energy Small Tariff Program, the solar plant markets electricity to Southern California Edison.

Phelan Pinon Hills Constructing Solar Plant In El Mirage

EL MIRAGE—A 1.16 megawatt expandable solar project being built by the Phelan Pinon Hills Community Service District will save the district \$13.9 million in electricity costs over the next 30 years, district officials say.

The facility is being constructed on the former Meadowbrook Dairy in the 17900 block

of Sheep Creek Road in El Mirage. Upon its June completion, the plant will supply 40 percent of the electricity used by the district. The lion's share of the district's power use is to run pumps for wells and booster stations that provide and deliver water to 6,800 homes.

SunPower Corporation is building the facility.

In fiscal year 2013-14 ending last June 30, the district laid out \$821,431 in payments to Southern California Edison. That expense represented 17 percent of the community service district's water operations budget, according to the district.

The \$13.9 million in savings over the expected life of the solar plant will more than offset the

\$4.7 million the plant will cost to complete and the loan financing needed to undertake it. The district received major subsidizations on the project, using Southern California Edison's local-government Renewable Energy Self-Generation Bill Credit Transfer program.



Needles Extends Closing On CRMC Land Sale from front page

able, operating inventory in place, outstanding bills and unemployment obligations. Unassumed debts were to be deducted from the purchase price, but the city was to keep any cash in the hospital's coffers at the time of sale.

Needles Hospital, Inc. lost its opportunity after it failed to meet an April 26, 2012 deadline to prove it had the funding to make the purchase. AM Pharmacy, headed by Bing Lum, had put together a competing proposal to purchase the hospital and run it as a for-profit entity. The city council turned down that proposal in January 2012 in favor of Needles Hospital, Inc.'s offer. After the Needles Hospital, Inc. bid fell through, however, the city council agreed to accept a revamped \$2.577 million purchase proposal by Lum which entailed AM Pharmacy creating a non-profit wing, National Healthcare Partners, Incorporated, to run the hospital.

Under that agreement, Community Healthcare Partners, Incorporated was to pay \$2.2 million at a so-called first closing to cover the value of the hospital itself and \$377,000 at a second closing to cover the cost of a portion of the real

property.

The initial \$2.2 million payment was made in June 2012 and there was progress toward making the second payment to the city, which owns the totality of the property the hospital is situated on. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Land Management held reversionary rights to a portion of the hospital grounds, including that portion upon which the emergency room is located. This created the need for the two-step closing process, as it was anticipated there would be a slight delay in the clearance for the total sale being completed.

The two-part closing was undertaken because the city was running up considerable expense as a consequence of its ownership and continuing management responsibility at the medical center and there was a priority on stanching the hemorrhaging of red ink as soon as was practical.

Currently, the hospital is under a lease while Community Healthcare Partners, Inc. addresses some outstanding items that are required by the Bureau of Land Management for the purchase.

According to city attorney John Pinkney, the original agreement between the city and Community Healthcare Partners, Inc. was to be fully closed by February 28, 2015. If the second closing couldn't be completed by February 28, 2015,

a long term lease of 28 years with Community Health Care Partner, Inc. at a rate of \$1 rent per year was to be effectuated.

At the city council's February 24 meeting, an extension of that deadline until August 31 was agreed to.

Bing Lum, the first principal of Community Healthcare Partners, Inc. and the executive vice-president of the Colorado River Medical Center, said Community Health-

care Partners, Inc. has proven a good steward of the hospital and that the company had fulfilled all of the elements of the arrangement to take over the hospital. He said Community Health Care Partners will be better able to guarantee that it can meet the long term needs of the community once it is in full possession of the medical center.

The local office of the Bureau of Land Management has accepted

an appraisal of the property and is amenable to National Healthcare Partners, Incorporated's purchase. The local office's recommendation has been passed along to the state Bureau of Land Management office, which must confirm the local recommendation before forwarding its recommendation to the national office, which must ultimately okay the sale. Already more than 22 months have passed as the local office has

carried out its due diligence with regard to the matter. It was originally anticipated that the Bureau of Land Management would grant its approval of the pro forma for National Healthcare Partners' takeover of the hospital by March 26, 2013 and in no case later than June 30, 2013. Because of the delay and the approaching deadline, city council agreed to an amendment of the sales agreement with National Healthcare Partners.

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Glimpse Of SBC's Past The Cucamonga Wine Region

By Mark Gutglueck

Though it today is but a shadow of itself in its heyday, the Cucamonga Wine Region was once the most prolific wine producing area in the United States. It garnered for the Inland Empire a reputation that for

grapes to those that fared well on the East Coast of the United States.

1859 would prove a fateful and auspicious year for winemaking in the Cucamonga Valley.

In 1859, John Rains started planting the second large vineyard in the



Secondo Guasti

wines, the San Francisco Times said, "It is known as Cocomun-go, or California Madeira wine, and is pronounced by competent judges to be as fine an article as manufactured in the world."

In the area around Etiwanda, table grape growers flourished, including George F. Johnston, who was instrumental in establishing the commercial viability

men and women left Italy behind, emigrating to towns with names like Cucamonga, Etiwanda, Fontana, Grapeland, Mira Loma, Wineville, and another, later named after one such early immigrant, the village of Guasti.

The second reason for the significance of 1859



Guasti Chapel

was that year Secondo Guasti was born. Guasti was to become the most prolific vintner in the region. In 1883 he founded the Italian Vineyard Company, transforming it into a formidable wine enterprise that was still growing when it was curtailed by the Volstead Act, which initiated Prohibition in 1919.

Guasti later said that when he first beheld the desertlike sands at the foot of the San Gabriel Mountains/Angeles National Forest being overwashed by the torrent of

Valley.

In 1917, Guasti was advertising the Italian Vineyard Company's vineyards on 5,000 acres as the largest single vineyard in the world.

In 1882, the Hofer Family established the Cucamonga Pioneer Vineyard Winery, east of what is now Haven Avenue. The Hofer Family, in addition to cultivating their own vineyards, established an association of 11 other growers whose vineyards eventually grew to encompass 4,000 acres.

of vineyards in the Cucamonga Valley, well beyond those in Sonoma and Napa counties.

The Volstead Act and the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920 forbade the "manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors." It remained legal, however, to make 200 gallons of wine in each home.

Red grapes, including Zinfandel and Grenache fared well in the soil and climate of the Cucamonga Valley. When prohibition became



Thomas Brothers Winery

many decades defined this portion of Southern California, with its Mediterranean climate, as a West Coast/California paradise.

In 1838, the first vineyard was planted in the Cucamonga Valley, which would later become known to vintners and others alike as the Cucamonga-Guasti Wine District. Tiburcio Tapia, an adventurer, soldier, privateer, smuggler and politician, planted the first large vineyard in present day Rancho Cucamonga, one year before he was granted 13,000 acres of land around the area called Cucamonga by Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado on March 3, 1839. Using indigenous labor, Tapia planted rows of grapes and built a successful winery, which lay east of his adobe home on Red Hill. A portion of the winery, later known as the Thomas Brothers Winery - "California's Oldest" yet stands at the northeast corner of Carnelian Avenue and Foothill Boulevard.

With its cool foothill terraces, natural springs, its warm sandy floor and perfect drainage, the Cucamonga Valley had the ideal growing conditions for grapes of all types, from Old World varieties of Mediterranean, French and German

area, eventually establishing 125,000 vines.

The Sainsevain broth-



Virginia Dare Winery

ers - Pierre and Jean Louis, arrived less than a decade later and they established a formidable vineyard in eastern Etiwanda, near the present day border between Rancho Cucamonga and Fontana.

Jean Louis became winery superintendent at the winery built by Tapia. Pierre, arranging for the importation of grape cuttings from France, planted a number of new varieties in the area. In 1869 the San Francisco Times rhapsodized, "A very superior article of wine grown in San Bernardino County is now on the market and is attracting considerable attention ... from consumers of the juices of the grape." In singing the merits of the Sansevain

of the Thompson Seedless grape developed by his partner, William Thompson.

The magnificent scenery of the Cucamonga Valley played a role in its evolution into a wine kingdom. The views the valley offered were said to be majestically reminiscent of Italy's Piedmont region. Word of mouth and word of letter spread back to the Old Country and in no time

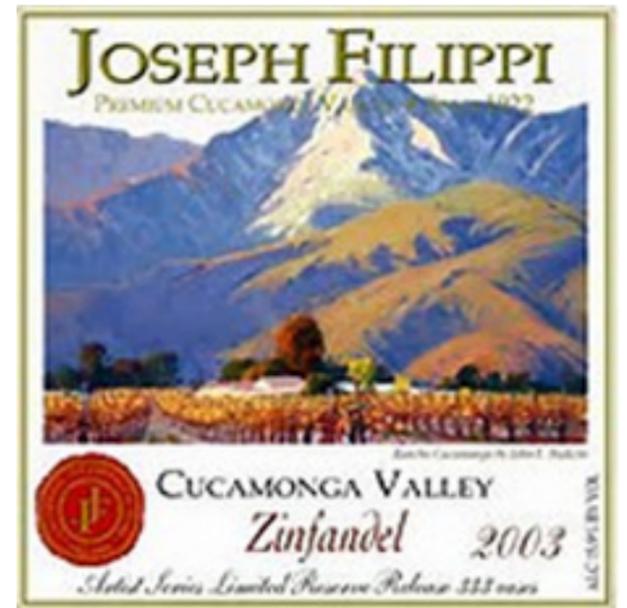


Guasti Winery



Cucamonga Vintage Winery circa 1910

spring time water coming out of the mountains, "Surely, I thought, this is heaven's doorstep." He knew there would be enough moisture to sustain the vines and he went no further than the crest of the Cucamonga



In the early 1900s, the U.S. Government and the state of California, perceiving the value of the tremendous

the law of the land and large quantities of wine grapes were transported by train to the Midwest and East Coast for use by home winemakers, the Zinfandels, with their thick skin and high sugar content became much in demand.

When prohibition ended in 1933, Vintners in the Cucamonga Valley immediately parlayed the area's reputation for high quality Zinfandel grapes into a marketable product, and the wine label, "Pride of Cucamonga" was born. It fared well in the eastern markets such as New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston and Atlantic City.

That was perhaps the only positive impact of Prohibition on the Cucamonga Valley Wine Industry. On balance, the 14-year experiment of Prohibition had a devastating impact on what

asset that had already been established in the Cucamonga Valley, offered incentives in the form of grants, loans and tax breaks to European Vintners willing to relocate to California and establish wineries.

Philo Biane established the Vaché/Biane family operation in Cucamonga, including the Brookside Winery. The Gallo Brothers established a winery in the Cucamonga Valley as well.

By 1916, there were more than 20,000 acres

Continued on Page 8

SBPEA Seeking Teamster Affiliation *from front page*

ers' union to pick up the percentage of employee contributions the county had been paying into the workers' retirement accounts and accept reduced annual promotional increases. In September 2012 the Safety Employees Benefit Association, a separate union representing the county's sheriff's deputies, made contract concessions. In April 2013, Devereaux imposed contract concessions on deputy prosecutors and public defenders, who have their own union as well.

In July 2013, San Bernardino Public Employee Association (SBPEA) General Manager Bob Blough was abruptly terminated and rumors began to circulate to the effect that he was under investigation by the district attorney's office.

In May 2014, two classes of county workers, nursing division supervisors and managers,

accepted the county's terms. The same month, SBPEA rejected the latest contract offered to the various classifications of county workers by the county. Of the 5,524 county employees who voted on the proposal, known as a tentative agreement, 3,523 voted no. The other 2,001 members of the San Bernardino Public Employees Association who are employed by the county who participated in the vote cast ballots of acceptance. Some 7,000 county employees represented by the union did not participate in the vote.

Last year the contingent of SBPEA members dissatisfied with the association's leadership urged their fellow union members to reject the contract Devereaux was proposing, while seeking a special election to decertify the San Bernardino Public Employees Association as the county general line employees' representative. They instead sought to install Service Employees International Union

Local 721 as their bargaining unit. Their effort did not succeed, and SBPEA's leadership retaliated against the dissidents by expelling those members advocating the change and obtaining a restraining order against the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in June 2014, effectively ending SEIU's ability to lobby SBPEA members.

On February 11, the SBPEA board informed the association's membership an affiliation with the Teamsters was under consideration, asserting such an affiliation with the Teamsters would increase SBPEA's leverage at the bargaining table. There is a contingent within the association adamantly opposed to affiliating with the Teamsters. Some dissatisfaction with the current SBPEA board exists and the move to associate with the Teamsters would virtually lock in the current set of union bosses, some members believe.

The association's internal financial picture is

somewhat shaky, and the current board and president now say that some \$700,000 that went missing or is unaccounted for was embezzled by former general manager Blough, whom the association is now suing. Blough has denied the association's allegations in a response filed with the court.

What is unclear at this point is whether the affiliation with the Teamsters would result in an increase in union dues. As it currently stands, SBPEA is entitled to dues equal to no more than 1.3 percent of a member's salary. Language in the affiliation agreement is ambiguous and contradictory on whether that dues figure would remain at 1.3 percent, which is suggested in one section of the document, or would increase to 2.3 percent, as is required of all Teamster's members according to the Teamster charter, and which is suggested in another passage in the proposed affiliation agreement.

The San Bernardino Public Employees As-

sociation, which came into existence in 1938 as the representative of San Bernardino County and San Bernardino City employees, today 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.

For three quarters of a century, the San Bernardino Public Employees Association had remained in a relatively secure position as the representative of the lion's share of county workers, but beginning four years ago internal and external events and pressure have threatened to shatter the association. Despite the injunction

the association obtained against SEIU and SEIU agitators last year, a vote of SBPEA's professional unit vote was forced last month, in which those members were polled on whether they wanted to keep SBPEA as their representative or bring in SEIU. The results of that vote are not publicly known at this time and a count by the State Mediation and Conciliation Service is to begin on March 16.

The association's leadership has expressed confidence a majority of the membership will reject SEIU, but have indicated SBPEA becoming an independent local of the Teamsters is desirable. "Local politicians have targeted our wages, benefits and pensions. We need to fight back to save our way of life," SBPEA posted on its website last month. "If we do not evolve and progress, we may lose it all. Affiliation will give us the support and the backing of an organization that has 1.4 million union members nationally and 140,000 locally."

No Disclosure On Cost Of Charter School Firings *from front page*

services of attorney Diana Carloni-Nourse, who

protested the administrative leave as a violation of Flynn's \$165,000 per year contract running through December 31, 2018 and Stackelhouse's \$127,727 per year con-

tract running through June 30, 2017. At a February 10 board meeting Carloni Nourse indicated the pair would seek reinstatement or whatever was due them under the

terms of their contracts.

On February 19, Flynn and Stackelhouse resigned, but no indication was given as to whether they were to be paid the money due them under

their contracts, whether the contracts had been bought out at a percentage of their full worth or whether they were paid only through February 19.

Excelsior Charter Schools is a public entity, chartered under the authority of the Victor Valley Union High School District, serving students in grades seven to twelve. It consists of five schools, two in Victorville and one each in Phelan and Barstow as well as in Norco in Riverside County.

Excelsior Acting Superintendent Peter Wright did not return any of four phone calls, including one left with his secretary in which the *Sentinel's* inquiry into the terms under which Flynn and Stackelhouse departed was explicitly stated. Neither did Victor Valley Union High School District Superintendent Ron Williams respond to questions about what monitoring the High School District is doing of money spent by the charter school organization it is sponsoring.



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Upland Delays Medical Marijuana Vote Until 2016
from front page

ing levied by the city upon the applicants for a dispensary permit, Adams said. But the city's actual costs in carrying



Craig Beresh

out background checks and permit processing is far less than \$75,000, he said. The California Constitution defines any government-imposed fees that are greater than the cost of the service rendered as a tax, Adams said, and municipal taxes must be voted upon during a normally scheduled municipal election and not at a special election. Adams said that while the gathering of more than 15 percent of the city's voters' signatures on the petition mandated a special election, there is a conflict between the election code, as passed by the legislature, and the state constitution. The state constitution trumps an act of the legislature, he said.

Adams said the city council had several options, which included simply using its own authority to pass the initiative as a city ordinance without taking it to a vote of the residents; scheduling the election for June 16; scheduling

the election for June 16 and placing a competing initiative on the same ballot; or holding off on the vote on the initiative until the next scheduled citywide municipal election next year.

The three members of the city council adamantly opposed to permitting the sale of marijuana medical or otherwise at Cannabis dispensaries in town – Mayor Ray Musser and council members Glenn Bozar and Carol Timm – jumped at the chance Adams' had provided them and voted to schedule the election for November 8, 2016 election. That vote came after an earlier effort, supported by council members Debbie Stone and Gino Filippi to schedule the initiative vote for June 16.

The timing of the election was considered significant for two reasons. The first is the cost. The county registrar of voters would charge the city as much as \$180,000 to handle the election as a stand-alone event this year. The city would reap considerable savings by putting the election on the 2016 ballot, when the mayor's post, a single city council position and city treasurer spot are up for reelection. Secondly, advocates of the initiative see a special election as the forum in which sale of medical marijuana within the city limits of Upland is most likely to gain acceptance of the voters participating. Informal surveys of Upland voters show that, on balance, the city's residents are against the initiative. But special

elections normally have poor voter turnout and the initiative's advocates believe that through the aggressive and energetic use of social media and networking among that portion of the city's electorate most favorably inclined to the accessibility to medical marijuana and marijuana use in general, they can drive enough voters to the polls to prevail in a special election while a significant portion of the city population opposed to the concept of open access fail to participate.

A number of residents weighed in on the matter prior to the vote.

Bob Nelson said, "These dispensaries are going to invite more



Glenn Bozar

crime. We don't need this in Upland. They are a front for drug activity. I hope we don't go down this road."

Raymond Herrera said allowing legal sales of marijuana for medical purposes would likely result in untoward activity. "How many people buy this stuff and sell it to high school students?" he asked.

Carmen Limon, who lives proximate to an existing dispensary functioning illegally, enlarged upon Herrera's theme, saying "The amount of traffic is alarming. I see the cars lined up. I see the

exchanges made. There are many children that walk by this place every day. I see this as a disaster waiting to happen. If people want this to continue, I say have them in your neighborhood, not mine."

Others, such as former city manager Stephen Dunn and initiative proponent Nicole DeLaRosa, recommended that the city put the initiative before the voters in a special election this year.

Dunn cautioned the city council against using the loophole Richards had discovered to force the election to be held in 2016, saying that it would establish a precedent that is contrary to the city's financial interest. Using the "tax versus fee" rationale to require a vote at a general election would invite comparisons to other fees the city has established, Dunn said, and he suggested "Most of the city's fees would not hold up under the scrutiny." He cited \$2.1 million in revenue into the city's development services budget that could be lost. "Be careful what you do," he said. "The reality is if you don't send this on to the voters tonight, the proponents might look at [challenging] other fees."

DeLaRosa said she was there to "protest your referring to the fee as a tax. It is not a tax. It is a fee and is a reasonable fee."

Others such as Jim Richardson and David Wade charted a middle ground.

Richardson said he believed a majority of the people in town were recoiling from the concept of allowing marijuana clinics to function in the city and were opposed to the initiative but that the city council had an "obligation to look out for the minority." He said the city should "get out in front of" the issue and draw up a "decent set of ordinances." He said the initiative as proposed did not have protections for the neighborhoods, customers and business owners. He called for the city to put together a

better ordinance. "I don't see why we have to accept it," he said of the initiative.

Wade was critical of the initiative, which he said conferred a virtual monopoly on initiative proponent Randy Welty, who is a major landowner in the zone where



Ray Musser

the initiative allows dispensaries to be set up, but he chided the city for its lack of imagination in simply offering an alternative initiative that reasserted the city's existing ban on cannabis shops.

Of note was the level of tension, vitriol and enmity evinced by two of the key initiative backers toward the city council even before the vote took place on Monday night. Previously, Randy Welty, a board member of the California Cannabis Coalition which is co-sponsoring the initiative, and Craig Beresh, the president of the California Cannabis Coalition, had been somewhat deferential toward the council. But in addressing the council on March 9, Beresh talked openly of initiating a recall campaign against the city council if it did not comply with the call to put the initiative on a special ballot this year.

Welty, who owns and operates the Tropical Lei strip club and controls other property within the area along the north side of Foothill Boulevard between Airport Drive and Monte Vista Avenue where the initiative specifies the three medical marijuana dispensaries are to be located, wore a shirt emblazoned with the epigram: "You say tomato. I say f--- you." as he addressed the council.

Adams in making his presentation emphasized that the council's vote that evening should not be framed as a judgment

of the merits of the initiative but should reflect only the council's decision on the advisability of the timing of the initiative election based upon the legal requirements and considerations. Nevertheless, in their remarks, both Musser and Bozar engaged in a critical review of the initiative itself, although Bozar did dwell on the legal issues pertaining to the city's potential liability in scheduling the election both immediately and next year.

"There is nothing in here that is going to benefit the city of Upland," Bozar said. "It is all to the benefit of the proponent. There is no sense rushing to spend \$180,000 to do that."

In making his remarks, Bozar caused Adams to cringe, as did Musser when, in explaining why he was voting to hold off on the initiative election until 2016, he said, "Our community is not ready for this."

Councilman Gino Filippi during the discussion relating to the initiative expressed dismay at the manner in which Adams had laid out the city council's options and alternatives. He suggested that Adams and staff had evinced bias toward the initiative and those who had endorsed the petitions calling for a vote upon it by providing the council with a limited set of alternatives, when the council's direction, given at a council meeting last month, was to explore all options.

Continued on Page 11



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Missing Women
from front page

year-old Sahray Astina Barber, who is a student/employee at the Art Institute in San Bernardino and lived in an apartment complex in the 1500 block of West Northpark Blvd. proximate to Cal State San Bernardino, was last seen sometime shortly after 6 a.m. on March 9 leaving for the institute.

Her disappearance came in the aftermath of several recent at-

tacks/attempted rapes on women on the Cal State San Bernardino campus. Those included a March 4 attack on a woman in the stairwell at the John M. Pfau Library, which ended with the assailant fleeing, and another on March 8 at the library in which a man attempted but failed to abduct a woman. Barber was not a student at Cal State San Bernardino, but many of those who reside in her apartment complex are students. Several of her personal items, includ-



Police sketch of suspect in campus library attacks

ing her laptop and cell phone, were found abandoned in bushes at that apartment complex.

Cal State police released a computerized sketch of the suspect in

the two Pfau Library attacks, showing a Hispanic man with black curly hair and no facial hair, roughly 19 to 21 years old. He is described as between 5 feet 7 inches and 5 feet 8 inches tall, and weighing 135 to 145 pounds.

In the case of Stuart, it is believed that as a result of her disappearance she does not have access to prescription medications she needs. She is described as a thin white woman, 5 feet 9 inches tall and 107 pounds, with

brown hair and brown eyes. She was last seen wearing a camouflage hat, white shirt, black pants and white shoes.

Anyone with information about Stuart or her whereabouts is asked to call detective Bill Doemner at the Victor Valley Sheriff's Station at 760-956-5001 or 760-552-6800.

In the case of Barber, as of press time an intense search for her has been underway for three days, ranging from the area around Cal

State San Bernardino to Live Oak Canyon in Redlands, where a lead brought investigators. Bloodhounds were used to track her from her apartment door to the complex's front gate, at which point the trail went cold, suggesting she had left in a vehicle. Anybody with information about Barber's whereabouts is asked to call Detective Dan Han at 909-384-5623 or the detective's bureau at 909-384-5615.

Glimpse
from page 5

had here-to-for grown into a world class agricultural setting. Those vintners that had survived (Guasti died in 1927), gamely carried on, working to re-establish what had been taken away. The Accomazzo, Aggazzotti, Campanella, Cherpini, DiCarlo, Ellena, Filippi, Galleano, Guidera, Liabeuf, Masi, Opici and Romolo families, some of whom had

been in operation prior to and even during Prohibition, redoubled their efforts beginning in 1933/34.

In 1939, six years after Prohibition had ended, the Cucamonga-Guasti area boasted 41 thriving and bonded wineries and 13 brandy distilleries. The region had a storage and fermentation capacity of more than 13 million gallons of wine.

Six years later, wine production in the valley had grown, with 55 wineries operating and

approximately 35,000 acres of vineyards being farmed. The Belletrutti, Bruno, Carrari, Cherbak, DeAmbrogio, DeBerard, DeVito, Ellena, Johnston, Lopez, Mandala, Merrille, Modica, Sanchez and Vernola families were active in the winemaking business.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, much of the emphasis in California wines was on massive production of sweeter fortified port-style and hearty red wines sold

in gallon jugs. The Cucamonga Valley participated in this trend. In 1968, the Cucamonga Valley accounted for 98 percent of the 9.5 million gallons of wine produced in the Southern California. At that point the Cucamonga Valley was riding the crest of the domestic sparkling wine production boom.

But with the 1970s, two trends were ushered in that resulted in the decline of the Cucamonga Wine Region. American wine consumers'

tastes matured, resulting in sweet wines falling out of favor. Northern California wines, particularly those bottled in Sonoma and Napa enjoyed a renaissance. This eroded the Cucamonga Wine District's hold on the market. Pressure on vineyard owners to plant varieties more in demand hit just as ever-increasing land values resulted in pressure on the vintners to sell their property at great profit. Many did, and many more of those that held

out capitulated later as land values rose to astronomical levels. The once-storied Cucamonga Valley has lost most of its once vast vineyard acreage to development and the urban expansion. Today, only four of the area's traditional wine-growing families, Biane, Filippi, Galleano and Hofer remain in the winemaking business.



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Siringoringo And Two Associates Charged With 47 Counts In \$44M Fraud

The San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office has filed charges against attorney Stephen Siringoringo and two of his associates in connection with what has been described as a "major loan modification fraud scheme." He has been arrested and is being held in lieu of bail of more than \$17 million.



Stephen Siringoringo

The complaint alleges 23 felony counts of grand theft of personal property and taking upfront fees for loan modifications in addition to 24 counts of money laundering.

The activity by Siringoringo, Joshua Cobb and Alfred Clausen, according to the district attorney's office, "resulted in the loss of over 44 million dollars by unsuspecting victims."

On March 5, investigators from the real estate fraud prosecution unit of the San Bernardino District Attorney's Office arrested Stephen Lyster Siringoringo, 34, of Westminster, and 32-year-old Joshua Michael Cobb.

Both suspects alleg-

edly took large sums of money from victims who were seeking loan modifications. A third suspect, Alfred Orn Clausen, 41, of Rancho Cucamonga, is still at large and is suspected of leaving the country.

According to district attorney office investigators, the vehicle for the criminal activity was the Siringoringo Law Firm, which had engaged in energetic advertisement on local radio and television. The law firm advertised extensively in Spanish language media.

Siringoringo, a 1999 Fontana High School graduate, seemingly made good by becoming an attorney specializing in modification services for clients facing foreclosures during the height

of the home mortgage meltdown five years ago. But despite representing that he was a top flight attorney, Siringoringo rarely, if ever, delivered. He and his firm took money up front from clients, maintaining action could not be taken if there were no funds to work with. The firm typically asked for \$3,995 to initiate work and would bill clients \$135 each month thereafter. When employees were pressed by clients about what action had been taken, they would be met with claims that the process required time to mature. Delays of eight, ten, 12, 14 and 16 months before informing clients that their loan modifications had been denied were common. Subsequently, clients were told that another method for obtaining a modification was in the works. Few, if any, of the sought modifications were ever achieved.

Victims were promised that their loan modifications would be handled by a licensed attorney. Instead, they were handed off to a non-attorney representa-

tives. Many of the victims never met or spoke with Siringoringo.

In December 2013, the California Bar Association found Siringoringo culpable of collecting advanced fees for loan modification work in 20 client matters and recommended an 18-month suspension. In partial mitigation Siringoringo agreed to provide refunds ranging from \$1,500 to \$5,970 to 14 former clients named in the stipulation. On October 15, 2014 Siringoringo and the State Bar agreed to a stipulation which ratcheted that December 2013 discipline up to the level of disbarment.

Losing his license to practice law mollified some, though not all of the hundreds of former clients who claim Siringoringo took advantage of them, took their money, allowed their homes to be taken from them and then provided them with no accounting or records to assist them in the aftermath.

According to the State Bar, Siringoringo

visited upon his clients significant harm by failing to provide promised services to them and aided in the unauthorized practice of law by others when he allowed non-attorney employees to meet with clients, set fees and perform legal services without supervision.

The State Bar's Office of Chief Trial Counsel indicated it has received 796 additional complaints regarding alleged misconduct by Siringoringo. Those clients may

be eligible for reimbursement by the State Bar's Client Security Fund.

In San Bernardino County, Siringoringo and Cobb are scheduled for a pre-preliminary conference March 13, 2015. Deputy district attorney Vance Welch is prosecuting the case.

If convicted as charged, the defendants face in excess of thirty years in state prison.

Bail is currently set at \$17,837,000 each for Siringoringo and Cobb.

Buhagiar Leaving Upland

from page 3

Mayor John Pomierski, who had been indicted on political corruption charges just after he resigned from office in 2011, had left the city in a tenuous position financially, and it was faced with overwhelming pension obligations in the future. It was widely believed that Pomierski had purchased the silence of many city employees about his depredations by providing them with

fat salaries, generous benefits and cushy pensions. Two years before Buhagiar arrived, Dunn had taken a meat cleaver to city staff, laying off or firing 27 employees, including five department managers.

Dunn was encountering resistance from staff over his further intended economies, and his City Hall reform effort bogged down as this resistance manifested during the second half of his first year as city manager. In 2012, however,

Continued on Page 10

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San Bernardino County Coroner Reports

Coroner case #701501972 On 03/07/15, at 12:39 AM, Fernando Heredia, a 45 year old resident of San Bernardino, was a pedestrian struck by Toyota Rav4 south bound on Euclid Ave. south of Foothill Blvd. in the city of Upland. Heredia was pronounced deceased at the scene. The Upland Police Department is investigating this fatal traffic collision. [030715 2355 TC]

Coroner case #701501969 On 03/06/15, at 9:56 PM, Brian Membrino, age: 29 of Loma Linda was operating a Harley Davidson motorcycle southbound on Judson Street at the intersection of Lugonia Avenue in the city of Redlands. He collided with a GMC Yukon. Membrino was pronounced deceased at the scene. The Redlands Police Department and the California Highway Patrol is investigating this fatal traffic collision. [030715 2355 TC]

Coroner case #701501964 On 03/06/15, at approximately 8:20 p.m., the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department responded to two males fighting in the street at Live Oak Avenue and Iris Drive in Fontana. When deputies arrived they found James Vinnedge, a 53 year-old resident of Fontana, with upper body trauma. Vinnedge was transported to a local hospital where he died from his injuries. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department – Homicide Detail is investigating the incident. [030715 2355 TC]

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

The Count... from page 3

cal marijuana available for sale there on the ballot this year or next. The initiative's proponents want it voted on this year. The city attorney had given the council the option of doing it this year or next. Before the decision was even made, one of the proponents, I am told, chose to insult

the council by inviting its members to have sexual relations with themselves or something similar. Another initiative proponent threatened to recall the council members from office. It's been several decades, at least, since I read Dale Carnegie's *How To Win Friends And Influence People*. Despite the elapsing of that much time and the senility that

is, alas, creeping over me, I can still say with absolute confidence that insulting people who have the power of decision over you or an issue dear to your heart was not a tactic that Mr. Carnegie recommended. I am still trying to figure out exactly what the pair that came before the council on Monday night had hoped to accomplish. I don't think it worked,

since the city council in the end decided to hold off on the election until next year. My governness taught me when I was a child that I should not make decisions or blurt things out when I am angry. Overall, I think that was a pretty sound lesson. Those involved in public affairs in Upland should heed it...



Buhagiar Leaving Upland from page 9

Dunn's effort at reform was boosted with the election of Glenn Bozar to the city council. Bozar was employed as a manager with Tyco Electronics, where he oversaw a lean and efficient \$16 billion private industry operation. As a council member, Bozar was

intent on applying principles of management developed in the private sector to municipal operations, which coincided, in at least some of the particulars, with Dunn's effort to make city operations more efficient through the winnowing of non-productive staff.

The intent with Buhagiar's hiring was that she would understand the

Continued on Page 12

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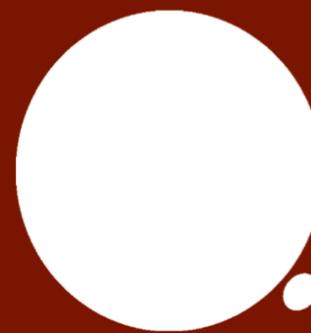
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County Wildlife Corner

Eagle-Eyed Volunteers Needed to Count Bald Eagles

By John Miller, U.S. Forest Service

Volunteers are needed to help count bald eagles for the annual winter bald eagle counts in and near the San Bernardino

and San Jacinto Mountains on Saturday March 14th.

Concurrent Bald Eagle counts are held at Big Bear Lake, Lake Arrowhead, Lake Silver-

wood, Lake Perris, and Lake Hemet. Volunteers are stationed at vantage points around the lakes, where they watch for bald eagles during a 1-hour period on the count mornings. Volunteers record their observations on maps and data sheets. This is a wonderful opportunity to catch a glimpse of our breathtaking national symbol. Brief orientations are conducted prior to the count so volunteers know where to go and what to do. Eagle counts at some of the sites have been conducted regularly since 1978.

On the February 14th count, over 275 people scanned for soaring or perched bald eagles and 17 bald eagles were observed.

Signing up ahead of time is unnecessary – just show up at the designated time and location, dress warmly, bring binoculars and a watch (or device with a clock).

•Big Bear Lake area volunteers will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Forest Service's Big Bear Discovery Center on North Shore Drive for orientation. Contact Rari Marks (rariemarks@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2600 x4022) for more information. Please call 909-382-2832 for cancellation due to winter weather conditions – an outgoing message will be left by 6:30 am on the morning of the count if it has to be cancelled. Contact the Discovery Center (909-382-2790) for information about Eagle Celebrations. There will also be a free slideshow about bald eagles at 11:00 after the counts.

•Lake Arrowhead/Lake Gregory volunteers will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Skyforest Ranger Station for orientation. Contact Rari Marks (rariemarks@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2600 x4022) for more information. Please call 909-382-2832 for cancellation due to winter weather conditions – an outgoing message will be left by 6:30 am on the morning of the

count if it has to be cancelled.

•Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area volunteers should plan to meet at the Visitor Center at 8:00 a.m. for orientation. Contact Kathy Williams or Mark Wright for more information about volunteering or taking an

food supplies and end up wintering in sunny southern California.

During the winter, Southern California bald eagles are typically found at many of the lakes, including Big Bear Lake, Baldwin Lake, Silverwood Lake, Lake Arrowhead, Green Valley Lake, Grass Valley Lake

lations continue to grow, more bald eagles are in our future.

In 2012, the first successful bald eagle nesting ever recorded in the San Bernardino Mountains happened in Big Bear Lake. To protect that nest site and help ensure a successful nesting attempt this year, the



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Upland Marijuana Initiative Vote To Wait Until 2016

from page 7

Filippi told the *Sentinel*, "The city attorney's prior comments and the staff report clearly indicated a level of prejudice.



Gino Filippi

There was a great effort by the city attorney and city staff in coming up with a competing ordinance to uphold the existing ban of medical marijuana dispensaries to the point that a sample ordinance upholding the ban was provided to the city council. However,

er, there was no effort on a compromise ordinance such as was done in Yucca Valley. In addition, contrary to the staff report, there was never any discussion and/or direction from city council in closed session or public meeting to justify the direction the city attorney and staff undertook. In my view, this was a violation of law. I do think Musser and Bozar have intended on denying the petitioners their due process for a special election since the signatures were verified."

When asked if the initiative's proponents would undertake a legal challenge of the council's vote and seek an injunction to force the city to hold the special election for the initiative this year, Welty told the *Sentinel*, "Our lawyer is looking into that right now."



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in the San Bernardino Mountains and Prado Dam, Lake Perris, Lake Hemet, Lake Skinner, Diamond Valley Lake, Lake Matthews, and the Salton Sea to the south.

Through radio-tracking bald eagles, biologists learned that some of the same individual eagles return to the San Bernardino Mountains year after year. It has also been determined that there is a lot of movement of eagles between the different mountain lakes and that the lakes do not have distinctive separate populations—the eagles regularly move between the mountain lakes.

Radio-tracking and/or banding also revealed that the eagles that winter in the San Bernardino Mountains migrate to Southern California from Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Canada. Breeding populations of bald eagles in Southern California were wiped out by the late 1950s. Until reintroduction efforts began in the 1980s on Catalina Island, the southern-most nest site known in California was in Lake County. Since 2003, several pairs of bald eagles have decided that our Southern California neighborhoods were too nice to leave – they built nests and have successfully raised families. Nesting bald eagles are now found at Lake Hemet, Lake Skinner, Lake Matthews, and Big Bear Lake. As the popu-

Forest Service has closed the area to all public entry. This includes Gray's Peak Trail and Grout Bay Day Use area as well as the undeveloped forest area around the nest tree. The closure will remain in effect until the chicks leave the nest or the nest fails.

Because of the population rebound, bald eagles are no longer in jeopardy of going extinct. While bald eagles are no longer protected under federal Endangered Species Act, they still have full protection under the Bald Eagle Protection Act and under the State of California's Endangered Species Act. These laws make it illegal to harm or harass bald eagles. It is also illegal to possess bald eagle parts, even a feather.

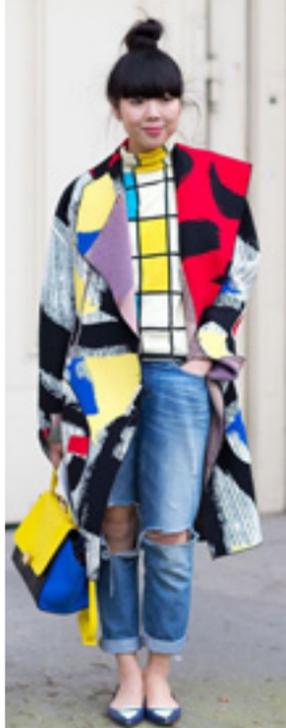
Remember that human presence may distract or disturb the eagles - so, try to limit your movements and do not make loud noises when they are nearby. If possible, remain in your car while looking at eagles - the car acts as a blind. Stay a respectful distance of at least 200-300' away from perched bald eagles. Do not get closer than ¼ mile away nesting bald eagles – trying to get a closer look may result in eagles becoming agitated and knocking eggs or chicks out of the nest. It is illegal to harm or harass bald eagles. Please do your part to help protect our national bird!

California Style Fresh Art



new beginning offered by young people. They know how to form together and they are clever and creative with art.

There are many things to consider as the weather changes and we start seeing the colors of spring. But this week I'm giving proper respect to the hope and the



Their trends are looking creatively unique. As always, it is a joy to watch young people be off the wall and full of ideas. This new generation is full of fresh air and they



want nothing to do with branding. It's all about the fresh air of spring and it all happens with them. The audience is young and they don't want to be forced into fashion from within the box. They're all about thinking for themselves and expressing it by wearing lacey sneakers, custom made

By Grace Bernal

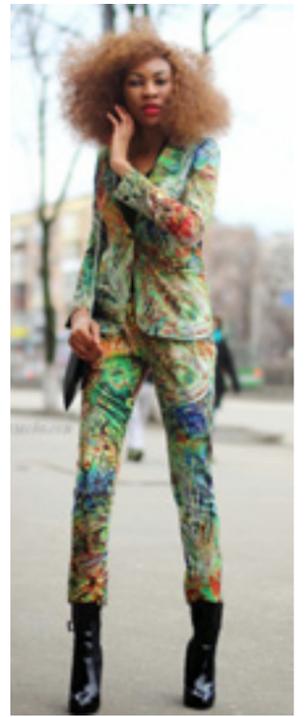
boots, and surprisingly, made-in-America wear. All the prepackaged fashion doesn't make it with these kids because they enjoy making their



own pieces. Some the hairpieces are also very creative and it's fantastic to see the ladies get creative with their top. With that said, get out of the



box and let your fountain of creativity come together. You can really create contrast art with your outfits. Enjoy the week, knowing that the



spirit of thinking very much outside of the box in the fashion and art world is going strong.

"Fashion is not necessarily about labels. It's not about brands. It's about something else that comes from within you."~Ralph Lauren



As always, if there's anything you need, I'd love to hear from you: Greygris@aol.com or visit my page I Love Your Style on Facebook Copyright Grace Bernal all rights reserved

Buhagiar Leaving Upland

from page 10
Dunn agenda and provide finance department reports and data to back up further layoffs at City Hall. It did not appear, however, that she understood what her intended role was, and as she assumed the position, became much too close to her fellow municipal employees. She was thus unable or unwilling to give Dunn and the city council the informational basis upon which to

proceed with wholesale firings and layoffs. It was painfully obvious to observers that both Dunn and Bozar had a greater command of the principles of financial management and a much more in-depth grasp of reorganizational strategy than did Buhagiar. As a member of the city council and its finance committee, Bozar continuously asked her to produce data she chronically did not have at her fingertips. Bozar continued to dwell on the need for the city to cure

its looming pension crisis. On several occasions at public meetings when he did so, Buhagiar's distaste for that assignment was visible through her body language, facial expressions and the rolling of her eyes. Dunn's inability to execute on his city reform package resulted in the fraying of his relationship with the council, including Bozar, and last year he was let go. There followed a wave of city officials taking their exodus, including city attorney Kimberly Hall

Barlow, police chief Jeff Mendenhall, and assistant public works director Acquanetta Warren. Stephanie Mendenhall, the former police chief's wife who is the city's administrative services director, city clerk and director of human services, is set to retire in July. While Buhagiar's presence on city staff was tolerated by the balance of the council, she never embraced Bozar's agenda for pension and payroll reform, leaving perpetually unresolved the resulting dissonance between a key finance committee member and the city staff person most closely involved with municipal finances. Ironically, Bozar alone supported Buhagiar when she sought in December to win support for a \$1 million city-wide finance reporting system, which the remainder of the council rejected.

A telling fact is Buhagiar's relationship to

Hall Barlow. Hall Barlow left the city under a cloud when she defied the city council's instructions on the tenor of a letter to be written to the Colonies Partners land consortium over the lack of progress with regard to the development of former city property encumbered by a revisionary clause that was entrusted to the Colonies Partners to improve. Hall Barlow is the city attorney in West Covina, where Buhagiar has

landed. This last consideration is widely perceived, both by members of the council and the public, as an indication that Buhagiar's first loyalty was not to the City of Gracious Living. There were no statements of regret at the announcement of her leaving. The *Sentinel's* effort to reach Buhagiar was unsuccessful. Her last day with Upland will be on March 26 and she is to begin with West Covina on April 13.

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