

McMahon Quit Upon Learning Postmus Had Played Him For A Chump

By Mark Gutglueck

Former Sheriff John McMahon exited as San Bernardino County's highest-ranking law enforcement officer earlier this year upon being presented with overwhelming evidence that former Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Bill Postmus had successfully manipulated him and his department into action that was lining the pockets of a marijuana cartel controlled by Postmus



John McMahon

and his associates.

That cartel, through an out-of-state entity set up by Postmus, has

laundered hundreds of thousands of dollars to a myriad of public officials throughout the county, those associated with it have acknowledged. A significant portion of those payoffs, in the form of disclosed campaign contributions as well as ones hidden in a variety of forms, have gone to politicians in the cities of San Bernardino, Adelanto, Needles, Hesperia and Barstow, where marijuana and cannabis-related



Bill Postmus

commercial establishments have been or are in the process of being permitted and licensed.

Simultaneously, Postmus is spreading those bribes around to members of the board of supervisors and politicians in several county cities, where commercial cannabis and marijuana-related activity is not yet permitted but where the cartel and those politicians it is greasing have designs to liberalize regulations that will allow the cartel Postmus represents to set up a monopoly or near monopoly **See P 2**

Departure Of Denny As City Manager Shifts Focus Again To Warren & Her Trade-Offs For Campaign Cash

Fontana, which for two decades ending in 2019 exhibited the most managerial and administrative stability of any of San Bernardino County's 24 municipalities, is scrambling to replace its city manager for the third time in just over two years.

The disarray at City Hall comes as questions mount over whether the three senior administrators who served in succession since July 2019 were too accommodating of the city's political leadership, in particular Mayor Acquanetta Warren, in allowing outside financial, investment and developmental interests to dictate policy.

In the meantime, Phil Burum, who was plucked from the private sector seven months ago to serve as deputy city manager, has taken the helm in the 217,237-population city.

Ken Hunt, who had been elevated to the acting city manager post in 1997 and dropped the qualifier from his title in 1999, remained a solid 20 years as the head honcho over a municipal workforce that at present has grown to more than 1,200. During those two decades, the city, with a population of some 137,000 when Hunt came in, grew substantially, leaping past Ontario and Rancho Cucamonga to become San Bernardino County's second largest city in terms of population.

Hunt was seen as a steady-as-you-go captain of Fontana's ship of state and a ca- **See P 6**

Spooked By Lawyer, Redlands City Council Balks At Rubberstamping Subdivision

Forced by an environmental rights attorney to take stock of what were alleged to be shortcomings in the environmental certification documents prepared for the proposed conversion of the England Grove Estate's 130-year-old orange orchard into 28 homes, the Redlands City Council this week held off on giving the project go-ahead.

The England Grove Estate is located at the southeast corner of Palm Avenue and Alvarado Street in the southern portion of Redlands.

Jeff Burum and Matt Jordan of Rancho Cucamonga-based Diversified Pacific have proposed bulldozing roughly six of the England Grove Estate's 8.8 acres to make way for a residential sub-

division consisting of 2,000-square foot-to-2,600-square foot homes on what are mostly 6,200-square foot lots. Diversified Pacific would leave intact the home on the property facing Palm Avenue initially built by Thomas Y. England in 1893 in the Victorian Style and altered into a prairie style abode in 1914 by Guy Hunter, as well as the carriage

house behind the England home and the England Queen Anne cottage built on another part of the property facing Alvarado Street.

Several nearby residents, other city residents and preservationists have taken exception to Diversified Pacific's development proposal altogether, maintaining that the estate should be fully preserved, so that

the structures on the property remain in the context of the citrus operation, which includes a grove of navel oranges and a gravity-fed irrigation system, the only remaining such facility in Redlands and among the last in the state.

Of note is that Diversified Pacific was able to purchase the property for \$2.35 million in June 2019. Previously **See P 3**

Hesperia Approaching Five Years W/O Pocket H₂O Facility Running

When Hesperia and Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority officials broke ground on the Hesperia Subregional Water Recycling Facility in March 2015, there were confident predictions that once the plant came on line two years hence, it would generate some million gallons of water per day that would be used for ir-

rigation at various places around the city, and that the operation could be expanded to treat as much as 4 million gallons daily.

The facility involves storm water pump stations, reclaimed water pump stations, influent screens, two aeration basins, inline ultraviolet disinfection, hybrid membranes in- **See P 3**

State Lawmakers End Current Legislative Cycle Without Any Commitment To Extend Gold Line

The state legislature's budget committees today closed out discussions with the governor's representatives without any commitment toward providing funds for the extension of the Gold Line into San Bernardino County over the remainder of the fiscal year.

The Gold Line is a 31-mile light rail system currently running from

Union Station in Downtown Los Angeles to Azusa. Work is now underway on the extension of the line from Azusa through Glendora and on to Pomona.

Members of the California Senate and Assembly representing districts in Los Angeles County and western San Bernardino County were this morning seek-

ing from their colleagues and the governor's office \$540 million to construct the next 3.32-mile link of the line from Pomona to Montclair.

Today was the deadline for representatives from the governor's office and selected members of State Senate and Assembly finance committees to outline budget priorities dur- **See P 5**

Sensing Mounting Resident Resentment, Foster Departing Redlands, SB County & California

Redlands City Councilman Paul Foster, who was elected to the Redlands City Council in 2010 and gradually drew to himself ever greater power until he became and remains the dominant presence in municipal government and the city as a whole, will resign from his elected position in January.

Despite Foster's continuing political prima-

ry, in recent years and months, Redlands residents in larger and larger numbers have grown disenchanted and in some cases angry with Foster over his accommodations of developmental and financial interests based outside the city to the exclusion, some say, of the residents of the city and its Fifth District, which he now represents.

At Tuesday's council

meeting, Foster said he was departing because he and his wife had been presented "with an opportunity," as he put it, to live elsewhere. Foster did not say, and was not available to respond to questions as to whether he had created the opportunity to leave or whether it had been conferred on him by others or circumstances beyond his personal control.

For some, the timing of his and his wife's upcoming exodus from Redlands and the State of California is at the very least curious, just as a head of steam is building to initiate inquiries into whether a number of Foster's votes in recent years have been prompted by inducements offered to him by those individuals or businesses which benefited from his

votes.

Redlands, which is the fourth oldest and arguably the grandest of San Bernardino County's cities, boasts a multitude of historic neighborhoods, filled with many stately vintage homes. As both a resort and agricultural mecca established in the 1880s, the city was long known for its abundant citrus trees, and in particular orange **See P 5**

A Decade Before Fooling McMahon, Postmus Perfected Masquerading As A Rock-ribbed Conservative To Gain Political Power & Enrich Himself And His Cronies *from front page*

within the next two-to-five years.

Sources close to McMahon say that the former sheriff was taken in by Postmus's show of religiosity. Expressing piety was a chapter in Postmus's original political playbook, which he successfully utilized in his maiden campaign for the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors in 2000, when he was 29 years old. Boldly, on the strength of his having volunteered and worked for Republican Assemblyman Jim Brulte, Republican Assemblywoman Kathleen Honeycutt, and Republican Assemblyman Keith Olberg, as well as his status as one of the founding members of the High Desert Young Republicans, Postmus took on incumbent First District County Supervisor Kathy Davis, also a Republican, in that race.

A key element of Postmus's campaign was the support that came his way from five of the eight largest churches in the High Desert, a Pentecostal and two Baptist congregations in Victorville and two Baptist houses of prayer in Hesperia. The preachers at all five were believers in Christian denominational political action, and they would not hesitate in letting their faithful know who among the candidates seeking office at any given time were worthy of support and who were not. Postmus made a point, as the 2000 election was approaching, of putting in an appearance during Sunday service, sometimes at three different churches from early morning to early afternoon, depending on the time of worship at each. The ministers did not hold back, and during their sermons and homilies as well as in between their sermons and homilies, sometimes with Bill Postmus present in any one of the first three rows and sometimes with him attending elsewhere, the subject of

the upcoming election would be brought up. The worshipers should search their hearts, they were besought, and vote for the person Jesus would cast his ballot for. The message was clear: that candidate was not the liberal-leaning Kathy Davis.

Despite her GOP affiliation, from the time she was elected to the board in 1996, Davis had played political footsie



The Young & Clean-cut Bill Postmus

with the two Democratic supervisors on the panel, Jerry Eaves and Larry Walker, and her other liberal Republican board colleague, Jon Mikels.

Postmus, assisted by his electioneering team, represented himself as a rock-ribbed conservative, family values Republican. With his clean-cut, All American youthful demeanor, which made him look like the grandson every Republican grandmother in America would love to claim as her own, together with his pro-law enforcement, anti-abortion, let's-maintain-a-strong military stance, Postmus trounced Davis, a former Apple Valley mayor.

Having pulled off that coup, Postmus arrived in San Bernardino, the sixth youngest supervisor in county history, after Minor Cobb Tuttle in 1862, Norman Taylor in 1855, Robert McCoy in 1861, John C. Turner in 1893 and Gus Skropos in 1985. In office, Postmus proved uncommonly successful, handily achieving reelection in 2004, at which point he was chosen by his colleagues as board chairman, making him the second youngest person to hold that honorific

after after John C. Turner in 1895. At the same time, he was voted in as chairman of the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee. At the age of 33, he was the premier political entity in 20,105-square mile Republican-dominated San Bernardino County, reigning over a dominion geographically larger than Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey and Delaware combined. As the leader of San Bernardino County's Republicans, he intensified fundraising efforts on behalf of the party's candidates and causes, succeeding in his stated goal of keeping the Democrats and liberalism at bay throughout the area, with the lone exception of the county's Central Valley and its cities of Fontana, Rialto, Colton and western San Bernardino and their heavily blue-collared and union-affiliated populations.

Of note is that as supervisor, Postmus was, as were his supervisory colleagues, hardened in the rejection of requests by county residents for the county to allow, under the auspices of the Compassionate Use Of Marijuana Act passed in the form of Proposition 215 by California's voters in 1996, medical marijuana dispensaries to operate within the county. Mindful that the vast majority of the Republican voters who had put him into office were ardently opposed to the availability of marijuana, Postmus scoffed at the idea. In his view, he said, any use of marijuana, for medical purposes or otherwise, should be dealt with as a felony.

In 2006, while he was yet chairman of both the central committee and the board of supervisors, Postmus launched a campaign for county assessor. Spending just under \$3 million in what remains to this day the most expensive electoral effort in San Bernardino County history, he beat incumbent Assessor Donald Williamson.

At that point, the future seemed to auger well for Postmus. He had control of the county GOP's political machine. He

held the elected position of the most powerful taxing authority in the county. The loose ethical standards normally applied in San Bernardino County allowed him to adjust the assessments on the property of the county's wealthy elite downward and thereby save them thousands of dollars, tens of thousands of dollars or perhaps more than a hundred thousand dollars per year, leaving them disposed to make generous donations to Postmus's political fund, to either of the political action committees he controlled or to the San Bernardino County Republican Party if he made such a request. With his own campaign coffers flush with cash and the county Republican Party structure at his command, Postmus had the luxury of having multiple options as to which office he might next successfully accede to – assemblyman, state senator or congressman – while serving as a kingmaker by being able to vector at will sufficient cash to ensure his closest allies in the primary races against other Republicans prevailed and to then commit adequate resources so that Republicans beat their Democratic counterparts in the November races.

As assessor, however, Postmus soon overreached, as when he increased from one to two the number of assistant assessor positions and installed in those posts two of his closest political associates, neither of whom had any previous experience in assessing property or real estate. He then filled 11 of the assessor's office's next 14 highest-paying positions with his cronies and political operatives.

For a time, Postmus continued to ride high, but by late in 2017 the manner in which he and those around him were exploiting the assessor's office for personal gain and partisan political purposes had grown obvious to those paying attention. Things worsened in 2008, at which point the district attorney's office detailed investigators to look at the activity engaged in by Postmus,

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both assistant assessors, and at least seven of the assessor's office personnel in its management and administrative echelon. In June 2008, Assistant Assessor Adam Aleman, who was Postmus's closest political and office associate, was arrested and charged with six felonies, including destroying public records, vandalism or purposeful destruction of an assessor's office computer, and the production/creation/forging or public documents. From midsummer 2008 until October of that year, Postmus was absent from the assessor's office headquarters, and his whereabouts, in the face of growing scrutiny, were publicly unknown. Three months after he surfaced, in January 2009, district attorney's office investigators, armed with a search warrant relating to Postmus's suspected misuse of the assessor's office's authority and facilities, served a search warrant at Postmus's Rancho Cucamonga condominium, finding in the course of that action methamphetamine and evidence indicating that he was smoking the crystalline form of the drug and had also engaged in the use of inhalants, such as toluene, paint thinner, butane and aerosol sprays. In February 2019, Postmus resigned as assessor.

In July 2009, the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office charged Postmus and Greg Eyler, one of Postmus's personal/political associates who had been hired into a good-paying administrative position in the assessor's office,

with 12 felony grand theft, misappropriation of public funds and perjury counts, nine lodged against Postmus and three against Eyler. Postmus was also charged with misdemeanor drug possession.

In February 2019, Postmus and Jim Erwin, whom Postmus had hired to serve as one of his assistant assessors, were charged with a total of 15 felonies relating not to acts that took place while Postmus was assessor but rather pertaining to one of the last votes Postmus cast while he was supervisor and his acceptance of money in the aftermath of that vote from the the entity most directly impacted by his vote. The vote in question, made on November 28, 2006, conferred a \$102 million settlement on the Colonies Partners development consortium relating to a lawsuit that company had brought against the county in 2002 over flood control issues at its residential and commercial subdivisions in the northeast quadrant of Upland. Erwin had been a consultant for the Colonies Partners engaged in an effort to have the lawsuit settled on terms favorable to the Colonies Partners. Postmus was charged with five felony counts including receiving a bribe in his official capacity, embezzlement by a public official, conflict of interest by a public official and conspiracy to commit a crime. Erwin was charged with nine felony counts including bribing a legislator and a public official, extortion,

Continued on Page 4

Hesperia's Subregional Wastewater Treatment Facility Languished For Nearly Five Years
from front page

volving the use of permeate and backwash pumping, a recirculating aquaculture system pumping station and percolation ponds. The facility is designed to function as a "scalping plant," meaning it sucks liquid out of the sewage line leading from Hesperia to the main regional treatment plant operated by the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority near the Mojave River in Victorville. At the subregional plant the foul water is skimmed, filtered through two sets of membranes and then subjected to ultraviolet light to kill bacteria.

The water the facility delivers is not intended to be potable – that is, it is not to be used for drinking, cooking or bathing – but it will be suitable for use at the city's golf course and to maintain the fields and landscaping at various schools around the city. This would replace groundwater that would otherwise be pumped from the city's wells.

Nearly five years after the \$40 million plant was completed, it has not recycled a drop of water.

Hesperia officials over the last four-plus years have not offered much in the way of an explanation as to why the waterworks has lain fallow, and little in the way of an effort has been made to bring it on line. Nor has the Hesperia City Council nor other city officials pushed the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority, which technically owns the facility and serves as its operator, to make it functional.

Instead the liquid in the city's effluent has gone to the main water treatment plant, and the water derived there has been used in Victorville for irrigation purposes.

Had the Hesperia Subregional Wastewater Reclamation Facility been functioning over the last several years,

the recycled water produced there would have been pumped to a large storage tank managed by the City of Hesperia and then piped to ponds at the Hesperia Golf Course, as well as to school campuses to irrigate landscape and grass covered fields.

According to Hesperia City Councilman Bill Holland, who serves as his city's representative on the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority and is currently the chairman of that entity's board, the facility will be up and running at full capacity no later than January of next year, and will likely be partially on line as early as the second week of November.

At Tuesday night's city council meeting, Holland read a narrative prepared by Darron Poulsen, the general manager of the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority.

According to Poulsen, as voiced by Holland, "The issues that are causing delays in the delivery of recycled water in the City of Hesperia from the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority's Hesperia Subregional Facility began five years ago when for financial reasons the facility [was] not put on line after construction was completed. Revenue shortcomings at the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority attributed to diversion matters caused the organization to have a layoff of 33 percent of staff, staff that was meant to operate the facility. The plant sat idle for almost four years until January of 2020, when staffing levels were slightly increased."

Holland said technical glitches compounded by poor management decisions more than four years ago prevented the Hesperia facility from going on line some 20 months ago.

"At that time it was assumed," Holland, reading from Poulsen's narrative, continued, "the facilities could simply be turned on and operations would be fine.

That was not the case. Sitting idle for three, almost four years, start-up was not smooth. Filter membranes had been sitting in stale water for years and both membrane trains were fouled to the point of needing to be completely replaced. Due to COVID-19 measures, manufacturing was significantly delayed. To date, one train has been replaced, and the other train is scheduled for replacement the second week of October 2021. In February of 2021, the Victor Valley Waste Water Reclamation Authority was close to starting operation [of the plant], with the one replaced train. At that time the regional water quality board informed the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority staff that when the plant was shut down, previous Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority leadership did not perform the final operational performance testing on the ultraviolet disinfection system, and that we could not start the plant until the test was completed. During initial testing of the ultraviolet system we found that the three years plus of sitting stagnant, with recycled water in the ultraviolet system, [it] was not operating correctly. The entire ultraviolet system needed to be rebuilt. All of these delays in starting the plant are attributed to actions taken five years ago, and could not have been foreseen by current staff as necessary steps to restart the plant."

Holland said, "The materials to repair the ultraviolet system are being installed this week. The team performing the ultraviolet operational performance testing will start the work on Monday, September 13. The work will take two weeks to complete. The second set of membranes are now ready to be installed They're scheduled to be installed in the middle of October. The work will take two weeks to complete."

Holland said, "The Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Au-

thority will send the performance testing paperwork to the regional board by the end of October."

Again reading from Poulsen's narrative, Holland said, "The newly updated ultraviolet system has a potential to deliver a temporary operating requirement of a double ultraviolet dose, which will allow Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority to deliver recycled water at 250 gallons per minute within a week of the new membranes' installation."

Holland predicted a "best case delivery date of November 8, 2021. If there is a delay in the membranes' installation [there will be a] wait to deliver recycled water until after the Thanks-

giving Holiday, November 29."

As the current board chairman at the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority, Holland was unwilling to lay responsibility for the four year-plus delay at the feet of the troops he leads.

"I don't want folks to blame the current staff, because it's not their fault," Holland warranted. "They've done the best they can with what they have had to inherit."

Holland was confident the facility will soon be doing what it has been kept from doing for too long.

"Once the regional board approves the testing, the facility will be able to ramp up to full delivery mode, which should be over 500 gal-

lons per minute," Holland said. "The Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority staff will push hard to have this review completed, so that full operations can start by January of 2022."

Holland said that at that time, the operation "should be able to deliver reclaimed water to at least the golf course, which is already set up for it, and possibly other sites that have been set up for it."

Holland said he had prompted Poulsen to provide him with the narrative so he could inform Hesperia's residents about "the reason why we have gotten to this point and haven't gotten any further along."

-Mark Gutglueck

Big-Name Developer Wants To Put Residential Subdivision On Historic Property
from front page

the Redlands Conservancy offered the property's owners, Christopher and Jacquelyn Brumett, \$3 million for the estate, which was rejected, as the couple expressed the

belief the property would fetch twice that. The Brumetts then spurned another offer of \$4 million from preservationists who said they were committed to protecting the entirety of the land from development.

For many of those who have gone on record as being opposed to the development project and the destruction of

the grove, the fashion in which Diversified Pacific outmaneuvered the preservationists in being able to purchase the property for less money than they were willing to put up is an issue. Project opponents further object to the city permitting the environmental certification on the project to be

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**After McMahon
Granted Him Early
Release On His
Prison Sentence,
Postmus Went Back
To Political Money
Laundering** *from
page 2*

embezzlement, forgery, perjury and tax evasion. Both Postmus and Erwin pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Thirteen months later, in March 2011, Postmus entered guilty pleas to 14 felony political corruption charges that had grown out of his 2009 and 2010 arrests, including conspiracy, bribery, misappropriation of public funds, conflict of interest, fraud and perjury, as well as pleading guilty to a single misdemeanor drug charge. He agreed to turn state's evidence, and in April 2011 testified as the star witness before a grand jury which in May 2011 issued a superseding indictment of Erwin, in which were included Jeff Burum, who was a principal in the Colonies Partners; Paul Biane, who in 2006 was Postmus's colleague on the board of supervisors who had voted to approve the \$102 million settlement with the Colonies Partners; and Mark Kirk, the chief of staff to Gary Ovitt, another member of the board of supervisors who had supported the lawsuit settlement with the Colonies Partners. The 29-count indictment in large measure revolved around the Colonies Partners having conferred a \$100,000 contribution upon Kirk's Alliance for Ethical Government political action committee on May 16, 2007; a \$100,000 contribution upon the San Bernardino County Young Republicans political action committee controlled by Biane and his chief of staff, Matt Brown, on June 11, 2007; and two separate \$50,000 contributions provided to the Conservatives for a Republican Majority political action committee on June 28, 2007 and the Inland Empire political action committee on July 5, 2007. The Inland Empire PAC and the Conservatives for a Republican Majority PAC were

controlled by Postmus, his business and political associate, John "Dino" DeFazio, and Postmus's political and personal associate, Adam Aleman.

Postmus's sentencing on his convictions was held in abeyance as the trials for Burum, Biane, Erwin and Kirk were pending, since he was required, as part of his plea deal, to cooperate with the prosecution in testifying against them, as well as against DeFazio, who had been separately charged with assisting the Colonies Partners in delivering what both the district attorney's office and the California Attorney General's Office said was bribe money to Postmus through his participation in the creation of Postmus's political action committees. Pre-trial legal sparring and appeals motions delayed by more than six-and-a-half years Burum, Biane, Erwin and Kirk going to trial, with jury selection not taking place until December 2016 and the trial starting in January 2017.

During the interim from the indictment to the trial, Postmus found himself languishing. His conviction on the public official conflict of interest charge meant that he was banned for life from holding elected public office in California. Still, he longed to get back into the political game.

On April 8, 2013, either Postmus or his father, who have the same first and last names, so-journed to Cheyenne, Wyoming and registered with the Wyoming secretary of state's corporate division Mountain States Consulting Group LLC, based in Cheyenne, as a Wyoming domestic limited liability company. Thereafter, having learned the pitfalls of bribetaking and other forms of graft and corruption, Postmus wielded Mountain States Consulting Group as a political money laundering operation. He understood implicitly and explicitly how the political system works, the circular pay-to-play element of control and governance where politicians take in money from those with an interest in the governmental decision-making process,

use that money to get into office or stay in office and vote to approve the development projects or the contracts or the franchises of those who have donated that money. He had been caught boldly and baldly doing just that. As the owner of Mountain States Consulting Group, he could offer politicians a way to engage in pay-to-play trade-offs without getting caught and being stigmatized with criminal convictions as he had been. Mountain States Consulting Group took money originating with individuals or companies with a stake in governmental decisions, laundered that money through his company and then provided that cash, either as legitimate political donations or payments in some other form to the politicians making those decisions. Postmus employs Mountain States Consulting Group as a cutout, insulating the recipients of the money – the politicians – from those who are providing the money. When Postmus properly executes on this mission, it protects the politicians from the perception that their votes are being purchased, which has political benefits, while serving to lessen to some extent the possibility that the politicians he is funneling money to will be subject to law enforcement action for engaging in what in the final analysis are quid pro quos, out-and-out bribes or kickbacks. Postmus also utilized Mountain States Consulting Group to employ politicians or those considered to be up-and-coming in politics, such as Jeremiah Brosowske, an energetic and enthusiastic Republican Party volunteer who eventually landed an assignment as the executive director of the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee and who was considered by many to have the hallmarks of the young Bill Postmus and embodied the same potential of achieving election to the board of supervisors when he was yet in his twenties.

In this way, Postmus managed to remain as a power broker in San Bernardino County political

circles.

The trial for Burum, Biane, Erwin and Kirk took place over the course of nine months in 2017, during which Postmus was called as a prosecution witness. Burum, Biane and Kirk were acquitted. Erwin's jury deadlocked, and was unable to reach a unanimous verdict on the charges against him. The failure of prosecutors to gain convictions against any of the defendants was in some measure considered to be a reflection of Postmus's lack of credibility brought on by the scandal he had immersed himself in. Following the trial, prosecutors, highly conscious of Postmus's credibility issue, forsook seeking a conviction against DeFazio on charges of assisting Postmus in laundering the bribe money he had admitted to taking from the Colonies Partners.

While Postmus was yet awaiting sentencing, he moved toward fully re-immersing himself into San Bernardino County politics. He started in Hesperia, a community with which he was intimately familiar. In 2014, he succeeded in getting his longtime political associate, Paul Russ, elected to the city council. In 2016, he strengthened his hold on Hesperia by successfully working, through Mountain States Consulting, in getting another political affiliate, Rebekah Swanson, elected to the city council.

After Hesperia Mayor Russ Blewett died in May 2018, Postmus acted rapidly to promote Brosowske as the appointee to fill the gap on the council Blewett's passing had created. Indeed, Brosowske gained that appointment and then in November 2018, with the advantage of running as a council incumbent, Brosowske was elected to the council in his own right.

Prior to Postmus's sentencing by Judge Michael A. Smith, the same judge who had presided over the trial of Burum, Biane, Erwin and Kirk, Postmus and his attorney, Jeffrey Lawrence, sought to withdraw Postmus's 14 guilty pleas on po-

litical corruption charges entered in 2011. Judge Smith denied that motion and ultimately sentenced Postmus to three years in state prison.

Postmus reported to begin his sentence on November 30, 2018.

He was initially incarcerated within the state prison system, but because of so-called prison realignment codified in Assembly Bill 109 and passed by the California Legislature in 2011, he was returned to the custody of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. Because of the non-violent nature of Postmus's crimes, a positive evaluation of Postmus's behavior in custody and his expressed attitude, as well as his assertion of having undergone a religious conversion, Sheriff John McMahon released him in August 2019.

Postmus immediately picked up where he had left off. Having established himself as a successful political operative in the 2014, 2016 and 2018 election cycles, he was even more active during the 2020 election.

Most notably, Postmus moved to become a central player in the effort to assist those seeking permits and licensing to engage in the sale of marijuana in San Bernardino County and who were accordingly willing to generously reward the elected officials whose votes are needed to ratify the granting of those commercial cannabis licenses and permits.

Among the various county and municipal jurisdictions in California, the San Bernardino County government structure and most of its 24 cities/incorporated towns were among the most resistant to the liberalization in the law pertaining to medical marijuana availability that occurred with the 1996 passage of Proposition 215, the Compassionate Use of Marijuana Act, and the 2016 passage of Proposition 64, the Adult Use of Marijuana Act. It was only relatively recently that first the City of Needles, then Adelanto, thereafter San Bernardino, and now Hesperia and Barstow have

consented to permitting commercial marijuana or cannabis-related activity within their confines.

Postmus, in conjunction with DeFazio and Brosowske and a handful of others, through Mountain States Consulting Group, has picked up as major clients well-financed cannabis industry heads who have obtained or are seeking to obtain permits and licenses to operate in Adelanto, San Bernardino, Needles, Hesperia and Barstow. In both Adelanto and San Bernardino, several of the operations obtained those permits by out-and-out bribing elected city officials. Postmus has begun filtering money from that set of cannabis entrepreneurs to politicians to grease the way for the companies he represents to take command of a lion's share of the marijuana and cannabis-based product market in San Bernardino County.

Postmus has had, the *Sentinel* has learned, either or both public and private meetings with Supervisors Curt Hagman, Paul Cook and Dawn Rowe. These meetings have in major measure revolved around money, primarily money that Postmus is able to dig up for them. As a fundraiser, Postmus has begun funneling tens of thousands of dollars originating both from the cannabis industry and elsewhere to Hagman, Cook and Rowe for use in their future election campaigns. Simultaneously, he has put together a timetable by which the county will move to allow "established reliable growers" who have already obtained clearance to operate in Needles, Adelanto, Hesperia and San Bernardino to set up operations in the unincorporated portions of the county as well as within the eleven other municipalities in San Bernardino County other than Needles, Hesperia and Adelanto for which the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department provides contract law enforcement service.

Part and parcel to Postmus's game plan was the election of Thurston "Smitty" Smith to the

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As His Tenure In Office Lengthened, Foster Grew More And More Out Of Step With A Cross Section Of His Constituents *from front page*

groves. In this respect, Redlands was no different than many other local cities and communities, including Riverside, Highland, Loma Linda, Upland, Ontario and Alta Loma. Beginning in the 1950s, some of the land upon which those citrus trees were set began to be sacrificed to make way for development, in particular the construction of homes. Gradually, and then ever more rapidly in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, those groves were destroyed as the population in San Bernardino

County escalated.

In Redlands, more than in virtually every other community in the county, traditionalist sentiment became a strong and central aspect of the local culture. Efforts to preserve and conserve took hold, city resident-passed initiatives and measures limited the intensity of growth and voters consented, in league with a majority of the members of previous city councils, to issue bonds to enable the city to purchase groves to ensure their preservation

and shield them from destruction and development.

At one point, more than a decade ago and before he was elected to the city council, Foster was, or at least seemed to be, involved in that movement. Prior to his being elected to the city council he had been a member of the Redlands Planning Commission, and before that he was a member of the Redlands Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission.

In his fifth year on the council, Foster was selected by his council colleagues for elevation to the position of mayor. He remained in that post until earlier this year.

According to some Redlands residents, it was around the time that he assumed the mayoralty that they detected an at first subtle and then ever more obvious change in Foster.

Though he had never been a politician who actively sought out the opinions and input of his constituents, Foster grew even more inaccessible than he had been. Particularly with regard to development proposals, Foster evinced virtually no interest in the views of his constituents, seeming to sense that they would be unwelcoming of any type of development. The only type of interaction he was prepared to en-

gage in, or so it seemed, were meetings with the proponents of development projects. Foster grew deaf, or at best hard of hearing, to any expression of objection Redlands residents made to any of the various facets of project proposals that were to come before Foster and his council colleagues, and he grew impatient with any suggestions that development planned or proposed in the city, which he touted as "progress," be denied approval.

Consistently, once the economic downturn of 2007-2014 subsided, Foster embraced virtually every development project that came be-

fore the city. Among his council colleagues, his enthusiasm proved infectious, and he reproved, either silently or acidly, any of his colleagues if they indicated they were so much as contemplating standing in the way of "progress." Generally, through wheedling and cajoling, he influenced the remainder of the council to go along with him in supporting development proposals if they were not already inclined on their own to do so.

Those who want to build something and accomplish things with their lives, Foster maintained, trumped those who want to leave things

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State Executive/Legislative Committee Fails To Reach Agreement For Ongoing Fiscal Cycle Funding For The Extension Of The Gold Line To Montclair *from front page*

ing the current legislative season. When the group focused on several transportation matters, no agreement could be reached, and the goal of earmarking funding for the Gold Line continuation into San Bernardino County was forsaken.

State Senator Anthony Portantino and Assemblyman Chris Holden were primary advocates of finding the funding to have the line reach the Montclair Transit Center by 2027, before the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. The Gold Line was not the issue in the failure to come to an agreement on transportation spending, participants in the discussion said. Rather, differences between the governor's office and the legislators over the wisdom and necessity of spending commitments

on the Los Angeles-to-San Francisco high-speed rail project caused those talks to bog down. Accordingly, funding issues relating to transportation projects all over the state went unresolved.

The Gold Line, which is also referred to by the nomenclature L-Line, is a more efficient and well-travelled transportation system than the one existing rail line, Metrolink, that runs between Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties. The track for the diesel-powered Metrolink, is shared with cargo trains, and it does not have frequent departures or arrivals, with the shortest time between departures from San Bernardino into Los Angeles running 20 minutes at certain times of the day and

as much as two hours at other times.

Consequently, Metrolink is not heavily used and it does little or nothing to alleviate heavy traffic on the freeways into and out of Los Angeles on a daily basis.

The Gold Line, which runs on a separate track dedicated to passenger transport alone from Downtown Los Angeles to Azusa, uses lighter cars and more fuel-efficient engines, with staggered departures and arrivals of as little as every eight minutes. The Gold Line is thus heavily used, and its cars, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, neared capacity on virtually every run.

The Los Angeles County-based Gold Line Construction Authority right now is engaged with a nine-mile, \$806 million extension of the light rail line from Azusa to northern Pomona, such that at present work on the leg between Azusa and Glendora is ongoing.

The track will reach Pomona by late 2025. Thereafter, the line was previously slated to be extended another 3.3 miles from Pomona through Claremont to Montclair at that city's existing Montclair Transit Center. From there, the intention had been to extend it from Montclair to Ontario Airport. According to the Gold Line Construction Authority, the extension of the line from north Pomona to Claremont will entail a cost of \$450 million. Previously, the Gold Line Construction Authority in conjunction with the San Bernardino County Transportation Agency, when it was previously known as San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), intended to continue the line from Claremont to Montclair, and then from Montclair to Ontario Airport. SANBAG had accordingly dedicated \$39 million in available transportation money toward the Gold Line

project, and did a joint application with the Los Angeles Metro Transit Agency for a State of California Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program grant. That application was successful and it brought in \$250 million on the Los Angeles County side, which made a significant but not complete inroad on the \$850 funding deficit that jurisdiction had, and provided another \$41 million of the then-projected \$80 million cost for the San Bernardino County portion of the projected expense on the eastern side of the Los Angeles County/San Bernardino County border to get the line to Montclair.

Subsequently, however, when the project went out to bid, it turned out the cost of building the line from Claremont to Montclair would not contain itself to an earlier \$73 million projection or the later \$80 million estimate, but had escalated to \$96 million.

In reaction to that

projected cost overrun, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority Executive Director Ray Wolfe convinced a majority of the San Bernardino County Transportation Agency board in the fall of 2019 to pull the plug on San Bernardino County's portion of the Gold Line funding. On October 10, 2019 the San Bernardino County Transportation Agency's transit subcommittee, composed of representatives from the cities of Big Bear Lake, Chino Hills, Colton, Fontana, Highland, Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, Rialto, Yucaipa and the Third Supervisorial District, endorsed Wolfe's proposal to dispense with constructing the new Gold Line track into San Bernardino County altogether and to instead have Gold Line passengers heading eastward from Los Angeles or the San Gabriel Valley load

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Preservation Advocates Did Not Take Historic Grove Destruction Plan Lying Down *from page 3*

done via a mitigated negative declaration, one of the least exacting types of environmental analyses used to deem a project as being in compliance with the California

Environmental Quality Act.

A group of Redlands residents, who banded together under the name Save The Grove, retained attorney John McClendon.

McClendon prepared a document presented to the council which put forth the assertion and marshaled support there- to that a mitigated nega-

tive declaration for the project would not stand a legal challenge and that under the California Environmental Quality Act the city was required to conduct a full environmental impact report to let the development take place. The city was in violation of the California Environmental Quality Act because it had not consulted with nor

included other agencies in determining what type of environmental document to prepare, McClendon maintained, and he said the city should have touched base as well with those agencies during the preparation of the so-called initial study for the mitigated negative declaration, even if an environmental impact report was not complet-

ed. Furthermore, McClendon maintained, disagreements among experts and analysts who had examined the development proposal with regard to environmental impacts necessitated that a comprehensive environmental report be compiled. To make a negative declaration of no significant impacts and bypass

the requirement for a full environmental impact report, McClendon said, the city had to consult with all agencies in the state with responsibility pertaining to the issues at play in the development. He asserted that the city had failed to make such consultations. The documentation upon which the mitigated negative

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Another City Manager Exposed To Warren's Pay-To-Play Demense Bails From Fontana

from front page

pable manager, who kept one eye on the bottom line, ran the city day-to-day and had enough of a concept of urban planning to guide the former steel town away from its status as an industrial wasteland as it moved through the first two decades of the Third Millennium.

Others were mindful that Hunt had succeeded and functioned in the shadow of Greg Devereaux, whose run as Fontana city manager began in 1993 as the city was foundering financially. Devereaux, who was promoted into the city manager's spot after having spent two years as Fontana's redevelopment and housing director, came into a situation in which the city was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy and disincorporation as a consequence of the graft-encrusted giveaways to developers and others that had flourished under the direction of Fontana's city manager from 1973 to 1987, Jack Ratelle. Fontana's financial situation in the late 1980s and early 1990s overwhelmed each of the three city managers succeeding Ratelle – John O'Sullivan, Russ Carlsen and Jay Corey. Devereaux mapped out a strategy to lift Fontana out of the financial abyss that it had slid into.

In four years Devereaux not only succeeded in extracting Fontana from its intractable economic circumstance, but made strides in putting the city on firm financial footing that would persist for two decades. In this way, the success Hunt enjoyed is perceived by some to have been less Hunt's skill in management than his ability to execute the game plan Devereaux had formulated for him.

During the last eight-and-a-half years of his tenure as city manager,

Hunt had coexisted with Acquanetta Warren while she filled the role of Fontana's mayor. She had been elected to that post in 2010, after having been appointed to the city council in 2002, elected as councilwoman in 2004 and reelected in 2008. As mayor she had been reelected in 2014 and again in 2018, largely on the strength of her incumbency, name recognition and richly-endowed campaign war chest, which at this point exceeds \$350,000.

It is no secret that Warren has been able to accumulate that overwhelming electioneering fund total through accommodation of developer upon developer by means of not only her votes in support of their projects but by delivering the votes of her council colleagues in support of those builders' project proposals as well. Hunt was able to live within this pay-to-play milieu at least in part because continuing development in the city was not out of sync with the formula that Devereaux had devised to bring about economic sustainability for the city.

This symbiosis between Hunt and Warren was evident in the way in which Hunt cruised along as city manager, and the council, led by Warren, continuously renewed Hunt's contract. In 2011, after Warren had settled in as Fontana mayor, a salary and benefit package was conferred upon Hunt, consisting of \$264,596.80 in salary, \$58,909.52 in other perks and pay and \$36,184.72 in benefits for a total annual compensation of \$359,691.04, making him the highest paid city manager in San Bernardino County. In 2016, when his salary escalated to \$291,928, his other pay reached \$71,857.31 and his benefits equaled \$84,591.36 for a total annual compensation of \$448,376.67, Hunt was logged as the third highest paid city manager in California. With Hunt's contract set to expire in 2021, the ink on it was not dry when already Warren and her three

allies on the council in 2018 were publicly discussing extending Hunt's contract three years beyond 2021 to 2024 or perhaps even four years to 2025, so pleased with his performance were they and concerned that some other city might lure him away.

Precipitously in 2019, however, Hunt upped and departed. Mystery surrounded his exit, as Warren, who had previously been so laudatory about his talent as a city manager and how he was virtually indispensable to the city's operations, uttered a barely audible "The city is grateful for Ken's dedicated service to our city," through clenched teeth in announcing his leaving. She would go no further. Hunt offered no explanation as to the reason for the sudden change at City Hall. It remained unclear whether he had been fired or he had quit, whether he had been pushed out the window or had jumped. Warren dissembled, first implying and then stating that Hunt's departure was his own idea. "He resigned," she said. But that was contradicted by the consideration that Hunt, whose managerial skills were so highly valued, did not immediately move into another position. Moreover, the claim that Hunt had voluntarily departed did not jibe with the disclosure made at that time that Hunt was being kept on the city's payroll until the end of January 2020 and was collecting a severance on top of that, as Hunt's contract did not provide for any continuation of pay or a severance if he left the city of his own volition. Warren continued to stonewall when asked again and again what had really occurred, and when the questions persisted, she evinced anger as a ploy to resist having to clarify what the deal with Hunt was. During a break at one city council meeting, when she was approached on the matter, she said that the question was purposefully disruptive, and implied that she would have one

of or both of the Fontana police officers present at the meeting deal with the questioner harshly if the inquiry did not end.

Not until earlier this year was it disclosed that Hunt had not only been kept on the payroll until January 2020 after his July 2019 departure, for which he was paid \$153,558.25 in salary over those six months plus benefits of \$31,104.23, but that he had been kept on the payroll until January 2021, such that he was provided another \$307,116.51 plus benefits of \$62,208.46 for those 12 months of not working. On top of that, Hunt was provide with "settlement pay" and a "leave payoff" that together came to \$511,182.54.

In this way, Hunt was provided with \$1,127,378.45 after he left in July 2019, none of which he was due if he had in fact quit. Tacitly acknowledged was that Hunt had been asked to leave, by Warren no less, and that the \$1,127,378.45 was intended to buy his silence over what had precipitated his leaving.

While Hunt, in compliance with the confidentiality clause put into the separation agreement with the city he agreed to and signed in July 2019, is not talking, reliable sources close to him have told the *Sentinel* that he and Warren in May 2019 veered onto a collision course with one another that fully manifested the following month when Hunt let it be known that he had come to recognize Warren was on the take and he would no longer tolerate her bribetaking. Those bribes, the *Sentinel* is informed, originated with developers as well as Alliance Building Solutions, which was given, at Warren's insistence, a no-bid contract to render several Fontana municipal buildings more energy efficient.

Upon Hunt's departure, the city arranged with G. Michael Milhiser, who had previously worked as Montclair city manager, Ontario city manager and Upland city manager and, after his retirement, as interim

city manager in Adelanto for two different spans of time, to serve as interim city manager in Fontana, overseeing its roughly 1,200 municipal employees.

In April 2020, the city council settled upon Mark Denny to serve as city manager. Denny, a one-time aide to California Assembly Speaker Curt Pringle, the director of marketing and strategic planning for Allergan, Inc., the chief of staff for Orange County Supervisor William J. Campbell and the city manager of Dana Point, was considered by Warren to represent a good bet to serve as city manager. Denny was pro-development in his orientation and not terribly fastidious about adhering to ethical or legal constraints.

In 1996, when he was working for Pringle, the then-27-year-old Denny had been charged by the Orange County District Attorney and subsequently convicted of engaging in political skullduggery along with several of Pringle's other political associates, including Jeffrey Christopher Gibson, Rhonda Carmony, Jeff Flint, Maureen Werft and Richard Martin. Denny's convictions on campaign documentation falsification charges before Judge Marjorie Laird Carter came in close conjunction with the recording of similar or related convictions of the five others, all of whom had been involved in an effort to prevent Pringle from losing his tenuous hold on the leadership of California's lower legislative house. Working with Flint, who was Pringle's deputy chief of staff, Denny set about interesting Laurie Campbell in running as a decoy candidate to weaken the candidacy of Linda Moulton-Patterson who was vying against Pringle's political ally Scott Baugh in the specially-held 1995 election to replace one-time Assembly Speaker Doris Allen, with whom Pringle had sharp political differences.

Ultimately, Denny

was among a nest of political operatives convicted of election fraud. In Denny's case, he admitted to participating in a scheme to siphon votes from Moulton-Patterson, the more established candidate in the Assembly race against Baugh. While suspicion fell on Baugh, Pringle and then-Congressman Dana Rohrbacher over their involvement in masterminding and directing the ruse, Gibson, Carmony, Martin, Flint, Werft and Denny proved good soldiers, fell on their swords and did not turn state's evidence on the elected officeholders who employed them.

It was perhaps Denny's demonstrated loyalty to his boss in a political context which convinced Warren he was her man, and she relied upon the three votes on the city council she controlled at that time – those of Councilmen John Roberts, Phil Cothran, Jr. and Jesse Armendarez - to bring Denny into the Fontana fold.

Denny, like Hunt had for so many years before him, seemed to mesh well with Warren. Yet even as someone willing to not only allow aggressive development to take place hand-in-hand with speculative investment, augmented with taxpayer-assisted subsidizations that defray the cost of infrastructure to jumpstart the development process and increase investor and developer profit, Denny saw that Warren's attitude toward land speculators and project proponents had crossed the line from accommodation into outright affiliation, ones in which her own interest had become indistinguishable from the undertakings of those applying with the city for permits and project approval. The baldly pay-to-play ethos was most strikingly apparent in the accelerated pace of warehouse development in Fontana, a frenzy so intense that Warren was known, both derisively by her detractors and admiringly by her supporters, as "Warehouse Warren."

Continued on Page 11

Public Notices

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Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel September 3, 10 & 17, 2021

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: STEVENS RIDGWAY BROWN

CASE NO. PROSB2100580
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of STEVENS RIDGWAY BROWN:

A Petition for Probate has been filed by STEPHANIE M. BROWN in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that STEPHANIE M. BROWN be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held OCTOBER 7, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in Dept. No. S36 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San Bernardino District.

SEPTEMBER 2, 2021
Kimberly Tilley, Deputy
IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under Section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Filed: August 25, 2021
Attorney for Jacob Wayne Stahl
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Public Notices

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel September 10, 17 & 24, 2021.

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: GAUDELIA OCHOA aka BLANCA OCHOA

CASE NO. PROSB2100545
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of GAUDELIA OCHOA aka BLANCA OCHOA :

A Petition for Probate has been filed by JACOB WAYNE STAHL in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that JACOB WAYNE STAHL be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held OCTOBER 26, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in Dept. No. S36 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San Bernardino District.

August 25, 2021
Selyna Razo, Deputy
IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under Section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Filed: August 25, 2021
Attorney for Jacob Wayne Stahl
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Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel September 10, 17 & 24, 2021.

Public Notices

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of JOHN H. SUMNER aka JOHN HUBERT SUMNER JR.:

A Petition for Probate has been filed by ANTHONY SUMNER in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that ANTHONY SUMNER be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

THE PETITION requests a \$378,778.70 bond be fixed. The bond will be admitted by an admitted surety insurer or as otherwise provided by law.

Decedent died on 10/07/2020 in 5659 PALOMAR AVE. SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92404, a resident of San Bernardino County.

Decedent died intestate.
A hearing on the petition will be held OCTOBER 27, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in Dept. No. S35 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San Bernardino District.

Sabrina Felix, Deputy
SEPTEMBER 1, 2021
IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under Section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

The character and estimated value of the property of the estate is estimated at \$378,778.70.

Filed: September 1, 2021
Attorney for Anthony Sumner
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Public Notices

San Bernardino County Sentinel September 10, 17 & 24, 2021.

PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: JAMES PAUL WHITELEY

CASE NO. PROSB2100556
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of JAMES PAUL WHITELEY:

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by PAUL JAMES WHITELEY in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that PAUL JAMES WHITELEY be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests the decedent's wills and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in Dept. No. S-36 at 9:00 a.m. on OCTOBER 4, 2021 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San Bernardino District.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under Section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorneys for the Petitioners: MICHAEL C. MADDUX, ESQ.

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Public Notices

T.S. No. 19-20977-SP-CA Title No. 191138141-CA-VOI A.P.N. 0218-752-18-0-000 NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE. YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 01/11/2006. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. A public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash, (cashier's check(s) must be made payable to National Default Servicing Corporation), drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state; will be held by the duly appointed trustee as shown below, of all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by the trustee in the hereinafter described property under and pursuant to a Deed of Trust described below. The sale will be made in an "as is" condition, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by the Deed of Trust, with interest and late charges thereon, as provided in the note(s), advances, under the terms of the Deed of Trust, interest thereon, fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee for the total amount (at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale) reasonably estimated to be set forth below. The amount may be greater on the day of sale. Trustor: Carlos A Urbina and Bertha Rodriguez, husband and wife, as joint tenants Duly Appointed Trustee: National Default Servicing Corporation Recorded 01/23/2006 as Instrument No. 2006-0045762 (or Book, Page) of the Official Records of San Bernardino County, CA. Date of Sale: 10/14/2021 at 12:00 PM Place of Sale: At the North Arrowhead Avenue entrance to the County Courthouse, 351 North Arrowhead Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92401 Estimated amount of unpaid balance and other charges: \$474,213.44 Street Address or other common designation of real property: 2932 E Big Range Rd Ontario, CA 91761-0000 A.P.N.: 0218-752-18-0-000 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address or other common designation, if any, shown above. If no street address or other common designation is shown, directions to the location of the property may be obtained by sending a written request to the beneficiary within 10 days of the date of first publication of this Notice of Sale. If the Trustee is unable to convey title for any reason, the successful bidder's sole and exclusive remedy shall be the return of monies paid to the Trustee, and the successful bidder shall have no further recourse. The requirements of California Civil Code Section 2923.5(b)/2923.55(c) were fulfilled when the Notice of Default was recorded. NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS: If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien. If you are the highest bidder at the auction, you are or may be responsible for paying off all liens senior to the lien being auctioned off, before you can receive clear

Public Notices

title to the property. You are encouraged to investigate the existence, priority, and size of outstanding liens that may exist on this property by contacting the county recorder's office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge you a fee for this information. If you consult either of these resources, you should be aware that the same lender may hold more than one mortgage or deed of trust on the property. NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: The sale date shown on this notice of sale may be postponed one or more times by the mortgagee, beneficiary, trustee, or a court, pursuant to Section 2924g of the California Civil Code. The law requires that information about trustee sale postponements be made available to you and to the public, as a courtesy to those not present at the sale. If you wish to learn whether your sale date has been postponed, and, if applicable, the rescheduled time and date for the sale of this property, you may call or visit this Internet Web site www.ndscorp.com/sales, using the file number assigned to this case 19-20977-SP-CA. Information about postponements that are very short in duration or that occur close in time to the scheduled sale may not immediately be reflected in the telephone information or on the Internet Web site. The best way to verify postponement information is to attend the scheduled sale. Date: 09/01/2021 National Default Servicing Corporation c/o Tiffany & Bosco, P.A., its agent, 1455 Frazee Road, Suite 820 San Diego, CA 92108 Toll Free Phone: 888-264-4010 Sales Line 855-219-8501; Sales Website: www.ndscorp.com By: Rachael Hamilton, Trustee Sales Representative 09/10/2021, 09/17/2021, 09/24/2021; CPP# 351367

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO-20210008879

The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: Rose and Chalice; Rose & Chalice, 1153 East Highland Court, Ontario, CA 91764, Mailing Address: 305 North 2nd Ave, Unit 183, Upland, CA 91786, Serene D. Plant, 1153 E Highland Ct, Ontario, CA 91764

Business is Conducted By: An Individual

Signed: BY SIGNING BELOW, I DECLARE THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. (B&P Code 17913) I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/Serene D Plant
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 08/26/21

I hereby certify that this is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office.

Began Transacting Business: N/A

County Clerk, s/ I1327
NOTICE- This fictitious business name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see section 14400 et. Seq. Business & Professions Code).
09/10/21, 09/17/21, 09/24/21, 10/01/21

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO-20210008980

The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: HHK Designs, 2188 Lorraine Dr, Upland, CA 91784, Mark K Fitzpatrick, 2188 Lorraine Dr, Upland, CA 91784

Business is Conducted By: An Individual

Signed: BY SIGNING BELOW, I DECLARE THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. (B&P Code 17913) I am also aware that

Public Notices

all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ Mark K Fitzpatrick
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 08/30/21

I hereby certify that this is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office.

Began Transacting Business: N/A

County Clerk, s/ I1327

NOTICE- This fictitious business name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see section 14400 et. Seq. Business & Professions Code).

09/10/21, 09/17/21, 09/24/21, 10/01/21

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO-20210008317

The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: Fangear4u, 1495 W 9th St, Unit 607, Upland, CA 91786, Seung Don Kim, 14760 Moon Crest Ln, Unit B, Chino Hills, CA 91709

Business is Conducted By: An Individual

Signed: BY SIGNING BELOW, I DECLARE THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. (B&P Code 17913) I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ Seung Don Kim

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 08/11/21

I hereby certify that this is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office.

Began Transacting Business: 09/01/2019

County Clerk, s/ I5199

NOTICE- This fictitious business name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see section 14400 et. Seq. Business & Professions Code).

09/10/21, 09/17/21, 09/24/21, 10/01/21

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO-20210007242

The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: On Time Home Inspections, 10123 Hampshire St., Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730, Mailing Address: 10123 Hampshire St., Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730, Juan J. Tojin, 10123 Hampshire St., Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Business is Conducted By: An Individual

Signed: BY SIGNING BELOW, I DECLARE THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. (B&P Code 17913) I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/Juan J Tojin
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 07/14/21

I hereby certify that this is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office.

Began Transacting Business: 07/01/21

County Clerk, s/ I5199

NOTICE- This fictitious business name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see section 14400 et. Seq. Business & Professions Code).

08/06/21, 08/13/21, 08/20/21, 08/27/21 & Corrected on: 09/10/21, 09/17/21, 09/24/21, 10/01/21

Business is Conducted By: An Individual

Signed: BY SIGNING BELOW, I DECLARE THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. (B&P Code 17913) I am also aware that

Sheriff's Department Raids On Unlicensed Marijuana Farms Coincided With Postmus's Bribe Scheme To Get Cartel He Represents Commercial Cannabis Permits

from page 7

California Assembly in 2020.

Smith, a concrete pumper by trade who served two terms on the Hesperia City Council from 2006 to 2014, including having been rotated into the position of mayor, was considered by Postmus to be intellectually challenged enough to be easily manipulated. Shortly after Smith assumed his position in the California Legislature, he was bombarded with complaints about the proliferation of illicit marijuana farms in the desert, and thereafter induced by Postmus and his agents to take up a "legislative effort to reform Proposition 64," one that is aimed at elevating unlicensed marijuana cultivation from an infraction/misdemeanor to a felony, subject to steep penalties, including hefty monetary fines and mandatory prison sentences for such transgressions.

It is Postmus's, Brosowski's, and DeFazio's calculation as well as that of others involved with Mountain States Consulting Group that the legislative program Smith is pursuing will fail in the Democratic-controlled legislature. Thereupon, the stage will be set for the members of the county board of supervisors Postmus is bankrolling to throw up their arms, lament that seeking to eradicate marijuana cultivation in the desert and other unincorporated areas of the county is futile, and call for a change in policy in which the raising of marijuana is permitted, pursuant to a permitting, licensing and taxing regime. Those to be provided with permits are to be limited exclusively, or almost exclusively, to those who have hired Postmus and Mountain States Consulting Group to represent them and who are amenable to becoming a part of a cartel headed by DeFazio, who has already established a

cannabis cultivation facility in Needles. Other members of the cartel being assembled include those who have already, in league with Postmus and Mountain States Consulting Group and acting independently of Postmus and Mountain States Consulting Group, demonstrated a willingness, in order to jumpstart their marijuana and cannabis-related business enterprises, to provide bribe money to former Adelanto Mayor Rich Kerr, former Adelanto Councilman Jermaine Wright, former Adelanto Councilman John Woodard, San Bernardino Mayor John Valdivia and San Bernardino City Councilman Juan Figueroa.

Third District San Bernardino County Supervisor Dawn Rowe has demonstrated her willingness to sign onto Postmus's game plan by vociferously decrying the recent uptick in unlicensed marijuana farms in the desert and calling for intensified eradication of the crops.

In January 2021, almost as if he were following through on a New Year's resolution, Sheriff McMahon had his department become far more aggressive in locating and uprooting unlicensed marijuana plantations. Indeed, over the next several months, deputies and detectives assigned to the sheriff's Marijuana Enforcement Team served search warrants or carried out eradication operations in Adelanto, Lucerne Valley, Johnson Valley, El Mirage, Twentynine Palms, Desert Heights, Landers, Yucca Valley, Daggett, Helendale, Yermo, Rancho Cucamonga, Phelan, Newbury Springs, Bloomington, Piñon Hills, Victorville, Hesperia, western Mojave and other outlying desert areas, all as a part of what has been dubbed "Operation Hammer."

On May 18, 2021 at a workshop pertaining to

the county's proposed 2021-2022 budget, the board of supervisors telegraphed their intention to put \$10.4 million into the spending plan for the upcoming year to address nettlesome land use and code enforcement issues in the county's unincorporated areas, which primarily consist of unlicensed marijuana farms.

Public scrutiny of Operation Hammer intensified, inviting not only local news coverage but that from Los Angeles television and radio stations and those from as far away as Sacramento, San Francisco and San Diego. Some of that coverage focused on the advantage the stepped-up enforcement efforts against unlicensed growers of marijuana provided to those entrepreneurs who had managed to get permits for marijuana and cannabis-related operations. Implied in a smattering of the broadcasts and press accounts was that government officials and law enforcement agencies, which had until only recently before assiduously worked to prevent marijuana availability, were now embracing the use of the drug as long as those selling it were paying tribute, in the form of permit and licensing fees and excise levies to local government, essentially filling government coffers and lining the pockets of government officials.

On June 8, McMahon went before the Apple Valley Town Council, intent on justifying his department's intensified marijuana eradication effort. In the face of the criticism of law enforcement's apparent assistance in clearing the decks of the competition the licensed marijuana providers were facing, McMahon doubled down, using language he soon regretted.

Referencing the City of Adelanto, where dozens of marijuana and cannabis-related businesses had been established based on payoffs provided over the course of more than four years to former Mayor Rich Kerr, Councilmen John Woodard and Jermaine

Wright and several of their successors, McMahon said, "Adelanto has ... illegal grows as well. That's in direct conflict and competition with the legal growers that are paying taxes and paying fees to the city to operate. It is obviously impacting their business, as well. Needles sees the same thing."

McMahon went on to advocate that other cities and the county adopt an ordinance similar to one on the books in Needles, which levies \$10,000 a plant fines on anyone growing marijuana without a license.

Immediately, McMahon found himself figuratively immolated in a firestorm of controversy.

At issue was his insistence on having his department focus intense manpower and other resources on eradicating marijuana being grown by unlicensed and unpermitted farmers, while ignoring the graft – in the form of bribes and kickbacks – being provided by Postmus and Mountain States Consulting Group along with others to elected officials in the county who were granting commercial marijuana and cannabis-related operating permits to those who were paying them off. It was noted that in Adelanto, where the most intensive marijuana-involved graft was taking place, the sheriff's department was the contract provider of law enforcement services.

Looming into sudden focus was the manner in which McMahon in August 2018 had freed Postmus from custody 22 months prior to his then-scheduled release date, after the disgraced former supervisor/assessor had served fewer than nine of the 36 months of his sentence, and more than eight months prior to the half-way point in his sentence, which under normal circumstances would have been the earliest Postmus could have been released. The circumstances led to a widespread assumption that McMahon himself was in on the graft.

McMahon was angered, but before taking any precipitate action,

he had investigators with the sheriff's department's intelligence division and those attached to the department's command echelon look into the situation. In short order those investigators determined:

* While Postmus was awaiting sentencing from 2013 until 2018, he was indeed taking in money originating with individuals or companies with an interest in the outcome of governmental decisions, laundering it through Mountain States Consulting Group and then funneling that money to elected decision-makers in county and local government;

* That Postmus had wangled early release from incarceration by being on his best behavior while in a prison and jail setting and representing to those assigned to evaluate him for parole that he had undergone a spiritual transformation and religious conversion;

* A standard element within Postmus's political approach when he held office was to mimic the position of law enforcement holding that marijuana use is antithetical to an orderly society and that the liberalization of marijuana laws was plain wrong, and that he advocated fully recriminalizing marijuana use and possession to felony status, while maintaining that in no way should the County of San Bernardino or any of its cities allow medical marijuana to be sold;

* That while he was supervisor and assessor, he frequently engaged himself in the so-called party and play subculture, utilizing an online service by which he would schedule sexual hookups with other homosexual men that included the use of drugs – extending to methamphetamine, cocaine, ecstasy and marijuana – and the arrangements for those encounters included specifying which of the participants was to host the get-together and supply the drugs to be used;

* That immediately upon his release in 2018, Postmus reinstated Mountain States Con-

sulting Group's money and political fund laundering activity involving elected officials and candidates;

* That Postmus, while militating on behalf of actual or prospective cannabis industry figures or individuals with applications for marijuana or cannabis-related commercial licenses, was engaged in both direct and indirect efforts to convince officials such as Assemblyman Smith or McMahon and his officers that efforts to eradicate illicitly cultivated marijuana were necessary;

* That Postmus's business associate DeFazio had established a marijuana cultivation operation in Needles;

* That Postmus had already begun filtering money originating with those elements of the cannabis industry seeking commercial marijuana or cannabis-related permits and licenses to Supervisors Curt Hagman, Paul Cook and Dawn Rowe.

From the time he had been sworn in as a deputy with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department in 1985, McMahon had been an upholder of the law and a crusader against marijuana. In his time as a law enforcement officer, he and his colleagues with the sheriff's department had made tens of thousands of marijuana-related arrests, with tens of thousands of those offenders briefly seeing the inside of a jail cell as part of society's effort to convince them to end their dalliance with marijuana. There were thousands of others who were arrested on marijuana related offenses in San Bernardino County during those three decades who were incarcerated or imprisoned for longer periods of time. John McMahon stood by that record.

As it dawned on McMahon what Postmus had pulled off so far and what the politician-turned-political boss is yet purposed to achieve, he saw his life and career flash in front of him, the prospect that he would forever go down in San

Continued on Page 12

Fontana City Manager Denny's Abrupt Departure As Attorney General's Suit Over Insufficient Environmental Review Of Warehouse Proceeds Is The Latest Sign Of Mayor Warren's Entanglement In Pay-To-Play Arrangements *from page 6*

In July of this year, California Attorney General Rob Bonta sued the City of Fontana over the April 20, 2021 Fontana Planning Commission approval of, and the June 22, 2021 Fontana City Council denial of an appeal against, Duke Realty's proposal to build a 205,949-square foot warehouse on an 8.61-acre seven-parcel piece of ground at the southwest corner of Slover Avenue and Oleander Avenue.

Bonta took issue with the project, which is to feature 22 truck docks, 40 truck parking spaces, and 95 standard parking spaces, being immediately adjacent to a public high school. The city allowed the planning commission to utilize one of the least exacting forms of environmental certification for the project, a mitigated negative declaration.

In the lawsuit, Bonta argued that the city's limited environmental review of the project and its failure to appropriately analyze, disclose, and mitigate the project's environmental impacts violates the California Environmental Quality Act.

"Under the California Environmental Quality Act, the City of Fontana is required to implement all feasible mitigation measures to reduce harmful air pollution and other significant environmental impacts of the Slover and Oleander Warehouse project," Bonta said.

While the civil action by the California Attorney General's Office at this point merely stands as a procedural challenge to the project's approval, Denny, already convicted once for having gone along with the criminal activity of a political

personage above him in the governmental chain of command, cannot be confident that the state's top prosecutor will not assign investigators who routinely ferret out evidence relating to criminal activity to look much more closely at the corners he and the city cut to assist Warren in accomplishing a highly questionable favor for one of her campaign donors. Indeed, questions have already been raised about monetary inducements provided to Warren in the form of political contributions and through other means, and how explicit the mayor and her donors were in arranging what might be demonstrated to a jury as quid pro quos. Denny, who is acutely conscious of the suspension of standards that took place in approving the Duke Realty Warehouse Project and others similar to it, does not want to face scrutiny on his decision-making process and the degree to which he was aware of untoward action by Warren, which he did not properly report or otherwise subject

to proper protocol in his role as city manager.

The city's version of the reason for Denny's exit does not differ much from the initial false narrative put out with regard to Hunt's departure.

Warren, as she said of Hunt, has indicated that it is Denny's desire to leave.

"Mark arrived in Fontana in the midst of the COVID-19 shutdown and has shown extraordinary poise and leadership in guiding our City Hall team through some very difficult months," Warren is quoted as saying in a press release issued on September 8. "We've been blessed to have had the opportunity to work with such a dedicated professional and look forward to staying in contact with him as (he) takes this next step in his career journey." According to Warren, Denny requested that he be permitted to leave so that he can take a position in "the private sector nearer his home and family in Orange County."

The city gave no indication of whether or not a

severance has been conferred upon Denny.

Deputy City Manager Phil Burum was elevated to acting city manager.

Burum, whose prior experience and line of expertise falls exclusively within the realm of the building industry, is even more unabashedly pro-development than Denny. For that reason, he may be for Warren a better fit as the city's senior staff member.

In 2018, Burum was president of the Southern California chapter of the Building Industry Association. From September of 2000 until December of 2018, he was an executive vice president of Rancho Cucamonga-based Diversified Pacific, a homebuilder. From January of 2001 until December of 2019, he was a minority participant and vice president in Colonies Crossroads, Inc., a commercial developer. From early 2018 until February 2021, when he left to become Fontana's deputy city manager, Burum was a vice president with homebuilder DR Horton in its Southern Califor-

nia/Inland Empire office.

As deputy city manager in Fontana, which has been his only professional position in the public sector, Burum has been assigned virtually exclusively to issues relating to development. Burum heads the city's development services division, which encompasses the community development, engineering and public works departments.

Though the city has already begun a search for Denny's replacement, the city has the option of elevating Burum to the actual city manager's post, which would allow him to continue to oversee development issues in the city, and hiring a deputy city manager who might be assigned to administrative tasks and overseeing other city departments. Given Warren's reach and political control of three of the city's current council members – John Roberts, Pete Garcia and Phil Cothran, Jr. – she can essentially dictate how City Hall's hierarchy is to be structured.

-Mark Gutglueck

He Yet Has Supporters Who Want Him To Remain In Office, Foster Maintains, But With His Welcome Wearing Thin Among Others, He Is Leaving Redlands *from page 5*

as they are.

On July 20, when the city council considered a project that called for bulldozing more than six acres of 130-year-old orange trees on an 8.8 historic grove estate so 28 homes can be constructed on the land, Foster made a defense of himself and his philosophy, explaining to the city's preservationists why they were not making any headway with him.

"I have a sensitivity that is not being recognized for the passion you have," he told those who were asking the city council to reject the 28-house project. "But I have to weigh that against my belief in private property rights. That is going to weigh heavily on my mind as I look at [the project proposal]."

Furthermore, Foster

said, he felt those opposing development were engaging in illegitimate stall tactics. "[U]sually what happens is an attorney representing one or more people ...like to wait to submit their comments and drop it on us at a planning commission meeting or city council meeting when we are in the process of making the decision, thereby finding a way to delay the project," Foster said, and then realizing that he was implying that all projects that come before the city are automatically approved, added "or delaying a decision."

There are things more important than historic preservation, Foster indicated, and one of those things is economic development. Mature and responsible people understand the importance

of not interrupting the march of progress, which is embodied in development, Foster said.

"I would just tell you, we [the city council as opposed to the public] have to look at the big picture. We have to look at everything. We cannot just be driven by emotion, even if that's what we have a passion for, which is preserving things. We have to recognize everyone's rights in this situation."

Foster's constant refrain that property rights are paramount has led a contingent of Redlands residents to the conclusion that he is being unduly and improperly influenced by the development industry.

Even as complaints about alleged political corruption involving Foster have gone to the public integrity unit of the district attorney's office and others were moving to preparing further letters of complaint, on Tuesday evening Foster dropped a bombshell, announcing he was get-

ting out of Dodge. He will land well beyond the reach of the district attorney's office, not only moving out of Redlands and San Bernardino County, but out of the state.

Foster draped his announcement in as much nonchalance as he could. He made no reference to the growing disenchantment with him on the part of certain elements of the community, instead referencing the support of others who want him to continue in office.

"I have been for some time," Foster said, "getting pressure from the community to declare my candidacy for the next election. After due diligence and thought with my family, I had planned on letting the community know sometime between Thanksgiving and Christmas that I did not intend to seek reelection in the 2022 election. However, the one thing we can count on in life is change and not much else, but

we can count on change. Unique circumstances very often occur in life. That has happened to my wife and I. An opportunity has presented itself for us to relocate to the Pacific Northwest Therefore I, tonight – this afternoon – I tendered my notice to the city clerk, city manager and city attorney that I'll be retiring from the city council, effective January 3rd, 2022. I'll be leaving Redlands in January, relocating to our new home on Camino Island in Washington State. This is in many ways, and I'm trying to hold it together here, a very emotional and difficult decision. As I have learned too well personally in my life, things happen and change very very rapidly and unexpectedly, and you need to take advantage of opportunities when they arise. I will certainly have opportunities over the next four months to reflect on my 11 years on the city council and say the many thank yous I have

to the staff particularly as we move forward. It's bittersweet in many respects, but I wanted to make sure that every one of the mayor and my colleagues had time to work with the city manager to make appropriate arrangements for my transition in a timely fashion so that the work of the council and the community would continue in a very smooth fashion as I left, and also, frankly, because my house is going on the market next month and I didn't want anybody wondering what was going on without me telling everybody well in advance. So, [there will be] more opportunities in the future to talk to all of you and to express my feelings about my time here. In the meantime, I plan on continuing my service to the residents of Redlands as I have for the past 11 years until the day that I leave this dais for the last time on the second meeting of December."

-Mark Gutglueck

Company: 'Our Property Rights Entitle Us To Develop' Residents: 'Inventory Historic Resources First' *from page 5*

declaration was based, "was not sent to the state clearing house," McClendon said. "It was not properly distributed."

Advocates for Diversified Pacific maintain that the company is the owner of the property free and

clear, and that the company's property rights entitle it to proceed with the project on any terms it wants as long as it adheres to the city's zoning and building codes.

Diversified Pacific's architect, Peter Pitassi, emphasized that the company had made a diligent and sincere effort to plan for and to eventually create a residential subdivision that will enhance Redlands.

"We've gone to some significant effort to be

as sensitive as we can be to the conditions around our property," Pitassi asserted. "We think we have a project that will be very beneficial to the community and the neighborhood."

The lawyer for Diversified Pacific, Mark Ostoich, said the mitigated negative declaration prepared for the project was based on available and substantial evidence, and constituted an adequate environmental certification of the project. He

pointed out that Diversified Pacific had participated in the effort to preserve the two residences and the carriage house. The preservationists in Redlands should content themselves with what they are getting out of the project, Ostoich said.

"The cultural resources that are being lost [i.e., 90 percent of the the grove and the irrigation system and a wall around the grove] are less significant than the highly visible cultural resources

that are being retained [the two homes and the carriage house]," Ostoich said.

The city council was scheduled on Tuesday, September 7 to consider the proposal and vote on whether to make the mitigated negative declaration and allow Diversified Pacific to proceed with the project. In deference to input from City Manager Chares Duggan and City Attorney Dan McHugh, who expressed a concern that McClen-

don would initiate a lawsuit against the city if the project were approved before an inventory of the historical resources the estate entails were not first sent to the state clearinghouse or repository for such data, the city council deferred taking up the consideration of the project, and postponed further consideration of the matter until the inventory of historic resources is properly lodged with the state.

-Mark Gutglueck

No Gold Line Extension Funding Set For Ongoing Budgetary Cycle *from page 5*

onto another train at the Claremont Station which will run on the existing Metrolink track. Only the representatives from Ontario, Montclair and

Chino Hills dissented in that 8-to-3 vote.

San Bernardino County transportation officials declared their intention to return the \$41 million State of California Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program grant that had been freed up to allow the county to overcome the gap between the \$39 mil-

lion in available revenue from the half-cent sales tax collected throughout San Bernardino County for transportation improvements for completing the Gold Line extension from Claremont to Montclair and the earlier projected cost of the 1.2-mile extension.

While sentiment toward the Gold Line

among public officials on the east side of the San Bernardino County/Los Angeles County divide runs more negative than positive, the overriding commitment of Los Angeles County officials at both the municipal and county levels, as well as what appears to be a reliable determination to create a working

and well-used east-west rail system in Southern California within the executive and legislative branches in Sacramento augers that the Gold Line will likely be extended into San Bernardino County, first to Montclair, then to Ontario Airport, on to San Bernardino and ultimately to Redlands. The question

remaining is what the timetable for that construction will be. There is potential the line will, perhaps in the latter half of the 21st Century, reach Palm Springs in Riverside County.

The most enthusiastic proponent of the Gold Line in San Bernardino County presently is Ontario Mayor Paul Leon.

Postmus's Pushing To Have County Officials Accept The Marijuanification Of The County To Profit Himself & His Associates Had A Part In Convincing McMahon To Resign As Sheriff *from page 10*

Bernardino County history as another corrupt law enforcement officer who had enabled the corrupt politicians within his milieu. He was particularly dismayed with Cook, a Marine colonel who had run for and was elected to the town council and mayoralty of Yucca Valley, the California Assembly, U.S. Congress and, most recently, county supervisor. Cook was, as he was, a Republican, who had professed, and seemed to embody, conservative, pro-military and pro-law enforcement values. McMahon had supported Cook in his political campaigns and Cook had endorsed him. Similarly, McMahon had taken for granted that Rowe, who had once been employed on Cook's congressional staff, and Hagman, who had been an assemblyman and the chairman of the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee, shared his goals of preventing the liberalism that was overrunning the rest of

California and bringing with it an avalanche of marijuana that would bury San Bernardino County. Learning that Postmus was pouring marijuana industry money into Cook's, Rowe's and Hagman's coffers and pockets, and that the three were on board for allowing the cartel that Postmus represents and DeFazio heads to muscle in on the county's marijuana trade overwhelmed McMahon. This was compounded by his realization that he himself had been manipulated by Postmus into using his department to assist in entrenching the Postmus/DeFazio/Brosowski cartel, and that the reputation he had built over a 35-year law enforcement career crowned by eight-and-a-half-years as sheriff was about to be utterly besmirched. On June 9, it first crossed his mind that the only way out was to resign. Nine days later, on June 18, McMahon did just that, announcing he would leave as sheriff on July 16.

In the weeks and months prior to McMahon's announcement of his resignation, the *Sentinel* sought to engage with the sheriff on his personal knowledge and his department's institutional knowledge of Postmus's political money laundering activity vis-à-vis Mountain States Consulting Group. In making those inquiries, the *Sentinel* was explicit in referencing Postmus's/Mountain States Consulting Group's provision of money to a host of the county's politicians, including Cook, Rowe and Hagman. The *Sentinel* also inquired as to whether the sheriff recognized that Operation Hammer was assisting Postmus, either deliberately or inadvertently, in his effort to manipulate the county and several of its cities into granting the cartel headed by DeFazio which Postmus and Mountain States Consulting Group represents a virtual monopoly or near-exclusive franchise over commercial marijuana activity in their jurisdictions.

Over an extended period earlier this year, McMahon did not respond to the *Sentinel's* inquiries. On June 10, then-

Sergeant/nov Lieutenant Mauricio Hurtado told the *Sentinel* the sheriff would respond the following week. On June 18, McMahon announced his resignation as sheriff. More recently, the *Sentinel* renewed its efforts to have McMahon go on the record with regard to Postmus's seeming success in cutting out a niche in San Bernardino County for the cartel he and DeFazio have created as well as his decision to grant Postmus an early release from custody in 2018; the investigation the sheriff's department had undertaken into, and the information obtained regarding, Mountain States Consulting Group; his feelings about Postmus's and Mountain States Consulting Group's efforts to influence politicians with the application of campaign contributions and bribes/kickbacks; along with his views on the societal change ongoing in which marijuana is transitioning from its once banned status into a legally available and permitted intoxicative substance.

McMahon did respond to those inquiries.

An individual close to McMahon's told the *Sentinel* that the deci-

sion to have the sheriff's department engage in an intensified program to eradicate the proliferating illicit marijuana cultivation operations in the county's desert areas had nothing at all to do with any lobbying effort by Postmus or Mountain States Consulting Group, and that it was an organic and earnest effort to bring under control a problem that has existed since shortly after the passage of Proposition 64, and which has been steadily worsening.

The sheriff's position is an independently elected one, which gave McMahon autonomy and the ability to use his own judgment in directing the sheriff's department, he said. That the initiation of Operation Hammer began around the time that Postmus began slipping money to Cook, Rowe and Hagman was "a complete coincidence" that had "absolutely no meaning" and "no effect" on the sheriff's department, he said.

McMahon was "disappointed" to learn about Cook accepting money from Postmus, he said.

Furthermore, he insisted, any suggestion that McMahon was taking money from Postmus

or could be influenced by money was completely off the mark. "You cannot print anything like that," he said. "That is not only untrue, you would be seriously misleading your readers to even suggest anything like that. You would damage your newspaper's credibility with anyone who knows John or anything about him. John was a good sheriff. He is honest. He was never a politician. He had some friends who were, but he was never a politician himself."

Assailing McMahon for Postmus's early release was unfair, he said. "John's a Christian," he said. "He believes in giving people a chance. That's all that was."

McMahon was not overly familiar with Postmus and what his criminal history consisted of, nor was he aware of Postmus' political activity in the years after he left office. It was less than two months before McMahon left as sheriff that he learned about Postmus's activities. "He was completely, 100 percent blindsided by that," he said. "He was sickened by it. He had no idea. It has a lot to do with why he's not sheriff anymore."