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Judge Rules Yucaipa City Clerk's Suit Vs. Recall Blocked Resident Political Participation

Yucaipa City Clerk Ana Sauseda last year initiated a lawsuit that was intended to prevent at least 197 of the city's residents from engaging in the public political participation process, Judge Michael Sachs ruled on Wednesday.

That effort consisted of an effort, officially initiated in May with paperwork filed with Sauseda's office signaling that the residents intended to circulate petitions

to recall Mayor Justin Beaver and councilmen Bobby Duncan and Matt Garner after they abruptly moved to terminate longtime City Manager Ray Casey and City Attorney David Snow in January.

Largely as a result of Sauseda's lawsuit, the recall proponents ceased their effort and did not reach the goal of collecting the 1,623 signatures needed to qualify for a recall question against

Beaver, the 1,478 signatures needed to qualify for a recall question against Duncan and the 1,826 signatures needed to qualify for a recall question against Garner, which had to be returned to Sauseda's office by August 16 to force the holding of a special election in which those questions would appear on the ballot.

Though Sauseda's suit has now been dismissed, leaving her and the city

responsible for covering the recall proponents' legal costs in fighting the suit, the stratagem, which was not devised by Sauseda but rather City Manager Chris Mann and two lawyers for the Los Angeles-based Sutton Law Firm, Bradley W. Hertz and Eli B. Love, succeeded in protecting Beaver, Duncan and Garner from being subjected to a process that potentially would have removed them from

office.

The recall proponents have reinitiated a recall effort against Duncan and Garner, amid widespread speculation that Beaver will not seek reelection later this year. Based upon Judge Sach's ruling relating to the lawsuit Sauseda filed last year, it does not appear that she will again attempt to use her authority as city clerk and the city's election official, which the recall **See P 4**

Measure W: The Cultural Struggle To Keep Public Services Traditionally Provided By Government In-House

The contesting of Measure W stands as what may prove a crucial battle over the cultural retrenchment in California and San Bernardino County as pertains to governmental service provision and financial responsibility.

There was a time when local governments in California and indeed throughout the United States, the various levels of government existed for the implementation of mutually agreed-upon laws, rules and regulations and the provision of in-common beneficial public services, including but not limited to all order of constructing and maintaining infrastructure such as streets, bridges, sidewalks, storm drains, sewers and water purification plants, cemeteries, hospitals, schools and parks and the establishment, outfitting manning and operation of police and fire departments. For generations, government workers were considered and were seen by themselves and the citizenry as public servants, ones who were, to be sure, remunerated for their work, but not overgenerously, and it was generally accepted that employees in the public sector were no more highly valued and in some degree less so than their counterparts in the private sector.

The two minor benefits that came with working for the government were that the employment was steady and **See P 7**

Victims IDed And Suspects Arrested & Charged In Shadow Mountain Killings

In rapid fashion early this week came revelations about the identities of the victims and the perpetrators of the violent murders of six men in a remote area of the Mojave Desert north of Adelanto, together with indications that sheriff's investigators have solved the primary mystery surrounding the crime.

For at least several hours after the shootings

took place on January 23, sheriff's department investigators were unable to identify five of the six men who were gunned down by five of their criminal accomplices in the early hours of that evening. For five days thereafter, the department withheld the identities of the victims, as they pursued a multiplicity of leads in determining who the killers

were.

The department has now identified Baldemar Mondragon-Albarran, 34, of Adelanto; and two brothers, Franklin Noel Bonilla, 22, and Kevin Dariel Bonilla, 25, of Hesperia as three of the victims. The identity of a fourth, a 45-year-old man, has been ascertained, but his name is being withheld pending notification of his next of

kin. Two others, whose remains are in the custody of the coroner's office, have not been identified.

According to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, those six were involved in the unlicensed production of marijuana in one or more locations throughout the High Desert subregion of the Mojave Desert in both San Bernardino and Los

Angeles Counties and had a deadly encounter with Toniel Baez-Duarte, 35, and his brother Mateo Baez-Duarte, 24; Jose Nicolas Hernandez-Sarabia, 33, and his brother, Jose Gregorio Hernandez-Sarabia, 36; and Jose Manuel Burgos Parra, 26 some time at or after sundown on January 23.

Like the victims, their five assailants **See P 2**

Chino Hills Council Agrees To Public Discussion Of Term Limits

Against what appears to be the wishes of at least some members of the city council, Chino Hills Mayor Cynthia Moran has agreed to schedule a discussion regarding term limits for politicians in San Bernardino County's southwesternmost municipality.

Whether that discussion will translate into

the council's willingness to use its authority to put a measure on the November ballot to allow the city's voters to decide whether members of the city council, who also rotate into the mayor's position, should be limited to one, two or three terms is by no means certain.

Nevertheless, a group of the city resi- **See P 3**

Fontana City Council, In Departure From Its Long Established Policy, Grants Marijuana Shop A Permit

In action that firmed up a radical departure from a policy steadfastly adhered to over the last quarter of a century, the Fontana City Council voted on January 23 to grant a permit to a businesses trafficking in marijuana and other cannabis products.

On occasions too numerous to recount, both past and the cur-

rent Fontana City Councils refused to entertain or abruptly denied efforts by entrepreneurs to obtain licensing to operate medical marijuana dispensaries in the 43.07-square mile city in the years after Propositions 215, the Compassionate Use of Marijuana Act of 1996, was passed or permits to sell marijuana or marijuana-

based substances to be used for intoxicative effect following the 2016 passage of Proposition 64, the Adult Use of Marijuana Act. At several points, members of the city council vowed that Fontana would remain a commercial Marijuana free zone, no matter what liberalizations of the law there were or changes in societal norms. **See P 3**

Two Men Who Disappeared Into The Wilderness In Disparate Events Found Dead

It has now been confirmed that a young man and a middle-aged man who disappeared into San Bernardino County's wilderness last year and this year perished in unrelated circumstances of misadventure.

Trammell Evans, a 26-year-old from Florida, who went into the Black Rock area of Joshua Tree National Park April 30, 2023 for an ill-

advised solo trek to clear his mind and body and exorcise some personal demons, did not reach, the point where he had arranged to be picked up on May 5.

An effort to find him, including trying to spot him from the air using helicopters, airplanes, and drones, while on the ground bloodhounds, volunteers and members of the sheriff's depart-

ment's search and rescue team ensued, but was unsuccessful.

Evans was an experienced hiker with some familiarity with Joshua Tree National Park. Hope that he might be later arrive at the designated spot faded, with some of those closest to him suspecting the worst and yet others believing he had used the hike in the vast 1,234 square

mile National Monument as a type of ruse to disappear and take on a new identity to evade certain realities of his own life that had become to complicated and self-suffocating.

On January 25, human remains were found near Covington Flats, not too far from Black Rock.

On January 14, 55-year-old Christian

Alan Petrie, was last seen near his home in Crestline in the San Bernardino Mountains. His family noted his absence later that day, but had not involved authorities until the sheriff's department was called on January 20.

On January 23, during a search and rescue effort, sheriff's personnel came across Petrie's lifeless body in **See P 3**