

Friday, January 26, 2024 A Fortunado Publication in conjunction with Countywide News Service 10808 Foothill Blvd. Suite 160-446 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 (951) 567-1936

## Six Dead In Desert Shooting Slaughter Three Miles From Shadow Mountain Mine

In the largest mass killing in the county since the December 2015 massacre in San Bernardino, at least six people were gunned down in a remote area of the Mojave Desert about three miles east of the Shadow Mountain Ghost Town.

A San Bernardino County sheriff's deputy found five of the six dead in and around two vehicles near the intersection of Shadow Mountain

Road and Lessing Avenue at 8:35 p.m. on the evening of January 23, 2024 after the sheriff's dispatch center received a call at 8:16 p.m. requesting a welfare check from a location about a half mile from that location. The deputy was assisted in finding the vehicles, a blue Chevrolet Blazer SUV with Oregon plates and a silver Dodge Caravan van 9HUV954 with a blue 2024 expiration tag one hour and 17 min-

utes after sundown with assistance from a California Highway Patrol helicopter. The body of one of the five decedents was inside the Blazer. Another body was near the Caravan.

In the sheriff's department's initial survey of the scene, five victims, all of whom had been felled by gunfire, were found. The following morning, the body of another victim, one who had apparently been able

to ambulate a yet-un-disclosed short distance from the spot of the killings, was discovered.

According to available information, the shootings took place proximate to the El Mirage off-road trail 4652 marker not far from the Shadow Mountain Road/Lessing Avenue intersection. Shadow Mountain Road and Lessing Avenue are dirt roads. That intersection is roughly three miles east

of the Shadow Mountain ghost town, where a no-longer active mining operation once flourished, and about three-and-a-half miles west of Highway 395, 10 miles northeast of the center of El Mirage, 12 miles west of Helendale, 15 miles west of Silver Lakes, 18 miles north-northwest of Adelanto and 26 miles northwest of Victorville and 50 miles north of San Bernardino.

A fire de- See P 5

## Rialto Brings In Journeyman City Manager Carmany On 5-Year Contract To Serve As Top Administrator



David Carmany

A honeymoon of unknown duration has begun between David Carmany and the Rialto Mayor and City Council as Carmany is returning to a role in governance with a municipality in San Bernardino County where his public management career began almost four decades ago.

Rialto has burned through a half-dozen of generally experienced and established city managers in the last decade. Carmany fits the bill in terms of experience in comparison to his many predecessors.

In January 2011, Henry Garcia, who had been steadily in place as Rialto city manager for a decade, left abruptly to become city manager in Moreno Valley. Rialto Police Chief Mark Kling was tapped to fill in for Garcia. Thereafter, the city council settled on elevating Mike Story, a 27-year city employee who at that time was Rialto's director of development services, to city manager. Story remained until the end of 2017, whereupon he was replaced by a succession of the city's department heads who served in the interim top city managerial role. In June See P 3

## Seven Enamorados Remain, For The Time Being, Locked Up As Their Trial Approaches

By Mark Gutglueck

Seven of the eight Enamorados who were arrested in predawn raids by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department on December 14 remain in custody, on a trajectory for a trial that is now unlikely to begin prior to the end of April. They remain jailed following today's bail hearing, during which Judge

John Wilkerson heard the appeals from the attorneys representing Edin Enamorado, 36; Wendy Luján, 40; David Chávez, 27; Fernando López, 44; Vanessa Carrasco, 40; Stephanie Amésquita, 33; and Edwin Peña, 26, that they should be allowed their freedom while they await and undergo trial on charges that they

overstepped the bounds of both decency and the law in their advocating that the rights of Mexicans and other Latinos, documented and undocumented, present in the United States struggling to stay afloat economically within the context of what they consider to be a biased and racist political, legal and social system dominated

by the white establishment should be granted bail or a recognizance release before they go to trial. Deputy District Attorney John Richardson presented countervailing arguments that the seven should remain locked up to prevent them from visiting their particular brand of violence on further victims or dissuading the witnesses who

will testify against them.

Ultimately, Judge Wilkerson took what the attorneys said under advisement, but he made no ruling to countermand the previous decisions by Judge Shannon Faherty, Judge Melissa Rodriguez and Judge Zahara Arredondo that the seven should remain jailed as their trial, which was previ-See P 2

## California Department Of Food & Agriculture Asking Redlands Residents To Hold Still For Fruit Removal

The California Department of Food and Agriculture as early as today will begin large-scale fruit removal in Redlands and the immediately surrounding area.

State officials are appealing to Redlands residence to cooperate with the agricultural department program, which in this case is aimed at eradicating what is cur-

rently the most threatening species of fruit predators, in this case the oriental fruit fly.

The oriental fruit fly, previously known by the scientific name, *Dacus dorsalis* and now referred to as *Bactrocera dorsalis*, is a species of tephritid fruit fly that was endemic to Southeast Asia. It is a major pest species, with a broad

host range of cultivated and wild fruits. Having left its native Asia, it is a highly invasive pest that now has a presence in at least 65 countries. It is believed to have invaded Hawaii in 1945 as a contaminant of military material returning from the western Pacific war zone, in particular Taiwan and the Mariana Islands. Fruit im- See P 3

## San Bernardino Receives \$35M State Grant To House Homeless

The City of San Bernardino has been awarded a nearly \$35 million grant from the California Department of Housing and Community Development to provide interim housing for chronically homeless men in the city.

The grant is being provided under the department's Project Homekey, which is an

initiative aimed at enabling the state's regional and local jurisdictions in developing a broad range of housing types, including converting hotels, motels, hostels, single-family homes and multifamily apartments, adult residential facilities, manufactured housing and commercial property/existing buildings into per- See P 3

## It Is Democrat Vs. Democrat Vs. Democrat In This Year's 50th Assembly District Race

Three Democrats are vying in this year's race for Assembly District 50, the post currently held by Eloise Gómez Reyes, who is vying this year for the California Senate. District 50 stretches from Rancho Cucamonga on the west, through Fontana, Declezville, Bloomington, Colton, Loma Linda and Redlands.

In the 50<sup>th</sup> Assembly

District, registered Democrats outnumber registered Republicans by better than a 9-to-5 ratio.

Running for the post are Robert Garcia of Rancho Cucamonga, a member of the Etiwanda School District Board; DeJonaé Shaw, a nurse; and Adam Perez, a member of the Fontana Unified School District Board of Trustees.

Garcia said "Inland

Empire residents are working harder than ever to make ends meet, while corporations make record profits and special interests get their way with some politicians. As a son of immigrants, I defied odds. As a classroom teacher, school administrator, and Etiwanda School Boardmember, I have strengthened education, kept students safe and

focused on mental health for middle schoolers. I'm running for State Assembly to keep neighborhoods safe, fully fund our local schools so students have the tools they need to succeed, get costs under control, make housing more affordable, and work on innovative solutions to tackle homelessness." He said he will "Stand up to corporate pollut-

ers to improve our air quality and keep our water clean." Garcia is endorsed by the California Democratic Party, California Teachers Association and Gómez Reyes. Shaw said, "As a leader in my health care union, and I fought for fair contracts that improve wages and patient care in San Bernardino County. I believe in empowering peo- See P 7

## Within The Last Year, The Enamorados Redirected Much Of Their Brand Of Confrontative Activism In San Bernardino County from front page

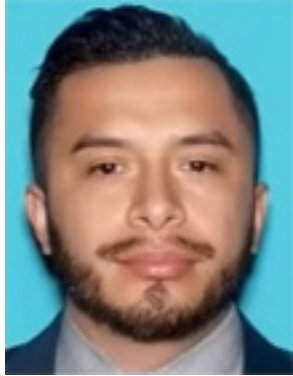
ously set for March but is now on a trajectory to begin on the last day of April, approaches.

The Enamorados consist of Edin Enamorado and his followers. Eight of them find themselves facing trial for putting into practice the tactics Enamorado has formulated to effectuate what he insists is social justice in the face of a power imbalance that is victimizing on a daily basis the downtrodden in Southern California, in particular those unskilled immigrants who can fit into the region's harsh social and economic reality in no other way than by seeking to eke out a living as sidewalk or street vendors.

It is the deeply held belief of Edin Enamorado and his eponymous group of followers that America, i.e., North America, was and therefore still is the land of the indigenous people of the Americas and that European colonizers usurped the land and resources that rightly belong to those indigenous tribes. Since the rich white descendants of those Europeans continue to engage in the domination of Latinos or La Raza through their capitalistic system and hoard the wealth and goods they are accumulating by continuing to exploit those who are less fortunate and not well-fixed financially, according to Enamorado, he and those with whom he networks and is in league are morally justified in taking back what was taken from them and protecting, by whatever means necessary, the Latino and immigrant population that is being assailed formally or informally, officially or unofficially by agents of the white-controlled government such as the police or municipal code enforcement

officers or white bigoted bullies who insult, assault or interfere in any way with street vendors or sidewalk vendors.

For several years, the Enamorados had undertaken to represent and protect the street and sidewalk vendors by providing them with pepper spray, chemical mace or other personal defense weaponry and giving them their cell phone numbers so they could be reached instantaneously to respond singly or en masse to serve as a buffer between any police officers, code enforcement officers or other government officials seeking to enforce sidewalk or street vending regulations against them or ward off and "punish" any local business owners or citizens who ha-



**Edin Enamorado**

rass, interfere with, assault or otherwise seek to prevent the vendors from plying their trade. In doing this, Edin Enamorado maintains he and the group he leads are entirely justified in responding in kind by fighting fire with fire.

The form of street activism and politicking Edin Enamorado and by extension the other Enamorados engage in as a key element of their crusade for social justice consists of equal parts of a presumption of moral superiority, making accusations of racism, profanity, rapid fire questions and assertions without giving their interlocutors an opportunity to respond, immediately dismissing any response those targets manage to get in edgewise, browbeating, insults and threats. In such circumstances, the intent is not to achieve an exchange of information or views but rather to relentlessly intimidate, provoke and ultimately convince those they

are confronting to back down. Intrinsic to the tactics Edin Enamorado devised for himself and his acolytes is to act in concert with a physically intimidating support network, the use of surprise, verbal domination and videography to capture indelible moving sound images of the individual being confronted, which in many, though not all, cases will result in an untoward or intemperate remark or reaction. Routinely, videos of these confrontations were uploaded onto social media platforms Edin Enamorado controls. Some of those depict an individual being confronted or in other cases bystanders to the protests the Enamorados engaged in growing impatient at being blocked or hemmed in or harangued and then reacting, whereupon the subject is ganged up upon and physically assaulted by those present.

While Enamorado and his associates were active in many places throughout Southern California over the last several years, they were based in Los Angeles County, where the lion's share of their operations took place.

By earlier this year, Edin Enamorado and Luján, who is described variously as Enamorado's girlfriend, fiancé, wife or partner, had changed their previous Los Angeles County residence to Upland. Paralleling the change in their physical location was a partial refocusing of their activism eastward, particularly into San Bernardino County. On their agenda were protests aimed at an Upland Police Department sergeant and those they perceived as his defenders, a San Bernardino County sheriff's deputy, city officials in Upland, San Bernardino and Fontana, a woman living in Apple Valley and the residents of neighborhoods in Upland and Rancho Cucamonga they deemed as "racist."

The Enamorados conducted protests seeking to prevent county and municipal officials from interfering with street

vendors in San Bernardino. A series of protests throughout the year were aimed at inducing the Upland Police Department to fire a sergeant on its force, who in 2013 had been involved in the nonfatal shooting of a Hispanic 18-year-old, after the sergeant's daughter, a student at San Diego State University, in February 2023 was captured on a video engaging in what Enamorado said was harassment of a street vendor outside San Diego State University's Viejas Arena. The Enamorados thereafter targeted the Rancho Cucamonga home of the Upland police sergeant and those Upland residents who had made public statements in favor of or defense of the sergeant, as well as the 92-year-old father of one of those Upland residents, who had no connection to the events in question but found himself surrounded by jeering Enamorados, who pursued him to the Upland home of another of his sons when he sought to leave. Those protests involved characterizations of those living in the Rancho Cucamonga and Upland neighborhoods as "racists." In September, some 30 to 40 Enamorados sojourned to Victorville to stage a demonstration in the vicinity of the sheriff's station there to express outrage over a San Bernardino County sheriff's deputy who had manhandled a 16-year-old student at Victor Valley High School while members of the department were trying to break up a fight between her and another student after a Friday night football game. In October and again in November, the Enamorados inundated Fontana City Hall in an effort to prevent the city council there from passing an ordinance regulating sidewalk/street vending. Those protests included threats of physical violence against residents and businesspeople supporting the ordinance, along with disruptions that resulted in the exclusion of the general public from the meetings. In

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Mark Gutglueck, Publisher

**Call (951) 567-1936**

**to learn of locations where the Sentinel is available or to provide news tips**

10808 Foothill Blvd., Suite 160-446

Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

SBCSentinel@yahoo.com

Legal Notice Department 951 567 1936

Message Line 951-567 1936

the immediate aftermath of the October meeting, Edin Enamorado led a group of Enamorados to an impromptu late-night demonstration outside the home of the Fontana mayor, an incident which was punctuated by his arrest and that of his "bodyguard." In December, Edin Enamorado and a handful of his compadres swarmed an Apple Valley residential area to picket the home of an Apple Valley woman they accused of making "racist" comments to a woman speaking Spanish to her child while on a trip to Disneyland.

While he had been based out of Los Angeles County, Edin Enamorado in the early 2020s had presumed upon the laissez-faire attitude of Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascón, who had tolerated the aggressive advocacy for the immigrant community Enamorado and his followers had engaged in, even when it crossed the line into physicality and assaultive behavior. San Bernardino County proved far less tolerant, however.

The boldness with which the Enamorados acted was remarkable, insofar as many of them had criminal records, as was the case with Edin Enamorado, a convicted felon. The extent of his criminal record is not now publicly available, as he successfully petitioned to have his record sealed, although it is known that one of his convictions was for grand theft. Because of his status as a felon, Enamorado was prohibited

from possessing a chemical agent such as pepper spray or a firearm, acts which could result in further felony convictions. Nevertheless, he was routinely in possession of both.

Authorities in San Bernardino County first took notice of the Enamorados presence in their midst when they launched protests in Upland and Rancho Cucamonga relating to the Upland police sergeant, including showing up en masse at Upland City council meetings and then engaging in demonstrations in residential neighborhoods. At one point, the Upland Police Department had amassed a squad of officers, who monitored, using magnifying video cameras and parabolic listening devices, the picketing of a residence in Upland not too distant from the home of San Bernardino District Attorney Jason Anderson and his family. Likewise, the Enamorados came to the attention of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department when they rallied on a residential street in Rancho Cucamonga near the home of the Upland police sergeant. The sheriff's department provides contract law enforcement service to the City of Rancho Cucamonga, serving as that community's police department.

The threats of physical violence made toward attendees at the council meetings in Fontana when the city council passed an ordinance regulating street

*Continued on Page 4*

## Oriental Fruit Fly The Latest Pest Bedeviling Local Agriculture *from front page*

ported to the mainland from Hawaii is generally fumigated to prevent the pest from coming here. But fruit brought by travelers, most likely from Hawaii but also from Southeast Asia and other Pacific islands has likely allowed the flies to get into California.

Residents in the Redlands-area are strongly urged to cooperate with the agricultural officials working on the project.

Agricultural authorities are asking residents and others in the target area to refrain from removing fruit from trees and are further demanding that they not move any produce from their

property.

Removal is expected to continue until late February. Residents in areas of concern will receive a notice 48 hours prior to fruit removal.

Some 2,000 residences are to be impacted. According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, "All host fruit for the Oriental fruit fly – citrus as well as a number of other fruits – will be removed from properties, with trees remaining in place. This approach will allow the California Department of Food and Agriculture and its partners at the United States Department of Agriculture and local agricultural commissioners' offices to break the lifecycle of the invasive fly, which lays eggs in fruit that develop into larvae, posing

a threat to both residential and commercial citrus as well as a total of more than 230 crops, including nuts, vegetables and berries."

The larvae referred to are otherwise known as maggots, which are white and will burrow through fruit.

The target area in the fruit removal program consists of the area north and south of I-10, with a northern boundary of East Highland Ave, a western boundary at the intersection of Garden and Elizabeth streets, an eastern boundary of Alta Vista Drive and a southern boundary of Silver Leaf Court. A map of the area may be viewed at: [https://www.cdffa.gov/plant/docs/Redlands\\_HalfMileFruit-Removal\\_map.pdf](https://www.cdffa.gov/plant/docs/Redlands_HalfMileFruit-Removal_map.pdf)

"If left unchecked,

the Oriental fruit fly could become permanently established and cause billions of dollars worth of losses annually, which would significantly impact California's food supply," according to the Department of Food and Agriculture.

After residents receive the two-day warning, work crews will begin to methodically work their way from one end of the target area to the other. Work crews are to consist of a combination of California Department of Food and Agriculture and U.S. Department of Agriculture employees, California Conservation Corps crews, and private contractors specializing in fruit removal.

Residents in the removal area are asked not to remove fruit from trees themselves and

they may not move produce from their property. If fruit falls from trees and must be disposed of, residents are urged to double-bag it and place it in a trash bin rather than green waste bins or other organic refuse designations. This approach significantly reduces the risk of spread of Oriental fruit flies, larvae or maggots. The California Department of Food and Agriculture hosted a public meeting in Redlands on January 24 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the San Bernardino County Museum at 2024 Orange Tree Lane in Redlands at which details of the fruit removal project were discussed.

Some fruit grows in the winter in California. Citrus trees blossom, normally, beginning in

February.

California and its fruit industry have been buffeted over the years by several pests, including Mediterranean, Mexican, Tau, melon, peach and guava fruit flies. The Mediterranean fruit fly was first detected in California in 1975 but Medflies, as they are sometimes referred to, did not become a major threat to the state's fruit crops until 1980. There have been intensive efforts to eradicate the Mediterranean fruit fly in the past, including the release of sterile male flies.

The black, silver and tan Mediterranean fruit fly, at about one-quarter inch in length, is smaller than the Oriental fruit fly, which is roughly one-third of an inch long, with a yellowish

*Continued on Page 7*

## State Giving SB \$35M For Homeless Project *from front page*

permanent or interim housing for the those who are without homes.

The \$35 million is the largest grant awarded during the current round of Homekey funding and is believed to be the largest competitive grant the

City of San Bernardino has ever received.

"This is a big win for San Bernardino. It allows us to continue making strides to address homelessness in the city and provide essential support to our homeless population," said San Bernardino City Manager Charles Montoya.

The city and Lutheran Social Services Southern

California made a joint application for the funding. The money, equivalent to \$34,944,702, will be used by San Bernardino to construct an interim housing facility for up to 140 individuals in partnership with site operator Lutheran Social Services of Southern California and developer Dignity Moves.

"San Bernardino is

helping the state address homelessness by delivering a unique Homekey project," said Governor Gavin Newsom. "Their Community Wellness Campus is a creative approach that will serve individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. The work and partnership behind this effort demonstrates what is possible when people

think outside of the box and refuse to accept the status quo."

The San Bernardino Community Wellness Campus will be located at the existing Lutheran Social Services campus on G Street. It will include 140 new modular housing units serving chronically homeless men. Residents can stay for up to 180 days

as they transition into permanent housing. The campus will include an on-site federally qualified health clinic, as well as provide case management, behavioral health treatment, job training & placement, rehabilitation services, and long term-housing assistance.

"I am thrilled that the City of San Bernardino *Continued on Page 5*

## Carmany Now Managing Rialto *from front page*

2019, Rod Foster, who had been the titular assistant city manager/de facto city manager in Hesperia and Upland under Robb Quincey in both of those municipalities and then the city manager in both Colton and Laguna, signed on as city manager. In 2020, it became public knowledge that an internal audit into \$200,000 in federal funds provided to Rialto that were directed to an organization led by Deborah Robertson's daughter Milele Robertson, the Bethune Center-National Council of Negro Women, which operated rent-free out of a city-owned building at 141 South Riverside Avenue in the city going back to 2011 was being conducted. At that point, Robert-

son faulted Foster for that exposé. Rather than hang onto his managerial post in an atmosphere in which the tension between the city's top staff member and political leader was at a fever pitch, Foster in October 2020 resigned. He was temporarily replaced by Police Chief Kling, while the city council carried out a city manager recruitment that involved 85 applicants. In June 2021, Marcus Fuller, the assistant city manager of Palm Springs who had been Rialto's public works director from 2012 to 2014, became city manager. Ultimately, however, that didn't work out, and Fuller departed in January 2023. He was replaced by Arron Brown, the director of information technology in Palm Springs who had likewise acceded to deputy city manager in that city and then accom-

panied Fuller to Rialto as to serve as deputy city manager.

Despite the way in which he had left Rialto in the lurch more than a dozen years previously, Garcia was brought back as an interim replacement in July 2023, supplanting Arron Brown as acting city manager. Because Garcia was at that point retired and participating in the California Public Employees Retirement System's pension program, he was eligible to work only 960 hours per fiscal year. His time having now expired, the city council settled on Carmany, another journeyman city administrator.

After obtaining his bachelor's degree in public affairs with a minor in public administration and a focus on urban and regional planning from USC, Carmany went to work as an assistant

to City Manager Seth Armstead in Grand Terrace. In 1981 he went to work in Alhambra as the community development director, and then promoted to assistant city manager. In 1987 he was hired as city manager in Agoura Hills, a relatively small city north of Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains. He remained there six years, and in 1983, was hired by recently incorporated Malibu to serve as city manager there. In 1997, he left Malibu to become the city manager of Pacifica in San Mateo County. In 2003, he was terminated as city manager in Pacifica, and he left the public sector to become an employee with Public Agency Retirement Services, which offers administrative services to public agencies in managing their pension systems. In 2007, he re-initiated his public agen-

cy management career as city manager with the City of Seal Beach and in 2010 became the city manager of the substantially larger City of Manhattan Beach. In 2014 he became manager of La Puente and in 2019 was hired as the city manager of West Covina.

Carmany has, as is common among city managers, been terminated or been forced into resigning more than once.

In 2003, Carmany was terminated as city manager in Pacifica "for cause," which obviated the provision of his contract requiring that he be given severance pay. Carmany sued, which resulted in a settlement in which he was provided with \$175,000.

Manhattan Beach City Council members unanimously dismissed Carmany as that city's top administrator in November 2013, citing the

need to "move in a new direction." In doing so, Carmany was terminated without cause. The firing came within the context of a contretemps with a former Manhattan Beach employee who was alleging Carmany forced her to alter figures in staff reports, shred documents and falsify financial disclosure forms. The suit also had a sexual harassment component, with the former employee alleging that Carmany would stand over her while she was at her desk and stare down her blouse. She filed a lawsuit against the city in 2014, one which was settled two years later, with the woman receiving \$1.5 million to drop the matter, with both sides paying their attorney fees and the city making no admission of further liability or wrongdoing.

When Carmany was *Continued on Page 7*

## By Constantly Videoing Their Protests And Field Operations Challenging Those They Have Defined As Racists, The Enamorados Have Now Given Prosecutors Enough Rope To Hang Them *from page 2*

and sidewalk vendors in October and a follow-up action in November setting an impound fee on merchandise and the vending carts, bivouacs and tables seized when those vendors were cited elicited the attention of both the Fontana police department and the county prosecutor's office. Edin Enamorado himself drew specific attention to himself when he was arrested for loitering outside the Fontana Mayor's house late in the evening on the night of the October meeting and for disrupting the council proceedings in November after they had been adjourned to a postponed session the following morning. The City of Fontana filed for a restraining order against Edin Enamorado prohibiting him from approaching any closer than fifty feet to the Fontana mayor in October, which was initially rejected by the court, but which is now being reconsidered. Edin Enamorado was arrested in Apple Valley on December 10 during a confrontational episode with the woman alleged to have been critical of a mother speaking Spanish to her child in a restroom at Disneyland.

It was the Enamorados' actions on September 24 in Victorville, while the group was engaged in a Sunday afternoon protest in the area around the sheriff's station in which they were demanding that the deputy who had roughly intervened in the fight between two teenage girls in the aftermath of the previous Friday night football game between Victor Valley and Gig Bear high Schools be identified, fired and prosecuted that ultimately triggered the arrests and prosecutions of eight of the Enamorados – Enamorado, Luján, Chávez, López, Carrasco, Amésquita and Peña – as well as Gullit Eder “Jaguar”

Acevedo, 30.

While the Enamorados and some 30 or 40 other local protesters who joined with them milled about the sheriff's Victorville station on Amargosa Road and the stretch of Amargosa Road to the intersection of Palmdale Road and Amargosa Road and down a span of well-traveled Palmdale Road with placards and signs, Enamorado used his trademark bullhorn to exhort the crowd and chastise passing motorists for their complacency in the face of a sheriff's department riddled with racists who engaged in or otherwise tolerated the brutality toward and abuse of citizens. With the demonstration ongoing, a couple had come to the car wash located on the block of Palmdale Road just west of Amargosa Road. After getting their Hyundai cleaned, they attempted, with the wife at the wheel and the husband in the front passenger seat, to take their leave from the car wash parking lot. With the constant traffic on Palmdale Road and the steady stream of protesters passing in front of the Hyundai on the sidewalk and in the gutter of Palmdale Road, the car and the couple found themselves unable to get out of the parking lot. At one point, the woman put the car in reverse and attempted to exit from the premises by taking a back alley at the rear of the car wash down to McArt Road, which parallels Amargosa to the west and offers access to Palmdale Road via a signalized intersection. The exit onto McArt Road from the alleyway, however, was obstructed, such that the only viable exit from the car wash operation was the driveway out onto Palmdale Road at which the Hyundai carrying the husband and wife had already been prevented from traversing. The driver

again drove toward the sidewalk along Palmdale Road and again found herself unable to proceed through the line of protesters moving both east and west. After roughly two minutes, she began to sound her horn in an effort get the pedestrians in front of the car to part long enough and widely enough to allow her to pull the Hyundai out onto Palmdale Avenue. This, however, had no appreciable effect on the protesters, who, indeed, seemed to be antagonized by the sounding of the horn and instead of moving along, loitered on the sidewalk in front of the car. Shortly thereafter, the husband opened the door on his side of the car and exited. As he did so, the car door came into contact with two of the protesters. Almost immediately, he was set upon by several people in the crowd, including Luján, Chávez, Acevedo, Peña and Carrasco. Enamorado, making use of his bullhorn, accused the man of hitting a woman, doing so in rather derogatory terms, including referring to him as a “bitch.” The man was punched, pepper sprayed, punched some more and kicked, knocked to the ground, pepper sprayed again and once more knocked to the ground. With Enamorado audible over the megaphone saying repeatedly, “That's what he gets,” the man, somewhat dazed and disoriented, stumbled about semi-blindedly, at which point his wife once more backed up and again, without her husband in the vehicle, sought to find some alternate means of leaving the grounds of the car wash operation. When that again failed, she drove once more back toward the exit. In the meantime, her husband had moved forward to stand on the sidewalk, struggling to use his shirt to wipe the pepper spray out of his eyes. When he discerned that his wife had returned, he moved toward the Hyundai, which was again prevented from exiting by the mass of protesters on the side-

walk in front of it. As he neared the vehicle, he had contact with Luján. This provoked Enamorado, who later claimed that the man had pawed Luján's breast. Enamorado, who had been simultaneously using his cellphone to livestream the protest to one of his social media accounts while directing the protest by speaking into the bullhorn in his other hand, set the megaphone aside and while continuing to videostream what was in front of him with the cellphone in his right hand, punched the man with his left fist.

Several deputies, who had been monitoring what was going on from a distance, at that point had gotten into their vehicles and drove to a spot on Palmdale Road near the car wash entrance/exit, essentially double-parking in the right lane of Palmdale Road. The wife put the Hyundai in park and emerged from the car, immediately approaching one of the deputies, conferring with him. Thereafter, one of deputies shepherded her husband away from the crowd to put him into protective custody inside one of the sheriff's vehicles. In rapid fashion, one of the deputies approached the group of protesters near the Hyundai and a physical altercation between him and Luján ensued, in which she was wrestled down onto the pavement and ultimately taken into custody. Nearly simultaneously, a shoving match between a deputy and Chávez broke out, which resulted in Chávez being arrested.

Luján was booked on charges/grounds/suspicion of assault with a caustic chemical, obstructing a peace officer, battery and unlawful assembly. Chávez's jailing was effectuated on suspicion of assault with a caustic chemical and unlawful assembly.

Enamorado narrowly avoided arrest as a result of the raucous protest and melee on September 24, which did not conclude before two others were also arrested, those being David Victor

Alba, 30, of Victorville, who was arrested on suspicion of obstructing a peace officer, battery and unlawful assembly; and Wayne Freeman, 36, of Moreno Valley, who was arrested on suspicion of obstructing a peace officer and unlawful assembly.

During her booking, Luján provided her jailers with a Pomona address rather than her actual residence in Upland, which sheriff's department's investigators, as a result of their subsequent investigation, now believe was an effort to protect Edin Enamorado, with whom she cohabits, from being connected to what had occurred that day.

The events of September 24, most notably including the assault upon the passenger in the Hyundai, were captured by multiple videographers, including Enamorado and others using hand-held cellphones, as well as at least one using a camera on a tripod.

Edin Enamorado uploaded an extended video of the protest, including the assault of the couple in the Hyundai, to a social media account on TikTok he controls under heading “Edin Enamorado is going live.” The video was presented to the public within a context in which it was suggested that what had occurred was a demonstration of the noble efforts of the Enamorados to stand up to racism. The posting did not dwell on the consideration that the passenger of the Hyundai who was assaulted is Hispanic.

The sheriff's department investigation that ensued in short order brought Edin Enamorado into focus, helped along in part by his utterances to the media and other public forums in the immediate aftermath of the Luján, Chávez, Alba and Freeman arrests when he assigned blame for what had occurred to the driver of the Hyundai, who, he said, “tried to run over protesters” and her passenger, who, Enamorado asserted “hit a woman” and then sexually as-

saulted Luján, who, Enamorado indignantly insisted, had merely “defended herself.”

When investigators observed the video of the assault, which offered a visual and verbal contrast to what Enamorado claimed to have occurred, they began to explore the activities of the Enamorados and their leader in multiple other venues, which were likewise documented in posted videos.

Of note is that relatively shortly after the Victorville protest, one of the Enamorados who was present and had participated in the assault on the Hyundai passenger, Guillet Acevedo, contacted Enamorado, telling him he thought he should take down the video of the September 24 protest, given that law enforcement might be monitoring the websites and social media accounts he controlled in the aftermath of the arrests of Chávez, Luján, Alba and Freeman. Shortly thereafter, Chávez, who was facing possible charges at that point over his arrest on September 24, texted Enamorado, “Hey bro, could you take down the video. It's incriminating me.”

Enamorado responded by making several passes at editing the video, cutting out the passages which depicted the gross violence against someone who was, in essence, a bystander, and altering the video and its context to emphasize the righteousness of the protest against the physical abuse of high school student injured by a deputy in the aftermath of the September 22 Friday night football game and the aggressive reaction of the deputies who responded to the protesters' confrontation with the Hyundai driver and passenger at the car wash.

Acevedo's and Chávez's requests and Enamorado's reaction came too late. Sheriff's Department investigators had already begun monitoring the Enamorados' social media post-  
*Continued on Page 6*

## Desert Shoot-Out That Left At Least Six Dead Has Many Of The Hallmarks Of Drug Cartel Style Reprisal Killings *from front page*

partment paramedic crew with advance life support gear was dispatched to the scene at 8:38 p.m., but upon arrival was unable to offer any positive assistance to the five victims discovered at that time, all of whom were pronounced dead.

Four of the five bodies encountered by the responding deputies were on the ground outside the vehicles, all bearing obvious signs of trauma including open wounds, torsos covered at least in part with blood, with signs of profuse bleeding on the ground around them.

An apparent attempt, one which was ultimately unsuccessful, had been made before the sheriff's department arrived to set the Blazer afire. At least two of the corpses were partially burned.

The department was able to secure the crime scene and maintain its integrity throughout the night. The following morning, a bevy of investigators, including ones from the homicide detail of the sheriff's specialized investigations division, forensic technicians and photographers descended upon the scene, at which point the sixth victim was found. Throughout the morning and into the afternoon, efforts to locate and gather evidence were made, in many cases using hovering helicopters to avoid disturbing potential footprint, vehicle tracks and other evidence.

Once the investigation had begun in earnest, no one outside the department was able to approach the crime scene, as the closest entrance onto the dirt Shadow Mountain Road from the pavement was barred with yellow evidence marking tape and a deputy manning that chokepoint.

Investigators had gauged a time of death as occurring within a one-and-a-half-hour window on Tuesday but were not specific as to what that

parameter was beyond that it was sometime during daylight January 23.

By the early afternoon of January 24, ten standard department vehicles along with a Freightliner MT-55 mobile command post and two other smaller van-type technical equipment and analysis vehicles were parked along Shadow Mountain Road roughly a tenth of a mile from the crime scene. The presence of the roomy mobile command post afforded technicians an opportunity to process or begin processing some of the evidence turned up on the spot and to upload any data gleaned to laboratories elsewhere for further analysis, some of which provided instantaneous or rapid feedback to investigators yet involved in fieldwork.

Light recent precipitation may have been of assistance in allowing investigators to recognize vehicle tracks or footprints near the scene that did not match those of the vehicles on the spot or the footwear of the victims.

Data feeds allowed footage from any video cameras or license plate readers in the area or at various chokepoints that lead to the location to be mined by investigators aboard the command post for what information they might provide about vehicles that transited into or out of the area on January 23, key evidence that might be used in identifying and locating suspects.

The victims located on Tuesday night near the vehicles had been stripped of their identification, according to one reliable source, with no wallets or similar possessions found on their persons. As of today, at least two of the victims had been identified by investigators, who did not publicly release that information. No one with the department was willing, at this point, to release the genders, nationalities or ages of the

victims nor their last known places of residence.

Around 5 p.m. on January 24, individuals claiming to recognize one of the vehicles were permitted to proceed to the scene of the shooting and were interviewed by investigators. Another person, said to have been a family member of one of the victims, was a walk-in at the sheriff's department station in Adelanto, the Sentinel was informed. At least one of the victims was from the Adelanto area, according to an informed source.

As of Thursday, according to the sheriff's department, the identity of the initial caller was unknown. No update on that issue had been issued as of today, Friday January 26.

The area where the shooting occurred, proximate to a flat, dry lake bed, is virtually uninhabited, with what was identified as a single residence within two miles of the crossroads.

While what was de-

## SB Wangles Homeless Project Grant From State *from page 3*

and Lutheran Social Services of Southern California have been awarded this funding through Project HomeKey," said Dr. LaSharnda Beckwith, President and CEO of Lutheran Social Services. "This not only provides a significant boost to this project, but it underscores our commitment to providing shelter, vital services, and making a lasting difference in the lives of the unsheltered individuals in San Bernardino."

Project Homekey was launched in 2020 as an extension of Project Roomkey, which provided emergency motel rooms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Homekey funds the construction or conversion of buildings including hotels, apartments, manufactured homes and commercial properties into permanent or interim housing, supporting people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

scribed as a "thorough" search of the area had been conducted, including a close and methodical scanning of the landscape from above by eagle-eyed scouts in helicopters, the department was unable to rule out the possibility that there were other victims.

As of early Thursday, the department had identified, according to Sheriff's Department Spokeswoman Mara Rodriguez, no suspects. When Rodriguez was asked early Friday for any further updates on the case and whether the victims would be identified publicly, Rodriguez stated that the press should "not expect identification today. The investigation is continuing. Currently, no updates are available for release. A press conference is expected to be announced next week if further information becomes available. We thank the public and our media partners for their patience as we conduct a careful and thorough investigation to bring justice to the families of

those affected."

According to the department, "Some information may not be available at this time. Either it is unknown or it may jeopardize the integrity of the investigation."

There was recurrent media and social media speculation that the killings were gang-affiliated or foreign drug cartel-related, either Mexican or Columbian, but investigators offered no confirmation of that.

In 2021 and 2022, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department engaged in an extended effort, dubbed Operation Hammer Strike, to find and eliminate unlicensed marijuana farms located throughout the county, most of them in the Mojave Desert. A significant percentage of the more than 1,200 outdoor cultivation facilities that were raided featured perpetrators who were foreigners both legal and illegal, that is documented and undocumented, primarily from Mexico and China. According to the sheriff's department,

"Homekey continues to serve as a model for communities confront-

ing the crisis of home-

## Judge Ends SB's Eviction Of Homeless From Its Parks

Federal Judge Terry Hatter Jr. has issued a preliminary injunction preventing the City of San Bernardino from removing unhoused people living in its parks and on the city's sidewalks and public area. Judge Hatter's ruling, issued January 12, was made in reaction to a lawsuit filed by the social action group So-Cal Trash Army on behalf of three individuals - Lenka John, James Tyson and Noel Harner - who were down and out and living in Meadowbrook Park. The city, which declared homelessness a local emergency in February 2023, used the duplicitous stratagem of closing the park for maintenance in May 2023. The city said it would offer them some alternative but never did. In his ruling, Judge Hatter made a finding that the city discarded and/or destroyed the displaced homeless residents' belongings, did not accommodate their needs and "likely" engaged in a violation of their constitutional rights as well as those under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Judge Hatter barred the city from removing or displacing unhoused residents and their belongings pending both further judicial review of the matter. He said the court would consider vacating the order if the city can formulate a binding policy by which it replaces homeless encampments with housing options for those to be displaced.

The county together with volunteers and assistance from municipalities yesterday conducted the 2024 Point-In-Time Count, an annual survey of the county's homeless population. The 2023 Point-In-Time Count conducted on January 26, 2023 pegged the number of unhoused in the City of San Bernardino at 1,502, which comprised 35.8 percent of the 4,195 homeless in the county.

at least some of those had cartel connections.

Some social media chatter featured conjecture that the victims might have happened upon one such operation, leading to their unfortunate fate. There was no indication from the sheriff's department, however, that any marijuana farms had been located in the area recently. The marijuana growing cycle, when using natural sunlight, normally does not begin until February at the earliest, with the germination of unplanted seeds taking place in January.

The sheriff's department went so far as to withhold whether the deaths were in fact caused by gunfire.

There was, nonetheless, strong indication that a shootout utilizing massive firepower had taken place. The Blazer had been riddled with bullet holes, with at least two bullet holes in the driver's side front window. Both a driver's side passenger compartment

*Continued on Page 7*

lessness," said California Housing and Community Development Director Gustavo Velasquez. "It has redefined how we can efficiently and rapidly create quality housing to aid Californians in transitioning away from life on the streets."

Funding for Project Homekey comes from the Federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA), which was passed by Congress in 2021, and the State General Fund. To date, the program has funded over 14,600 homes across California.

"One of the main goals of the Federal American Rescue Plan was to help ensure that everyone in our community could have a roof over their heads," said Congressman Pete Aguilar, who represents the San Bernardino area. "I'm proud that nearly \$35 million is coming to the City of San Bernardino to help tackle the housing crisis."

The project is estimated to be completed by spring of 2025.

## Defense Attorneys Focused On The Enamorados' Social Activism Rather Than Their Antisocial Activity In Promoting Their Philosophy, Giving Prosecutors Free Rein To Chart Their Own Course In The Case

from page 4

ings and communications, had ascertained Enamorado was their leader, were giving him especially close scrutiny and had begun to secure copies of the videos and other materials that were being uploaded to various websites and social media accounts. Those materials would form the partial basis of warrants the investigators would obtain, which led to further discoveries.

As investigators delved into the circumstance, they became aware of further incidents involving the Enamorados and, most particularly, Edin Enamorado. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department began trading notes with police agencies in Los Angeles, Pomona, Upland, Fontana, Riverside, Santa Ana, Long Beach, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Woodland Hills, Huntington Park, San Bernardino and Moorpark regarding their dealings with him.

A department investigator working undercover in the guise of a social activist gained access to several Enamorados, obtaining crucial information in that way. At least two Enamorados who had been arrested by the department or other agencies proved vulnerable to compromise by means of deals that could be cut with them in exchange for cooperation to include providing inside information known only to the Enamorados themselves.

At some point, Edin Enamorado took stock of how the extended video of the protests in Victorville on September 24, including the assault on the couple in the Hyundai, represented evidence of criminal activity by both him and his associates, and he removed it from his social media platform. That, investigators and prosecutors believe, is a demonstration of what

they term "consciousness of guilt" on Enamorado's part. Despite his scrubbing of the video, investigators had already secured a reprint.

A set of incidents that took place in Pomona, a full three weeks before the September 24 protest in Victorville turned violent, in particular caught the investigators' attention. On that day, September 3, in the midst of the Labor Day Weekend, Edin Enamorado was in hot pursuit of an individual he felt was worthy of the Enamorados' patented treatment of bigots. A few days previously, some sidewalk vendors who worked the area around El Super, a market in Pomona at the northwest corner of Indian Hill and Holt boulevards, had been confronted by a security guard at the market in a way the vendors and Enamorado found especially disrespectful. Part of that confrontation had been captured on video, which included one of the vendors and the security guard exchanging threats of violence. Enamorado had put out a call to his network of supporters to identify and locate the security guard. On the morning of September 3, Enamorado and one of his associates had gone to the Pomona Police Department headquarters to inquire why the police department had not arrested nor otherwise taken action against the security guard, as, Enamorado opined, the security guard had assaulted or violated the rights of at least one of the vendors. Thereafter, Enamorado had called for an intensification of the search for the offending security guard and returned to his home in Upland, whereupon, either en route home or after arriving there he was informed that the security guard was in Pomona at El Super. While at his residence in Upland,

Enamorado had phone contact with Luján and other Enamorados, putting out an immediate alert that the security guard had been located, instructing his followers to travel at once to El Super in Pomona, where an operation targeting the security guard was to take place. Ultimately, a contingent of Enamorados converged on El Super, where they confronted the security guard, pepper sprayed him and chased him into El Super, where both the store's security camera and videos recorded by some of the Enamorados depicted the security guard on the floor, blinded and incapacitated by pepper spray, being assaulted by the group of Enamorados, at which point he managed to get to his feet, where he was punched and kicked some more.

The Pomona Police responded to that incident, and Luján was taken into custody. The Enamorados regrouped and, en masse, sojourned to the Pomona Police Station to protest Luján's arrest and obtain her release. Before Luján was liberated, a Pomona resident came to the Pomona Police Station, intending to file a police report pertaining to an unrelated matter. Upon reaching the station, the resident found the entrance to the police lobby surrounded by the protesting Enamorados. When he finally was able to get to the door, it was locked, and he was thwarted in his effort to file the police report he had come to the Pomona Civic Center to make. His interpretation of what he had encountered was that the protesters had created a situation in which the police department had locked the public out of the station. In actuality, the station had been closed because of the Labor Day holiday. The resident had words with several of the Enamorados in which he, in essence, blamed them for his inability to file the police report. He returned to his vehicle, where he retrieved an unlidded Gatorade bottle

and flung it toward the Enamorados. That was interpreted by at least some of the Enamorados as both a hostile and disrespectful act, partially out of the mistaken belief that the bottle contained urine. One of the Enamorados followed the resident, who lived less than a mile from the Pomona Civic Center, in which the police headquarters is located. Following communication with Edin Enamorado, a decision was made for about ten of the approximately 20 Enamorados staging the protest at the police station to divert to the home of the resident who had failed in his effort to file the police report.

Like many, indeed most, of the Enamorados' actions, what ensued was caught on video.

When the Enamorados caught up with the Pomona resident, he was seated in his car. There, they threatened him, with someone telling him that "I will beat you every day if you don't get out of the car." Enamorado challenged him to fight. When the man did get out of the vehicle, Enamorado ordered, "Get on your fucking knees, and apologize, bitch."

The man knelt before his tormentors, holding his hands together as if praying. "Please... Please," he pleaded. "I'm sorry."

Seemingly satisfied with the man's show of contrition, the gathered Enamorados scornfully allowed him to return to his feet, having reduced him into a pathetic and groveling wretch.

A statement by Carrasco as the man turned to return to his car, punctuating the humiliation, prosecutors now maintain, establishes that the Enamorados had put the man in mortal danger. "We let you live, homey!" she uttered. One of the Enamorados threw something at him. As the man was about to drive away, another Enamorado sprayed him with what may or may not have been pepper spray or might merely have been water.

The investigators collected all of the information and handed it over to prosecutors, who then assembled criminal cases against Enamorado, Luján, Chávez, López, Carrasco, Acevedo, Amésquita and Peña and obtained from the court arrest warrants that were served between 3:20 a.m. and 4:46 a.m. on December 14 in Bell, Upland, Riverside, Ontario, San Bernardino and Los Angeles.

All eight were held without bail and remained jailed through Christmas, when Judge Faherty refused to release them on their own recognizance or set bail, acceding to the prosecution's assertions that they represented a danger to the public that could not be mitigated by any conditions that might be imposed on them.

After Judge Melissa Rodriguez was provided with evidence including technical information, statements and documentation to establish Acevedo had not been in Pomona on September 3 as was alleged by the prosecution, he was granted bail on December 26. The seven-day pre-preliminary hearing and preliminary hearing process was held for all eight defendants while the other seven remained incarcerated during the last week of 2023 and first two weeks of 2024, with District Attorney Jason Wilkinson and Deputy District Attorney John Richardson eliciting direct testimony and redirect testimony from Pomona Police Detective Travis Johnson, Pomona Police Officer Edgar Rodriguez, Pomona Police Officer Juan Ruiz, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Deputy Mark Valencia, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Deputy Jonathan Ortega, prosecution witness Blake Foyle, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Detective Alejandro Duran and San Bernardino County Sheriff's Detective Eric Rebollar. Those witnesses were subject to cross examination by attorney Nicolas Rosenberg, representing Enamorado;

Christian Contreras, representing Luján; Edwin Salguero, representing Chávez; Arsany Said, representing Peña; Dan Eugene Chambers, representing Acevedo; Damon Alimouri, representing Carrasco; Erick Hammett, representing López; and Mauro Quintero, representing Amésquita.

The criminal case revolved around the assaults sustained by the security guard who worked at El Super who was pepper sprayed and beaten inside the market, identified in court and court papers as John Doe 1; the Pomona resident forced to his knees outside his car, referred to as John Doe 2, and the husband/passenger in the Hyundai on September 24 in Victorville who was given the moniker of John Doe 3.

As it would turn out, the preliminary hearing demonstrated that both the prosecution and the defense had engaged in crucial mistakes of overstatement that came back to haunt them.

Prosecutors had gotten out in front of themselves by asserting that Acevedo, who was easily identified in several of the videos taken of the incident in Victorville on September 24 in a physical altercation with John Doe 3, had taken part in both of the assaults of John Doe 1 and John Doe 2 in Pomona on September 3 and that he had made liberal use of pepper spray that was in his possession, at least in the cases involving John Doe 1 and John Doe 3. Chambers, however, was able to produce clear and convincing, indeed unassailable and incontrovertible, evidence that on September 3 his client was in Orange County, Santa Ana to be exact. Moreover, Chambers showed the prosecution had no evidence whatsoever to place Acevedo in Pomona on that date. Going further, Chambers established that Acevedo did not buy, did not own, did not possess and did not use pepper spray or chemical mace or, as the prosecution termed it, *Continued on Page 12*

## Carmany Has Had Multiple Go-Rounds With The Political Leaders In The Cities Where He Was Hired To Serve As City Manager, Ironically, In Some Cases, By Doing Those Elected Leaders' Bidding *from page 3*

hired by West Covina in 2019, it was done on a bare minimum 3-to-2 vote, with then Mayor Lloyd Johnson and Councilwoman Jessica Shewmaker opposed to his hiring. He did, though, at that time have the enthusiastic support of Councilman Tony Wu, who endorsed Carmany as the kind of "common sense" public official capable of methodically working through difficulties facing public agencies.

Carmany's time in West Covina, which has had nearly as unstable of a relationship with city managers as Rialto has had with its top administrators, was star-crossed from the outset. When he came into the city manager position, West Covina was wrestling with an \$8.7 million deficit, which had in turn created unrest within the professional ranks at City Hall over deferred raises and benefit increases. Over time, Carmany was able to balance, or come close to balancing, the city's finances. Nevertheless, in the arena of personnel management and maintaining civil working relations with his political masters, Carmany was severely challenged.

By his second year in West Covina, Carmany's relationship with Wu grew testy. This was despite Carmany's efforts at supporting retrenchment with regard to some of the city's long-term employees.

At the time Carmany became city manager, some members of the city council, including Wu, had designs on forcing West Covina Fire Chief Larry Whithorn, who had started as a firefighter/paramedic with the department in 1991 and was promoted to fire chief in 2014, into retirement. Indeed, before Carmany arrived, the city was moving in that direction. After Whithorn took an extended leave medical leave in 2017 and then took further leave in 2018 to look af-

ter his ailing father, an effort to force him to retire ensued. Whithorn resisted and in the midst of the fire chief controversy, with the West Covina Firefighters Association issuing a vote of no confidence against Whithorn and Whithorn seeking to demote union members or changing their schedules and duties in reaction to their picketing City Hall, the situation deteriorated. Some of the department's firefighters, who stood a chance at promotion with Whithorn's departure, became further embroiled in the bureaucratic fisticuffs. Then-City Manager Chris Freeland and Human Resources Director Edward Macias, at the bidding of Wu and Planning Commissioner Glenn Kennedy, were pressuring Whithorn to retire throughout 2018. In March 2019, Freeland, Macias and Finance Director Marcie Medina abruptly resigned. The city's effort to depict Whithorn as distracted and an "absentee" fire chief was in full swing when Carmany arrived shortly thereafter. Carmany took up where Freeland and Macias had left off, carrying out what he recognized as the city council's imperative to get rid of Whithorn. He proffered Whithorn a resignation letter, which the fire chief refused to sign. When Whithorn did not go quietly into the good night, Carmany terminated him.

Whithorn responded with a lawsuit in which he alleged a hostile work environment, age discrimination, harassment, defamation and both constructive and unlawful termination.

Wu, despite having been a prime mover in the effort to get rid of Whithorn, and at least one other member of the city council blamed Carmany for his ham-fisted approach in firing Whithorn, believing he should have used greater skill and politesse in ca-

shiering him and not giving the fire chief the basis upon which to file suit.

The deterioration of the relationship between Wu and Carmany gave rise to a deeply untoward circumstance, one that was not handled very gracefully.

In the Spring of 2022, Carmany went to the West Covina Police Department, alleging that during a meeting, Wu physically threatened him. The police department, declaring a conflict of interest, passed the complaint along to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. That matter was still being investigated when, on May 5, 2023, a Los Angeles County jury found in favor of Whithorn in his suit against the city.

If, up until that point, Carmany had majority support on the city council to remain as city manager, his credibility and

ability to function as the city's top administrator was irretrievably compromised. The council met in closed session on May 16, 2023, taking no action but making clear that Carmany had to go, or else. On May 18, he resigned as city manager. The city council unanimously accepted his resignation and conferred upon him an as yet undisclosed severance payment. Both he and Wu, biting their tongues, offered amicable statements regarding Carmany's departure.

"I have been privileged to work with David Carmany," Wu said, before praising him for having "turned our city from almost bankrupt in 2018 to today [being] financially healthy. No matter what happened, he is always my friend and I want to thank him for his service and wish him all the best."

## Six Murdered Near Shadow Mountain Ghost Town *from page 3*

window and the rear window were blown out entirely, photographs of the vehicle taken early in the day on January 24 show. Late on January 24, possibly because

of evidence processing that took place that afternoon, the driver's side front window, which initially had bullet holes but was essentially intact otherwise, was largely shattered.

It appears that the shooting that did take place occurred from different spots. In one

Carmany said, "I have decided to resign as City Manager effective immediately. It has been my honor to serve the community of West Covina."

The Rialto City Council voted to hire Carmany at its Tuesday evening, January 23 meeting, effective the next day.

Rialto announced yesterday, Thursday January 25, that they are pleased to bring Carmany aboard.

Mayor Robertson referenced his "impressive track record, leadership skills, and commitment to community engagement," which she said will "make him the perfect fit for our city. We are confident that under David's leadership, Rialto will continue to thrive and prosper."

In proof thereof, the city signed Carmany to a five-year contract, which is to provide him with a \$354,994 annual

salary, together with pay add-ons and perquisites of \$43,936, benefits of \$74,227 plus an \$89,454.48 contribution toward his pension for a total annual compensation of \$562,611.48. That is a substantial increase over what he was making in West Covina, where he was being paid 218,780.24 in salary, \$30,283 in pay add-ons and perquisites, \$24,685.15 in benefits and a \$55,130.15 contribution toward his pension for a total annual compensation of \$328,878.54.

"I want to thank the mayor and city council for their confidence in me and look forward to proactively engaging with the community, getting to know my team and collaborating with the council to develop progressive and innovative initiatives," Carmany said.

-Mark Gutglueck

## Three Democrats And No Republicans In The 50<sup>th</sup> Assembly District Race *from front page*

ple to succeed. I am committed to making the local economy stronger and more fair for working people.

"Because I grew up in San Bernardino County with an absent father and a mother battling addiction, I faced many of the economic, educational, and health obstacles that too many people throughout the Inland Empire are struggling to overcome," Shaw said. "I worked hard, sought mentors, and lifted myself out of the cycle of poverty to help other hard-working people get ahead. I worked nights and attended classes during the day to become a licensed

vocational nurse."

Shaw said, "As your Assemblymember, I will work to help everyone in our communities succeed through greater educational opportunities, good-paying local jobs, a stronger economy for working people, addressing the housing crisis and homelessness and healthier and safer neighborhoods.

Shaw claims the endorsements California Attorney General Rob Bonta, former Assemblywoman Wilmer Amina Carter, San Bernardino Mayor Helen Tran, Redlands Mayor Eddie Tejada and Fontana School Board President Mars Serna.

Perez said, "I want to give back to my community in the most impactful way that I can. I have the experience needed

relatively small area of no more than 70-square feet to 100-square feet – a circumscribed patch of ground of not more than ten feet by ten feet – which appeared to be roughly equidistant from either vehicle, markers on the ground corresponding to shell casings that were recovered indi-

cated that no fewer than 34 shots were fired from that point alone. There were lesser numbers of shell casings on the ground elsewhere.

The department appealed to anyone with information about the crime to contact investigators.

-Mark Gutglueck

to be effective in this role and deliver results for our San Bernardino County communities."

Perez stated, "In the State Assembly, I'll fight to reduce homelessness with a focus on mental health and housing, improve schools and work to make college more affordable, help families struggling to address rising costs of gas and groceries, protect our environment, ensure cleaner air, build more parks,

encourage innovation to help local businesses grow and create jobs and make neighborhoods safer and ensure fast 911 response times."

Perez is endorsed by Assemblyman James Ramos, former San Bernardino County Supervisor Josie Gonzales, Fontana Mayor Acquanetta Warren, Colton Councilman John Echevarria and San Bernardino City Councilman Juan Figueroa.

-Mark Gutglueck

## State To Remove Fruit In Redlands *from page 3*

body and black spots on its wings.

Oriental fruit flies are most easily distinguished from other flies by their yellow color. At present, they are localized to San Bernardino

and Riverside counties, the area in and around Rancho Cordova in Sacramento County, the Brentwood area in Contra Costa County and part of Santa Clara, and agricultural officials are hoping to be able to arrest their spread to the rest of the state.

-Mark Gutglueck











## Trying The Enamorados In San Bernardino County As Opposed To Los Angeles County Gives The Prosecution An Advantage *from page 6*

tear gas. Consequently, he was able to get three of the four charges originally filed against Acevedo at his arraignment – felony conspiracy to engage in gang activity, felony unlawful use of tear gas, and felony false imprisonment – thrown out entirely. In a further coup, Chambers was able to convince Judge Arredondo that the physical confrontation between Acevedo and John Doe 3 amounted to no more than a “scuffle,” such that the fourth charge of assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury was reduced to misdemeanor assault. With the only remaining charge against Acevedo reduced to a misdemeanor, Judge Arredondo assented to having him stand trial separately from the other defendants before Judge Enrique Guerrero.

Early in the process, before each of the defendants obtained his or her own attorney, they were all initially represented by Contreras, whose specialty and forte is civil rights and social causes, although he does tout himself as a criminal defense attorney. Contreras, while representing all eight and even after having been reduced to representing Luján, continued to characterize the case as one in which the defendants were being criminally charged for having engaged in unpopular dissent, primarily against empowered and powerful political figures, such as elected officials, public officials, code enforcement officers and the like who were enacting, enforcing or upholding regulations and laws targeting immigrants or sidewalk/street vendors with which they had a constitutional right to disagree or dissent from as well as protesting against the action or behavior of law en-

forcement officers who had used what they considered to be excessive force, an activity that is another form of constitutionally protected dissent. To a degree, the attorneys who took on the representation of Enamorado, Chávez, López, Carrasco, Amésquita and Peña continued to echo that assertion, even in the face of evidence being presented during the preliminary hearing that the action those defendants engaged in, while perhaps being originally motivated by conviction in principle and containing elements of an effort to make a constitutionally protected expression of belief or philosophy, had devolved into physical action and assaultive behavior not toward empowered politicians or public officials but individuals who were essentially common citizens with no greater authority than what they possessed – John Doe 1, John Doe 2 and John Doe 3. Both individually and collectively, the defense for the seven who are still facing felony charges did not get on track in controverting, contesting or disproving the basic facts of the assaults or displays of violence against the three victims in any way that proved meaningful to Judge Arredondo, whose pre-bench legal career consisted of her having served not as a prosecutor but rather as a defense attorney. Legal pundits consider the inability of the legal teams for the seven defendants now yet facing felony charges to seriously undercut the case as presented by the prosecution in the preliminary hearing stage of the case – particularly given that Judge Arredondo is philosophically and by professional orientation more disposed than a former prosecutor to be sympathetic to arguments brought forth by the defense – to be an inauspicious harbinger of what lies ahead for Enamorado, Luján, Chávez, López, Carrasco, Amésquita and Peña.

A crucial element in the case was that of jurisdiction or venue. Two

thirds of the case being presented against Enamorado, Luján, Chávez, López, Carrasco, Amésquita and Peña consists of the events that occurred in Pomona on September 3. Pomona lies in Los Angeles County, a separate jurisdiction from San Bernardino County. Crimes occurring in Pomona under normal circumstances would be subject to adjudication in a venue within the County of Los Angeles. The prosecution pressed the theory that the phone calls Edin Enamorado made to the other Enamorados after he learned of John Doe 1’s presence at El Super in Pomona on September 3, in which he encouraged them to meet up with him in Pomona, where the planned encounter with John Doe 1 and the unplanned encounter with John Doe 2 occurred, constituted acts in furtherance of a conspiracy. Enamorado made those phone calls while he was in Upland, which lies within San Bernardino County, Sheriff’s Detective Alejandro Duran testified. In this way, the prosecutors emphasized, those calls provided an important part of the framework for the case, thus making San Bernardino County Superior Court a proper venue in which to hear the charges relating to what occurred in Pomona that day. Judge Arredondo indulged the prosecutors in making that argument, and the defense failed to make a spirited or convincing refutation, such that the case is now headed to trial in San Bernardino County, where it is to be prosecuted by an unyielding team of deputy district attorneys working for a district attorney, Jason Anderson, understood by virtually everyone to be far less progressive in his attitude than Los Angeles District Attorney George Gascón. What is more, the case is to be tried in Victorville, where the jury pool is far more likely to be loaded with citizens unwilling to show compassion for individuals who cross a perceived legal line in

carrying out a personal crusade to effectuate social justice than in other areas of San Bernardino County such as San Bernardino or Rancho Cucamonga or most any place in Los Angeles County, such as the Pomona Courthouse, the El Monte Courthouse, the Alhambra Courthouse, the East Los Angeles Courthouse, the Norwalk Courthouse, the Spring Street Courthouse, the Compton Courthouse, the Inglewood Courthouse or the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center.

Rosenberg, Contreras, Salguero, Quintero, Hammett, Alimouri and Said collectively and individually made two inroads each on behalf of Enamorado, Luján, Chávez, Amésquita, López, Carrasco and Peña with regard to the prosecution’s cases against their clients. The first of these consisted of a demonstration that the prosecution had not succeeded in proving that the Enamorados had damaged John Doe 1’s vehicle, resulting in the erasure of one PC594(B) (1)- felony vandalism involving \$400 or more worth of property charge against each of them. The second involved convincing Arredondo that the district attorney’s office had made an insufficient showing that tear gas, bear spray, pepper spray, mace or any chemical agent had been employed against John Doe 2, thus negating the one of the Penal Code [PC] 22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas charges lodged against each of the seven.

Despite those victories, Enamorado, Luján, Chávez, Amésquita, López, Carrasco and Peña are yet being conveyed toward a grinding by the relentlessly churning wheels of justice.

Enamorado still must answer on charges of PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two charges of PC422(A) – felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; three counts of PC236 – felony

ny false imprisonment; PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; three counts of PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; two counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas; one count of PC22810(A) – misdemeanor possession of tear gas by a convicted felon; and one count of PC29800(A)(1) – felony possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

Luján is to go to trial on charges of PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two counts of PC422(A) – felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; three counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; a count of PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; three counts of PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; and two counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas.

Chávez must face a jury of his peers over charges of PC182(A)(1) – felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two counts of PC422(A) – felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; three counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; one count of PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; three counts of PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; and two counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas.

Amesquita must overcome allegations that she engaged in a violation of PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; a count of PC422(A) – felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; two counts of PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; two counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; and one count of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas if she is to clear her name.

López, who already has a felony record, will likely go back to prison if he cannot vindicate himself on charges of violating PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two counts of PC422(A) – felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; two counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; a single count of PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; two counts of PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; one count of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas; and one count of PC22810(A)- misdemeanor possession of tear gas by a convicted felon.

Carrasco’s existence will be fraught with difficulty from here on out unless she can convincingly refute the allegations against her that she engaged in PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two counts of PC422(A)- felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; three counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; one count of PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; three counts of PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; and two counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas.

Peña will be consigned to a lifetime of disapprobation if he fails to invalidate the accusations that he violated PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; twice violated PC422(A)- felony threats of engaging in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; thrice violated PC236 – felony false imprisonment; once involved himself in PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; three times engaged in PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; and twice made felony unlawful use of tear gas, violations of PC22810(G)(1).