

6 Enamorados' Guilty Pleas Leave Their Leader Jailed, Isolated & Facing Deportation

By Mark Gutglueck

Six of Edin Alex Enamorado's co-defendants in three September 2023 incidents in which he and his followers were criminally charged with having engaged in swarm assaults on individuals they were targeting or bystanders inadvertently caught up in Enamorado's self-styled crusade for justice this morning entered guilty pleas on single felony counts.

Stephanie Amésquita,

34 of San Bernardino; Vanessa Carrasco, 41 of Ontario; Wendy Luján, 41 of Upland; David Chávez, 28 of Riverside; and Edwin Peña, 27 of Los Angeles, each pleaded guilty to a single count of violating Penal Code § 245(a)(4)-F: assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury. Fernando Lopez, 45 of Los Angeles, entered a single guilty plea to PC245(a)(1)-F: assault with a

deadly weapon other than a firearm likely to result in great bodily injury.

Present during the hearing before Judge John M. Wilkerson were Deputy District Attorney Jason Wilkinson, the prosecutor on the case; all six defendants; Amésquita's attorney, Mauro Quintero; Luján's attorney, Christian Contreras; Chávez's attorney, Alejandro Benítez; Peña's attorney, Arsany

Said; and López's attorney, Erik Hammett.

Judge John M Wilkerson, after re-advising all six of each of their rights, found each defendant understood the charge to which each was pleading, the possible penalties, the right against self-incrimination, the right to confront and cross examine witnesses, the right to a public and speedy trial, the right to a jury trial, the right to have an attorney present at all stages of the proceedings and the right have the court exercise its compulsory process of subpoenaing witnesses. According to court records, each defendant freely, voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently expressly waived those rights in open court.

Under the agreements stipulated to by Wilkinson, Quintero, Contreras, Carrasco, Benítez, Said and Ham-

mett. See P 2

SBC Democrats

Looking To Reverse Six Decades Of Republican Ascendancy

San Bernardino County remains as a 20,105-square mile pocket of Republicanism within the Democrat-dominated California, one of the few areas within the 163,700-square-mile Golden State where Republicans have the upper hand. Nevertheless, Democratic Party leadership in the county is hailing advances that have been made and maintain momentum is trending their way, such that the rival party's lock on local governance will significantly attenuated in the current election cycle and perhaps broken by 2026 or 2028.

In the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and halfway through the 1960s, San Bernardino County leaned predominantly Democratic, represented from January 1937 until January 1965 by Harry Sheppard, a New Deal Democrat. During his 14 terms in Congress, Sheppard was instrumental in bringing a host of benefits to the district he represented, including the construction of what were then two Army Air Corps bases, which later became Norton Air Force Base in San Bernardino and George Air Force Base near Victorville. He was a firm and fast member of the Democratic establishment under President Roosevelt and then President Truman and by the time John Kennedy was elected President in 1960 he held status as one of the four or five dozen most powerful men in

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SBC GOP Head's Personal Agenda Is Shortchanging Party Candidates, Stalwarts Say

By Jennifer Oliver O'Connell

According to Article 2.1 of the San Bernardino GOP Bylaws, the mission of the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee (SBCRCC) is to promote the republican form of representative government. In the last few years, it has been failing this mission miserably, and conservatives in San

Bernardino feel the Central Committee Chair's fingerprints are all over the wreckage.

Phil Cothran, Sr. is the BMIF—Big Man In Fontana. He is a lifelong resident of the Inland Empire city who has owned a successful insurance agency for almost 35 years. During that time, Cothran has worked his way into civic leadership and local and

county power circles. Cothran is the president of the Fontana Chamber Of Commerce, president of Miss Fontana, Inc., chairman of the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board, a reserve police officer with the Fontana Police Department, has served on the Fontana Planning Commission, and top of it all, he is chairman of the San Ber-

nardino County Republican Central Committee. He prides himself on being a huge philanthropist. In 2014, the San Bernardino Sun wrote a puff piece on him, referencing him as the "Go-To Guy."

The City of Fontana has a population of 216,330, having seen an increase of 7,710 since the 2020 Census was taken. Much of Phil Co-

thran Sr's energy and attention have been devoted to Fontana. From a perusal of Fontana city pages and other San Bernardino Republican sites, some feel that focus has been at the expense of the San Bernardino County Central Committee. You see, Cothran obviously cares about growing his community. However, when you take

See P 2

56 Arrested June 1 At Adelanto Unauthorized Car Show Related To May 11 Highland Street Takeover

An investigative follow-through relating to a so-called street takeover incident on May 11 in Highland during which a mob attacked a San Bernardino County Sheriff's deputy and vandalized his patrol vehicle led to the arrest of 56 people who had gathered for a similar event in Adelanto on June 1.

Shortly after midnight on Saturday, May 11, 2024, a deputy from the Highland Station was enroute to a call when he encountered a large gathering of people and vehicles at the intersection of Highland Avenue and Victoria Avenue.

A crowd estimated at around 100 people both inside and outside their

vehicles surrounded the intersection, according to the sheriff's department, and a nearby fire hydrant had been opened to create a layer of water along the surface of the intersection into which the drivers could gun their vehicles and then lock up their brakes to "drift."

The deputy stopped at a red light

See P 2

Two County Residents Missing Under Pressing Circumstances

The lion's share of layoff notices that were issued to hundreds of teachers throughout the county in March were rescinded in May, such that the impact on the workforce working in the region's educational field will be minimal, according to school district officials, the area's economists and financial

prognosticators.

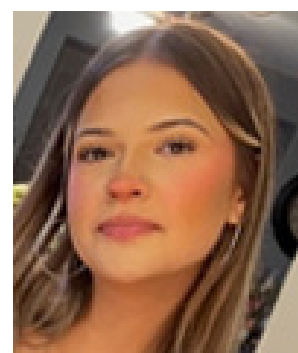
A combination of retirements from the teaching field and a slightly less onerous financial picture for most districts going forward than what was anticipated earlier this year has allowed districts to hang on to a significant portion of their staffs. Some layoffs will yet occur, however. See P 3

Two County Residents Missing Under Unrelated, Pressing And Dire Circumstances

The sheriff's department is seeking help from the public in finding two individuals who have vanished in separate, unrelated and geographically disparate circumstances.

Jenna Medel, a 16-year-old girl went missing from Granite Hills High School, located at 22900 Esaws Avenue, two weeks ago.

Described as a 5 foot-



Jenna Medel

3 inch tall, 105 pound Latina, Medel has blonde-streaked brown

hair, brown eyes, a small scar on her forehead and two nose piercings.

According to the sheriff's department, "On May 24, 2024, at approximately 6:35 a.m., Jenna Medel arrived by school bus at Granite Hills High School, in Apple Valley. After arriving, Jenna walked away from the school, west on Esaws Road and has not been seen or heard from. She



Frederick Wilhelm

was last seen wearing a black zip-up sweater, grey sweatpants, white

shoes, and was carrying a white backpack with pineapple designs on it."

Those who might have information that could be of assistance in locating her are urged to contact Deputy R. Conley at the Sheriff's Apple Valley Station at (760) 240-7400.

On Sunday, June 2, Frederick Wilhelm Jr, age 59, disappeared while he was See P 3

Amesquita's, Carrasco's, Luján's, Chávez's, Peña's and López's Idolization Of Enamorado Put Them Into Serious Legal Jeopardy *from front page*

mett and accepted by Judge Wilkerson, Amesquita, Carrasco and Luján were to be released today and must return to court on December 12, at which point they are to be sentenced to 353 days in county jail and will simultaneously be given, as of that date, credit for 353 days' time served, while Chávez, Peña and López are to remain in custody and return to court on December 12, at which point they are to be sentenced to two years in state prison with 364 days' credit for time served to be subtracted

from that term.

Judge Wilkerson agreed to dismiss one other count of PC245(a) (4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; one count of PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; one count of PC422(A) – issuing felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; two counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; and one count of PC22810(G) (1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas against Amesquita.

Judge Wilkerson agreed to dismiss two other counts of PC245(a) (4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; one count of PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two counts

of PC422(A)- issuing felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; three counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; three counts of PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; and two counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas against Carrasco.

Judge Wilkerson agreed to dismiss two other counts of PC245(a) (4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; one charge 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; and two

counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas against Luján.

Judge Wilkerson agreed to dismiss two other counts of PC245(a) (4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; 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; PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; and two counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas against Chávez.

Judge Wilkerson agreed to dismiss PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two counts of PC422(A) – felony threats to engage in criminal action likely to result

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in death or great bodily injury; two counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; one count of 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 against López.

Judge Wilkerson agreed to dismiss two remaining counts of PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury; one count *Continued on Page 4*

Highland Street Takeover Suspects Collared In Adelanto *from front page*

at the intersection when he came upon the scene, and was about to make an attempt to interrupt the activity, referred to by participants in such activity as a “street takeover,” by disbursing the crowd. Before he could do that, however, his patrol car was surrounded by a throng of takeover participants who began

kicking and punching the vehicle.

A significant degree of damage was done to the sheriff's unit, including the shattering of its windshield and vandalism to the vehicle's body panels.

At one point, the door of the patrol car was opened, it seemed, by a member of the crowd, though in the clearest video of the incident, because of the crowding around the car, it is not whether the deputy

sought to open the door or one particular individual standing next to the vehicle who could briefly be seen reaching for the external door handle opened the door. The deputy at that point drove away from the crowd.

Detectives from the department who examined the available video footage taken at the intersection and other evidence were able to make identifications of several of the participants in the

street takeover and determine that they were members of or affiliated with car clubs in the High Desert area. The investigators were able to identify an individual they referred to as “the primary suspect,” that being the young man or teenager believed to have attempted to open the car door in an effort “to overtake the deputy and his patrol unit.” That individual, according to the department, was a 15-year-old resi-

dent of Menifee in Riverside County.

An arrest warrant for the 15-year-old was prepared and signed by a San Bernardino County Superior Court Judge and then served at the juvenile's home around 6:30 a.m. on May 23, at which point he was taken into custody and booked into the San Bernardino County Juvenile Hall on felony vandalism and attempted carjacking charges. In the days thereafter, depu-

ties, detectives and sergeants assigned to the department's Operation Consequences enforcement effort worked in connection with the San Bernardino County Auto Theft Task Force, a multi-agency stolen vehicle recovery unit known by its acronym SANCATT, together with deputies and detectives in the sheriff's gangs/narcotics division, the Victorville Station, the Victor Valley Station, *Continued on Page 15*

County GOP Chairman Is Squandering Activist's Enthusiasm, Party Members Say *from front page*

on the position of chair of the county's Republican Central Committee, then one's focus should be on fundraising and promoting what is good for the entire county—not just a city of less than a quarter of a million people.

Some who have witnessed the ongoing erosion of the San Bernardino Republican Central Committee spoke with me on the condition of anonymity, others were quite open and vocal about their displeasure at the current state of affairs. Matthew Munson

is one of the latter. Munson, who was the 2014 and 2018 Republican candidate for State Senate District 20 and has been heavily involved in county politics for the last decade, expressed his discomfiture.

“I've been deeply involved in my local county party. I've realized that San Bernardino County Party is basically worse ran than the L.A. County Party,” said Munson. “The L.A. County Party is usually known as the most dysfunctional county party. But San Bernardino basically overtook the title of “Dysfunctional County Republican Party” in our state. And that's the reason why many of us ran for [Central] Committee in this cycle. We

just got fed up about the decline in fundraising. We ended up having it like in 2019. The Chairman said, Oh, ‘I'm going to be the salvation for the county party. We're going to raise a lot of money.’ And then, we ended up having our executive director basically laid off.”

Regina Santamaria was the Executive Director of the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee from 2018 to 2020. In a phone call with Santamaria, she confirmed that she had been the Executive Director during that period, and also confirmed that she had been laid off by the heads of the committee. The executive director position has been a revolving door

ever since, along with any war chest for the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee.

Munson continued, “We had almost a \$50,000 plus debt around 2020-2021-ish and then we did a major fundraiser with Dinesh D'Souza and that helped pay off the debt. And then after that, basically, he [Phil Cothran] tried a fundraiser in August of 2022, but it fell flat because he ended up losing about \$20,000 on that fundraiser. Where that's on our debt, on our sheets, you know, if you look at the 460s?”

Form 460s are the biannual fundraising reports required by the Secretary of State for all political parties, party

committees, candidates, candidate committees, and political action committees. The fact that these were obscured, filed in different locations (sometimes with the county, sometimes with the state), and practically buried (the committee has changed its name designation more than a few times), gives the appearance that someone does not want close scrutiny of the affairs of the San Bernardino Republican Central Committee. However, I ultimately dug up the Form 460 reports from 2017-2024 and combed through them. They tell a tale that corroborates what the interviewed subjects have been saying.

Catherine Saga Lara

worked as San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee's Election Integrity Director for four years and affirmed Munson's assessment that the SBCRCC is “a hot mess” and that it's part and parcel the result of Cothran's leadership—or lack thereof.

Said Lara, “There's our chairman, Phil Cothran,, who is pretty much corrupt. He's a big Fontana guy and it's all about Fontana. He and the Fontana Mayor, Acquannetta Warren, have all of these deals going on with all of these developers [of] warehouses and unions. It's a big political cog. [Cothran] became chairman of the GOP mainly because, you know, he wants to *Continued on Page 5*

Blasting A Lamborghini On El Mirage Dry Lakebed From A Helicopter Nets Man Federal Charges

A San Fernando Valley man has been arrested on a federal criminal complaint alleging he directed a YouTube video in which two women in a helicopter – flying near the ground and without filming permits – repeatedly shot fireworks at a Lamborghini sportscar last year in San Bernardino County, the Justice Department announced June 6.

Suk Min Choi, 24, a.k.a. “Alex Choi,” of

Studio City, is charged with one count of causing the placement of an explosive or incendiary device on an aircraft.

Choi made his initial appearance in United States District Court in downtown Los Angeles to answer the charges on Thursday afternoon. He was arrested on Wednesday. His arraignment under the federal justice system procedure is expected in the coming weeks.

According to an affidavit signed by Cristina Jones, a special agent with the United States Department of Transportation, Office of Inspector General, that was filed with the complaint, on July 4, 2023, Choi posted on his YouTube channel a video entitled, “Destroying a Lamborghini with Fireworks.” In the video, Choi presses a “fire missiles” button while two women are in a helicop-

ter, shooting fireworks at a speeding Lamborghini sportscar. Law enforcement believes the video was shot on the El Mirage Dry Lakebed in San Bernardino County.

After shooting what appears to be a live-action version of a fictionalized video game scene, the video transitions to a behind-the-scenes look at how Choi shot the first third of the video. During this portion of the video, Choi makes vari-

ous references to himself coordinating the shoot. Specifically, the video states that Choi directed it. In the video, Choi thanks a camera company for “being a part of my crazy stupid ideas.”

He also stated in the video that the group who helped make the video “fucked up” at one point “because I forgot to tell my friend how to use a torch.”

Finally, as noted in the affidavit, during the

video it appears Choi made the decision to end filming when someone asked if they would film again, stating, “No, that’s it. We’re out of fireworks, right?”

A clip of the video viewable on Instagram shows the women shooting the Lamborghini as the Miley Cyrus’s song *Party in the U.S.A.* is heard, including the lyrics, “I play my song.

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Scandal Precipitated Democrats Surrender Of SB County To The GOP In 1966 *from front page*

the country. Barely two months after the Lyndon Johnson administration had settled into 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Sheppard’s political authority evaporated within the span of a few days in January 1964, when he deposited a total of \$275,000 in twelve different savings institutions in the Washington, D.C./Virginia/Maryland area. Sheppard’s faux pas in opening three separate \$10,000 accounts – one penny below the threshold for an automatic report to the Internal Revenue Service – in each of eight savings and loan associations and then single deposits of

\$10,000 into three banks and one more of \$5,000 into another bank in and near the nation’s capital brought much unwanted scrutiny when it was publicly revealed the following month. Most



Harry Sheppard

deemed unconvincing Sheppard’s explanation that the money was his life savings that he had kept as cash in a safe deposit box since his election to Congress some 27 years previously and that he had just gotten around to making preparations to ensure his

wife’s future by making those deposits. He said he previously did not have time to manage his investments and didn’t want the income from putting the money into an interest-bearing account because that would have pushed him into a higher tax bracket. Neither the IRS, nor the U.S. Attorney’s Office nor any other authorities took action against Sheppard, but the revelation meant the end of his political career. He did not seek reelection that year, and he left office on January 3, 1965.

Harry Sheppard’s demise coincided with the eclipsing of the Democratic Party by the GOP in San Bernardino County and California as a whole. For two years, another Democrat, Kenneth Dyal replaced Sheppard

in the U.S. Congress, but in 1966, Dyal was replaced by a Republican, Jerry Pettis, in the same election during which Ronald Reagan became California governor. Republicans took control of San Bernardino County from that point forward.

For the next four decades, the number of registered Republicans in San Bernardino County outran the number of Democrats. With some notable exceptions, those elected to state legislative office, to the board of supervisors, district attorney, sheriff, and to the city councils and to the mayoralties of the cities within the county were by and large Republicans.

In the late 1990s/early 2000s, the Golden State as a whole fell into the hands of the Democrats once more. Still,

San Bernardino County remained one of California’s last remaining enclaves of Republicanism.

In 2009, for the first time in 40-plus years, the number of registered Democrats surpassed those registered as Republicans in San Bernardino County. Remarkably, however, despite the demographics that had swung in favor of the Democrats and more than a few scandals that local Republican officeholders had managed to embroil themselves in during the first decade of the Third Millennium, the GOP continued to dominate San Bernardino County.

As of this week, over the entirety of San Bernardino County and its 1,175,462 registered voters, Democrats convincingly outnumber

registered Republicans 472,146 or 40.2 percent to 353,518 or 30.1 percent. Still, engaged Republicans outthrust engaged Democrats and do a far better job of convincing their less active party colleagues to get out and vote than do their Democrat rivals. Of the five positions on the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, four are held by Republicans. On the 22 city and two town councils among the 24 incorporated municipalities in San Bernardino County, 17 have more Republican members than Democrats. While the Democrats hold their own against Republicans in the state and federal legislative arenas of the California Senate, Assembly and the U.S. Congress, representing

Continued on Page 9

State Reducing School Funding *from front page*

In California, school districts must issue by the Ides of March tentative notices to the current teachers they employ if the district is not going to keep the teacher in place for the next academic

year, the instructional calendar for which in most district’s initiates in August. The state further requires that the districts finalize those layoff decisions no later than May 15 and confirm or cancel the tentative layoff notices with the teachers whose jobs are on the line by that date.

The sheer number of teachers tentatively told that they should begin making employment arrangements elsewhere was far more substantial late this winter than any other year in memory.

One factor in the financial drawdown for school districts throughout California is what

is being represented as Governor Gavin Newsom’s mishandling of the state’s financial affairs. California went from having what Newsom at the beginning of the 2021-22 budgetary cycle said was a \$98 billion surplus to a projected \$73 billion deficit in rapidly closing 2023-24 and what is being forecast by the California Legislative Analyst’s Office as another \$73 billion budget deficit for fiscal year 2024-25. In California, school districts are largely dependent on monetary pass-throughs from the state government in Sacramento.

Another factor is that school districts throughout California, indeed,

nationwide, were previously being subsidized with additional funding to enable them to remain functional in the face of the 2020 COVID outbreak that continued for some two years and slowly diminished with the implementation of widespread vaccinations.

With the elapsing of the epidemic/pandemic and the discontinuation of remote learning models and the re-instigation of in-class instruction, the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund put in place after the COVID crisis hit has now run out and districts have returned to their normal operational and budgetary modes.

California received roughly \$23.1 billion in federal COVID-19 relief funding beginning in March 2020, which was distributed to the state’s schools through the California Department of Education, which is overseen by the state superintendent of public instruction, that being Tony Thurmond, who has held the post since 2019.

School funding in general is a percentage function, set by policy makers in Sacramento, of the State of California’s budget, under a distribution formula contained in California’s Proposition 98. With the overall reduction in money in California’s budget,

Continued on Page 7

Missing *from front page*

hiking on the Vivian Creek Trail in the area of Forest Falls with two friends.

He became separated from the two others on the 17.9 mile and roughly 11-hour trek to the summit of 11,503 foot elevation Mt. San Gor-

gonio, having last been seen around 1 p.m. The San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department Search and Rescue team over the last several days has coordinating a search for Wilhelm.

He is described as 5’11”, 215 pounds, with light colored hair and blue eyes. He was last seen wearing a blue

sweatshirt and tan pants. He was carrying a forest green camel pack and walking poles.

Anyone with information regarding Wilhelm is being asked to contact Deputy Eugene Juarez at the Yucaipa Police Department at 1-909-918-2305.

Do You Have Information Of Public Interest? Call the *Sentinel* at (951) 567 1936 The *Sentinel* is always looking for information to inform our readership and keep our readers abreast of newsworthy developments.

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San Bernardino County *Sentinel*

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As A Messiah Who Was Promising To Reinvent California As The Promised Land For La Raza, Enamorado Held That Violently Expelling The White Race Was Morally Justifiable & Legal *from page 2*

of PC182(A)(1)-felony conspiracy to commit a crime; two counts of PC422(A)-felony issuing threats of engaging in criminal action likely to result in death or great bodily injury; three counts of PC236 – felony false imprisonment; three counts of PC207(A) – felony kidnapping; and two counts of PC22810(G)(1) – felony unlawful use of tear gas against Peña.

Amésquita's, Carrasco's, Luján's, Chávez's, Peña's and López's two codefendants in the case, Gullit Eder Acevedo and Edin Alex Enamorado, the leader of the Enamorados, were not parties to the deal and were not in court. Acevedo, who is represented by attorneys Dan Chambers and Parag Shah, is due to return to court before Judge Albert Hsueh for a pretrial hearing on July 23. While Acevedo, who is known by the nickname "Jaguar," was originally charged with the fewest number of counts against him of all of the defendants – felony PC 245.2, use of a deadly weapon on an operator of a motor vehicle; felony PC 236, false imprisonment; felony PC22810(G)(1), unlawful use of tear gas; and felony PC 182.5, conspiracy to commit a gang-related felony – Chambers was

able to credibly establish that Acevedo was not present at two of the September 2023 incidents involving the other seven defendants and he persuaded Judge Zahara Arredondo to dismiss the PC182 conspiracy, PC236 – felony false imprisonment and PC22810 use of tear gas charges against Acevedo, entering a ruling that there was insufficient evidence to convict him on those counts. Judge Arredondo further granted Chambers' motion to reduce or modify the PC245(a)(4) – felony assault by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury to PC245(a)(4)- misdemeanor assault.

Edin Alex Enamorado, represented by attorney Nicholas Rosenberg, has remained defiant, insisting that his aggressive activities in defending the poor and disenfranchised and standing up for street vendors while confronting the racists who victimize them have never crossed the line into criminality.

Enamorado, 37, a convicted felon and self-acknowledged "gang banger" who moved to the United States from Guatemala with his parents as an infant and was raised on the mean streets of Cudahy, claims he turned his life around about a decade ago when

the gangland activity he was engaged in resulted in the shooting death of his girlfriend. Thereafter, he says, he committed himself to working toward the betterment of the society in which he lives. That included, Enamorado maintains, seeking social justice, including forcing a recognition that white Europeans who colonized the New World and then created the United States have usurped the land of the indigenous people of North America, whom they exterminated, removed, marginalized or otherwise dominated, while imposing on them an onerous, unfair and damaging capitalistic system.

One immediate element of Enamorado's action plan was to resist local municipalities in their imposition of regulations and ordinances relating to street vending, which Enamorado maintains is an element of Latino culture that street vendors have a constitutional right to engage in. The indigenous people who have survived or made their way back into what is now the United States and Alta California after having been displaced generations ago should now be free to conduct themselves outside that inherently unfair capitalistic paradigm without the interference of the white European racists who now have control of California politically, according to the Enamorados. Moreover, according to the Enamorados,

those indigenous people who have been assimilated into the white European culture or those members of La Raza whose ancestors returned to California from Mexico or even further south two, three, four or five generations ago and have now been abstracted into the California establishment either politically or economically or both are "coconuts," i.e., people who are brown on the outside but white on the inside, ones who have accepted the racist ethos of the white oppressors.

One of the Enamorados' tactics is to show up singly or in small numbers or en masse at a public meeting of the civil authority or a given jurisdiction's decision-making body such as a city council, generally with Edin Alex Enamorado leading them, to either protest a past decision or ongoing policy or to lobby against a contemplated new policy or action such as passing an ordinance that would clamp down on street vendors.

Another is a general show of protest in a given area, such as a downtown business district or outside a public building.

With his acolytes, whom he recruited both in person and through his use of various social media platforms, Edin Alex Enamorado has rallied to the locations where street vendors were confronted by law enforcement, municipal code enforcement, local business owners or citi-

zens to take "direct action." The ordinances put in place to prevent street vendors or sidewalk vendors from setting up operations near, in front of or in the parking lots of brick and mortar operations are an immoral carryover of the racist capitalistic system, the Enamorados maintain. One technique in their approach consists of offering what they term "support" and "security" to street vendors as they ply their trade, a presence intended to ward off anyone who would interfere with the vendors. That extends to "protection," i.e., providing the vendors with what are essentially bodyguards. In addition, they will supply the vendors with chemical agents such as mace or pepper spray that they can use against anyone they deem to be threatening them.

On his own as a social justice crusader prior to his incarceration, Enamorado often engaged in exchanges with the media during which he held himself out as an activist earnestly pursuing the goals of ensuring equality, protecting civil rights, standing up for the weak, impoverished and unfranchised while holding government accountable to the people. During those media encounters, Enamorado sought to express himself in measured and articulate terms. His approach in the field, which more often than not was captured in moving sound images by videographers

who accompanied him, was to portray himself as an avenging angel of justice ready to strike down with furious rage upon those who would harm the innocent immigrants whom he was protecting, relying primarily upon physical confrontation. This involved a formula that had as its ingredients equal parts of a presumption of moral superiority, making accusations of racism, profanity, rapid fire questions and assertions without giving his interlocutor an opportunity to respond or otherwise immediately dismissing any response made, browbeating, insults and threats. In such circumstances, the intent was not to achieve an exchange of information or views but rather to relentlessly intimidate, provoke and stage a scene in which Edin Alex Enamorado, as the group leader, emerged triumphant. Key elements of Enamorado's approach were being surrounded by a physically intimidating support network, the use of surprise, verbal domination and videography to capture an indelible visual and audio recording of the individual being confronted, which in many, though not all, cases resulted in an untoward or intemperate remark or reaction. Routinely, videos of these confrontations were uploaded onto social media platforms Enamorado controlled. Some of those depicted an individual

Continued on Page 6

In 2014, Deperately Needing The Financial Reach The County GOP Could Give Him To Transition From The California Assembly To The County Board Of Supervisors, Hagman Commandeered Control Of The Central Committee, Displacing Two Incumbent Republicans In The Process & Setting A Precedent By Which The Party Has Become A Tool Of Whoever Dominates It from page 2

continue his reign for Fontana, not so much for the county. He really doesn't give a shit about the county. So there's been lots of problems with him."

Change "lots" to "plethora," and you have a more accurate picture. Going back to the Forms 460, you can see a shift in contributions to the SBCRCC from individuals and small business, to developers and labor unions.

While some have been trying to connect the dots from these hefty contributions to Cothran and the pet projects in Fontana, a bright line has yet to be found.

The major fissures in San Bernardino County's Republican Party date back to well before Cothran's leadership began. In 2013, Curt Hagman, a term-limited Republican Assemblyman Hagman decided he needed another political position to fill; so, he decided to run for the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. There was only one problem: incumbent Republican Gary Ovitt already filled the seat, and planned to run for reelection. Hagman knew that the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee chairman at that time would not overthrow Ovitt in order to back him. Thus, the internecine drama began.

Hagman set about deposing the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee chairman, Robert Rego, and taking on the committee chairmanship for himself. Rego, during his tenure as chairman, had built the county's Republican Central Committee into a formidable fundraising machine, and the party had used the mother's milk

of politics in multiple venues throughout the county to maintain incumbent Republicans in office or elect fresh candidates bearing the GOP standard, outmaneuvering their more numerous but less organized, less coordinated and under-



Curt Hagman

funded Democrat counterparts.

Hagman knew that Rego would be reluctant to support any effort to oppose the reelection of an incumbent Republican such as Ovitt and outright unwilling to use the central committee's money in support of a non-incumbent such as himself in an electoral effort against an incumbent Republican. In a power play that involved his coordinating with former Assemblyman and State Senator Jim Brulte who that year was gunning, ultimately successfully, to seize for himself chairmanship of the California Republican Party, Hagman utilized his available resources, which included his then-status as an assemblyman along with the talents of his Assembly office chief of staff, West Covina Mayor Mike Spence, to engage in a round of dealmaking and political horse-trading, to oust Rego as the chairman of the San Bernardino County Central Committee and install himself in that post, a perch from which he could ensure that he would be able to prioritize the spending of local party money to elect

him as San Bernardino County supervisor in the Fourth District in the 2014 election cycle.

Hagman is a consummate politician. Not only did he convince Ovitt that his time on the board of supervisors was finished, but he persuaded the majority Democratic District 4 voters to back him over Gloria Negrete-McLeod, the Democrat challenger who was a much more seasoned former assemblywoman, state senator and Congresswoman. The war chests from Hagman's Assembly campaigns as well as from the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee facilitated this greatly. Hagman was able to set up his fiefdom on both the SBCRCC and the San Bernardino Board of Supervisors. In 2017, after several years of heading the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee, Hagman turned the reins over to Jan Leja, a lieutenant. This guaranteed that despite not having an official role on the SBCRCC, he still had his hand in its affairs. Robert Rego, the chairman who Hagman overthrew, has also maintained his seat on SBCRCC's Executive Committee, and appears to have sold what many thought was a reputation of integrity in order to maintain an insider role. Leja stepped down as chair in 2021, and Phil Cothran, who was finance chair under Leja, was then elected to chair. So, the fractures and factions that were planted decades before is now yielding a bad harvest.

Angel mom, former 2020 Congressional candidate, and longtime Rancho Cucamonga resident Agnes Gibboney immediately noticed a divide between Executive Central Committee and the Committee Caucuses, and it was clear that the Executive Committee had opposite aims.

"Well," said Gibboney, "I have been part of the Central Committee for quite some time as an alternate for other people. And then in 2020, I ran for Congress

and I became an ex officio, but I didn't know much [about] how the process worked. However, I was noticing an incredible amount of cliques, you know, from the very get go. It was just nothing but a clique! And obviously, it was like almost two groups mixed together, but they never mixed together—it was like water and oil.

As the SBC Sentinel reported, Hagman's history included an alliance with Democrat politician Norma Torres, whom he convinced to endorse him for his Board of Supervisors seat over Connie Leyva—another Democrat politician with a history of experience that far exceeded his.

Despite Leyva's labor and union affiliation, Hagman was able to pick up the endorsements of multiple unions, including the one that perhaps counted most, that of the Teamsters Union representing San Bernardino County employees. Torres was widely credited with giving the union bosses clearance to back away from Leyva and embrace Hagman.

Phil Cothran seems to have chosen to use the same playbook, but with the subtlety of a hammer on a nail. The comments on social media among the affected San Bernardino conservative communities is that Cothran has been making deals to funnel money to Democrat and Democrat-leaning candidates, in order to obtain perks for connected cities like his beloved Fontana. As the SBCRCC Chair, an overt endorsement of a Democrat candidate violates their bylaws. It also erodes the trust of the Republicans of the county who pour their time, talent, and treasure into candidates who they feel will represent them. Cothran has somehow managed to skate this line. However, there are political action committees registered in the county, one with clear ties to Cothran. These political action committees, known by the acronym PAC, have actively attacked fellow Republicans running for local,

county, and statewide office. Most recently they have been used against Republicans running for San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee seats, and Form 460 documents from these PACs reflect the money that was spent on mailers and Facebook ads in order to oppose them. SBCRCC treasurer Robert Rego is a named treasurer for the Committee for an Effective Government, one of the PACs in question.

The other political action committee is the Inland Empire Business Alliance. According to



Phil Cothran Sr.

the Form 410 Statement of Organization, the PAC was formed in 2016, and Phil Cothran is the named principal official of the PAC with Stephen Dunn as the named treasurer.

Dunn is also connected to the committee to elect Jesse Armendarez for Supervisor 2020. Jesse Armendarez was one of several Upland, Fontana, and county candidates supported by the PAC in 2016, but Armendarez appeared to receive much of the largesse for his Fontana City Council run. As the Form 460 below shows, upwards of \$36,081.02 was spent on campaign mailers, compared to \$20,480.50 for Mars Serna for Fontana School Board, and \$16,361.66 for Debbie Stone for Upland Mayor.

As part of launching the Inland Empire Business Alliance, Phil Cothran loaned \$23,000 of his own personal money to the entity.

It was the 2022 midterm elections where the eruptions and attacks on other Republican candidates became evident. One person who spoke on condition of anonymity felt that it tore apart the fabric of the com-

munity. This person felt the cohesiveness of the grassroots conservatives and Republicans in the county was its hallmark, and that Phil Cothran's actions compromised this.

"That's what I liked[...] the enthusiasm there compared to L.A. County," he said. "I couldn't believe the amount of people who wanted to help out, and volunteer. They wanted to get involved."

Now that a County election was in play, the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee—or at least its Chairman—became heavily involved in the race for the District 2 Board of Supervisors seat, which represents Fontana, Rancho Cucamonga and northern Upland. It became 2013 all over again, as two Republicans were vying for the post: former Fontana City Councilman Jesse Armendarez and longtime Rancho Cucamonga resident and Cucamonga Valley Water District member Luis Cetina.

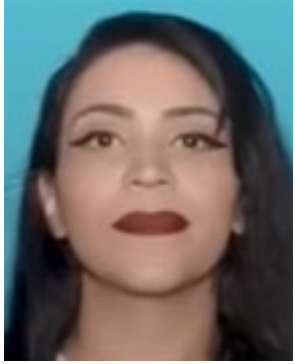
Of note here: in California most local positions are supposedly non-partisan, and county and state offices are where candidates move into a political party apparatus. Reportedly, Armendarez was formerly a progressive Democrat and changed his party affiliation when he decided to run for Board of Supervisors. However, according to the San Bernardino Democrat Party, he was not forthcoming about his party affiliation or campaign funds. They filed a complaint with the Federal Political Practices Commission (FPPC) that a \$31,000 transfer of funds from Armendarez' Fontana City Council committee to his Supervisorial committee did not indicate the individual contributors. The Democrat Party alleged he was avoiding campaign contribution limits.

Armendarez' challenger and fellow Republican Luis Cetina has no connections to Fontana, and thus did not receive

Continued on Page 7

By Videotaping Everything He Did & Proudly Displaying It On Social Media, Enamorado Cooked His Own Goose And That Of His Followers *from page 4*

being confronted or in other cases bystanders to the protests the Enamorados had mounted growing impatient at being harangued, blocked or hemmed in and then reacting, whereupon the subject would be ganged



Stephanie Amésquita

up upon and physically assaulted by those present. Audible in those videos would be a running commentary from Enamorado, the videographer or one of the participants in the melee offering a justification for the violence that was depicted.

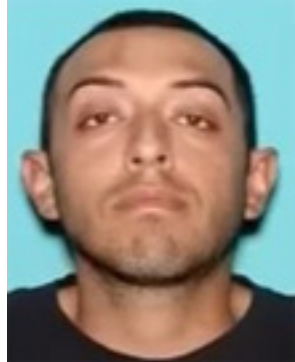
Three such incidents, two of which occurred over the 2023 Labor Day holiday on September 3 and another on September 24, formed the criminal case put together against the six Enamorados by the San Bernardino County District Attorney's office.

In early September, after Edin Enamorado learned that a security guard at El Super Market at the northeast corner of Indian Hill Avenue and Holt Boulevard in Pomona had a confrontation with some street vendors there by insisting that they not sell their food items from a table set up in the grocery store parking lot, he appealed to his followers on social media to find out who the security guard was. On the morning of September 3, a Sunday, Enamorado traveled from his residence in Upland to the Pomona Police Department headquarters located within the Pomona Civic Center to demand that the department take action against the security guard, who was later identified by San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

investigators and the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office as "John Doe 1." Enamorado, who had yet to determine the identity of the security guard, livestreamed to his Instagram channel that exchange with two police officers outside the entrance to the police station lobby, during which he was critical of the department's failure to arrest the security guard. In that video, Enamorado tells the police, in the midst of assailing them for not dealing with the security guard that "We'll be holding him accountable."

After that exchange with the officers, Enamorado returned to Upland, where, at 2:43 p.m., he received a message from an individual identified as "Big Guppy 420" who was apparently monitoring El Super.

"He's here," Big Gup-



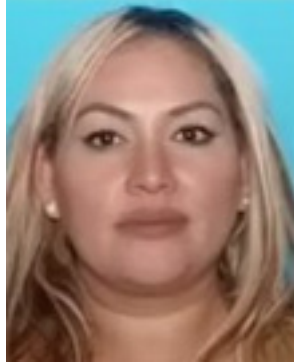
David Chávez

py 420 related to Enamorado, who responded, "I'm on my way." While he was yet in Upland, Enamorado phoned Luján at 2:45 p.m. and arrangements were made to alert the other Enamorados that the security guard – John Doe 1 – was at El Super and that they should go there at once. In video footage of what ensued taken by one of the Enamorados which was later posted to social media one of the Enamorados can be heard saying "Spray his dumb ass."

Other video passages taken inside El Super, including ones recorded by one of the Enamorados as well as the store's security videos, show the security guard sprawled on the floor, blinded by pepper spray. He manag-

es to get to his feet, make his way toward one of the store's cash registers, where three of the Enamorados are kicking him and raining blows down upon him.

After the mid-afternoon September 3 incident between the Enamorados and the security guard, Pomona Police arrived and arrested Luján. Thereupon, the En-



Vanessa Carrasco

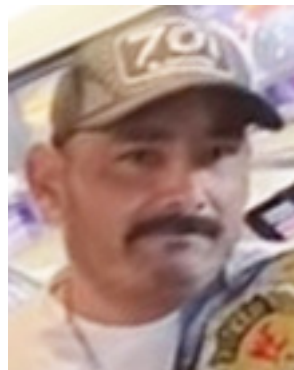
amorados sojourned to the Pomona Police headquarters to object to her arrest and get her out of custody. A Pomona resident, later identified during court proceedings as John Doe 2, came to the police station, intending to file an unrelated police report. Unbeknownst to any of those there – both the Enamorados and the Pomona resident – the police station was shuttered that day because of the Labor Day holiday. The resident, unable to get into the police headquarters lobby because of the protesters milling about in front of the station, perceived his inability to file the report he had come to make was because police personnel had locked the entrance because of the protest. Words were exchanged between the resident and some of Enamorados. When John Doe 2 went back to his car, he was accompanied by several of the Enamorados. Further words were exchanged, and the resident threw an open Gatorade bottle at them as he was about to drive off. The Enamorados mistakenly took the liquid in the bottle to be urine. Edin Enamorado told one of the Enamorados to determine where John Doe 2 lived. The resident resided roughly a mile from the Pomona Civic Center and shortly after his place of residence was determined, someone can be overheard

on Edin Enamorado's livestream video of the protest outside the police station say that they were going to John Doe 2's home. About half of the Enamorados engaged in the protest peeled off and went to the man's home. There they found him seated in his vehicle.

Enamorado challenged him to fight. Someone else could be heard on one of the videos of that confrontation telling John Doe 2 "I will beat you every day if you don't get out of the car." When he did get out of the vehicle, John Doe was forced to his knees, where he groveled before his tormentors, pleading with them not to harm him.

Further threats to harm John Doe 2 were made, capped by Carrasco humiliating him yet further by implying that they could have easily killed him. "We let you live, homey," she said.

On September 24, Edin Enamorado led a group of Enamorados to Victorville to protest

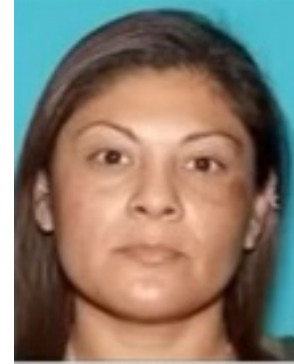


Fernando López

an incident that had occurred in the parking lot outside Ray Moore Stadium in the immediate aftermath of a football game between Victor Valley and Big Bear high schools the evening of September 22 when Sheriff's Deputy Starsun Fincel was videotaped slamming a 16-year-old girl, Faith Jeffers, a student at Victor Valley High, as the deputy and one of his colleagues sought to break up a fight that had broken out between Jeffers and another girl.

The protesters rallied in the area around the Victorville Sheriff's Station on Amargosa Road near Palmdale Road. With his trademark bullhorn in hand, Edin Enamorado led a party of

roughly 40 Enamorados, most of them from lower San Bernardino County and Los Angeles County, as they joined with an equal or greater number of protesters from the High Desert, several of them carrying placards calling for justice for Jeffers, as they paraded along the highly visible stretch of Palmdale Road between Amargosa



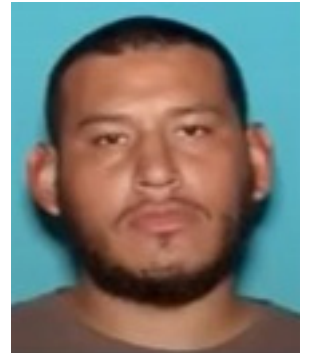
Wendy Luján

Road and McArt Road. Exhorting the crowd, Enamorado who at that point had yet to learn the deputy involved was Fincel, demanded that the department publicly reveal who the deputy was and that he be fired by the department and prosecuted by the district attorney's office. Enamorado used his cell phone to videorecord the protest, which was also being memorialized for posterity by at least three other Enamorados using shoulder-held, handheld or tripod-mounted video cameras.

As the protest was ongoing, a couple in a relatively late model Hyundai had gone into the car wash proximate to the sheriff's station near the intersection of McArt Road and Palmdale Road. Upon attempting to leave, the woman, who was driving, was unable to pull onto Palmdale Road from the car wash parking lot's exit because of the traffic flow on Palmdale Road coupled with the constant stream of protesters moving in both directions on the sidewalk and gutter of the roadway. Despite the Hyundai's obvious presence and the driver's intent to leave, the protesters remained disregarding of the car and its occupants as most were engaged in making a show of protest to the motorists passing by on Palmdale Road.

The occupants of the

Hyundai exhibited patience initially, but after more than two minutes, the woman sounded the Hyundai's horn. This had no appreciable impact on the protesters, who continued to file in front of the car, such that the driver could not move the car forward without running into and possibly injuring one or more of the protesters. A further wait ensued, at which point the woman sounded the horn once more and the man opened the door on the passenger's side of the car. As the man emerged, Enamorado, making use of his bullhorn, accused him of hitting a woman by opening his car door into her, doing so in rather derogatory terms, including referring to the man as a "bitch." One, then two, and then a third Enamorado began to rain blows on the man, who attempted to defend himself while he was angled away from the car and then knocked to the ground. As he attempted to get to his feet, he was



Edwin Peña

pepper sprayed. The incident was captured on video from at least three perspectives. Among those who can be seen in one of the video depictions hitting the man is Edin Enamorado, who does so with his left fist while holding and continuing to video with his cellphone in his right hand.

The man succeeded in getting up but as he was staggering, he was knocked to the ground once more and kicked while he was down. After the man was pepper sprayed and on the ground for the second time, Edin Enamorado can be heard repeatedly remarking, "That's what he gets."

As it was ongoing, the incident was *Continued on Page 8*

A Civil War Is Brewing Within The San Bernardino County Republican Camp As The Parties Traditionalis Work Horses And Grass Roots Activists Are Witnessing The Central Committees Leadership Make Deals With & Endorse Democrats In An Effort To Perpetuate The Hold A Few Big Name Republicans Have On Elected Office *from page 5*

the red-carpet treatment from Cothran or his team. Cothran exposed himself by endorsing Armendarez over Cetina.

Endorsement decisions are supposed to involve the entire Executive Committee, but according to sources, this step was bypassed. The Inland Empire Business Alliance Form 460 for the period covering July 2022 through October 2022 (right before the November election) attests to money having been spent to oppose Luis Cetina.

Here is where the second PAC, the Committee for an Effective Government came into play. A mailer and a Facebook ad began to appear about this time with language accusing Cetina of being a former Democrat and an agent for a leftist takeover of the San Bernardino Republican Party. The advertisement stated it was, "Sponsored by the Committee for an Effective Government," and also included the names of the Republican candidates for the Central Committee, of which Catherine Saga Lara and Agnes Gibboney were a part. Even Aaron Park at Right Daily blog took notice at this glaring conflict of interest.

As this Form 460 filed by the SBCRCC attests, Cothran poured all of the SBCRCC war chest into the District 2 Board of Supervisors race for Jesse Armendarez. This is the same Jesse Armendarez he helped get elected in 2016 through large sums of money funneled through the Inland Empire Business Alliance PAC. Beginning with Armendarez' ascension to the Fontana City Council, he has had a long—and some would say questionable—history with Chair Cothran and Fontana Mayor Acquanetta Warren. According to a Form 497

(which reflects big money contributions to a campaign/PAC), in 2014, a "Citizens and Friends of Acquanetta Warren" PAC poured \$5,000 into Armendarez' campaign for the Fontana Unified Board of Education. According to one constituent, who took to the platform Medium with their intel, Armendarez did not live within the boundaries of the Fontana School District and his children did not even attend any Fontana Unified school.

Armendarez was elected to that position, and his role on the school board appeared to be funneling city contractors and developers into the district to do work and to ensure he was a "Yes" vote for their approval. When Armendarez was elected to Fontana City Council, he seemed to serve the same convenient role, but only served one term. Apparently, Cothran had higher ends in mind. In 2020, Armendarez ran for District 5 Board of Supervisors but lost to Joe Baca, Jr.

Which brings us back to 2022 and the finances of SBCRCC. In pouring all the campaign funding into Armendarez' District 2 Board of Supervisors campaign, Cothran left zero cash in the war chest for other pivotal races: namely the state Assembly. Many of the San Bernardino assembly districts are shared with other counties, but three are solely San Bernardino County. AD 47 and AD 50 were critical and could have been won by Republicans had proper funding and focus been applied. Assembly District 47 had been rezoned in 2021, creating an entirely new district with no incumbent in the race. Assemblyman Chad Mayes, who formerly represented Assembly District 42,

had decided not to seek re-election. Mayes was an embattled Republican In Name Only who ultimately left the Party under a cloud of scandal and is decidedly Never Trump.

Mayes' former aide Greg Wallis decided to run for the Assembly District 50 seat, where the endorsed candidate was Sheela Stark, who was running against Democrat incumbent and Majority Leader Eloise Gomez Reyes. Reyes has held the seat since 2016. Because the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee spent all its cash on Armendarez, the staff assistant at San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee headquarters had to tell Stark, "I'm sorry, we have nothing to give you." Stark lost the race by 17 points. Wallis, like his Democrat opponent, was a wildcard and barely squeaked through with less than 100 votes. But it is clear that in either race, money poured into candidate advocacy, and ballot harvesting and ballot curing (which is legal in California), could have affected the outcome, and potentially changed the trajectory of the race.

The staff assistant surmised of Cothran, "I think he was being very selfish about the whole thing."

Just as Armendarez could be counted on as a guaranteed vote for construction and infrastructure projects when he was on the Fontana Unified School Board and the Fontana City Council to ensure that money was funneled in and through the City of Fontana, it is quite possible that with the California High Speed Rail project and others on the docket, Fontana could use an ally on the Board of Supervisors to ensure they get their slice of the pie. As one person interviewed surmised, "He wanted Armendarez to be on the Board of Supervisors—very much so—because of those railroad, businesses that would be up for grabs for Fontana."

The staff assistant said, "Luis Cetina was the better candidate and was even more conservative. The whole reason they didn't want Cetina is because he was Rancho Cucamonga.

I lost my respect for Phil Cothran because of that."

The schisms created by Curt Hagman and exacerbated by Cothran have become a festering sore, and that sore has now erupted. The mismanagement of funds, attacks on fellow Republicans, and general rancor existent between the faction of the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee Executive Committee and Caucus representatives culminated in a particularly heated Central Committee meeting in September of 2023. Cothran's and San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee's poor management has also had a chilling effect on funding for the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee and its causes, as well as volunteer participation, which is crucial for caucusing and get out the vote efforts. With the 2024 elections just six months away, this is not an effective position for a County central committee to find themselves.

With the progression of 2023 toward the election year of 2024, candidates for political office in the next election cycle, which will manifest first with the March primary, are readying for their electioneering efforts, including scouring the political landscape to size up the competition or possible competition, raising money, securing support, lining up endorsements and forming alliances.

A number of Republicans inching toward, or committed to, running in 2024 have been disheartened to learn that just as occurred in 2022, several of their party's most prominent and influential members – including the chairman of the Republican Central Committee, Phil Cothran Sr – have committed to supporting the Democrats they are

going to run against.

And this time around, there are national implications. Republican Mike Cargile has a good chance of unseating Democrat Congresswoman Norma Torres. However, Torres is on the powerful House Appropriations Subcommittees for Transportation and Housing, State and Foreign Affairs, and Financial Services. Torres has had ties to retired San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee Chair Curt Hagman, and there are unproven allegations of a connection to Chair Phil Cothran. If Torres staying in her seat means more funding for cities like Fontana, how much backing will Cothran give to Cargile, who may or may not contribute to those personal agendas? Republican Suzette Martinez Vallardes is running against Kipp Mueller for State Senate District 23, which encompasses cities in the county. With a county party in debt as well as in fracture, how much support and backing will she be able to receive in order to win her bid?

I reached out to San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee Chair Phil Cothran through his GOP email about the information outlined. As of this publication, Cothran has not replied or comment-

ed.

The issues with the Republican Party national apparatus uncovered at RedState, another publication to which I contribute, appears to have filtered down to this California central committee, and possibly others. This is a problem, especially for California, where conservatives are fighting for their lives. Regions like San Bernardino are the places where a real difference for conservatism can be made, not just in terms of the locality, but across the entire United States. Look at the powerful work being done by Representative Kevin Kiley (R-CA) not just for California, but for constitutionally-aligned persons across the nation. California is also the place where national candidates are made. Sadly, it only takes one power-hungry individual bent on their own agenda to ruin what should be a unified process of ensuring the best candidates get a seat at the table and proper representation, get the support and funding they need from their party, and most importantly, ensure that they can win.

Jennifer Oliver O'Connell is the progenitor of In My Orbit, a reader-supported publication.

School Districts Grew Accus-tomed To COVID Augmentation Funding *from page 3*

funding to schools began diminishing last year when it was determined that Governor Newsom's once-sanguine budget projections were not going to be met. The more sober budget projections for the coming year have continued the reduction in funding for state government programs all around, including education.

The return to in-class instruction which entails students actually being on campus brought about a return to normative operational costs,

since deserted schools had allowed districts to reduce school maintenance and other refurbishing outlays, as well as ones for energy, including electricity and heating, air conditioning and ventilation. In some cases, districts had utilized a portion of the funding for instructors hired on provisional conditions, such as to provide provide make-up instruction and assistance to students who had fallen behind as a consequence of the COVID-19 school closures that began in the spring of 2020 and continued throughout most or all of the 2020-2021 school year. According to officials with several districts, *Continued on Page 14*

With Six Of His Co-Defendants Having Admitted Wrongdoing, Enamorado Is Now Facing The Prospect Of Conviction & Possible Deportation *from page 6*

livestreamed to Enamorado's YouTube page.

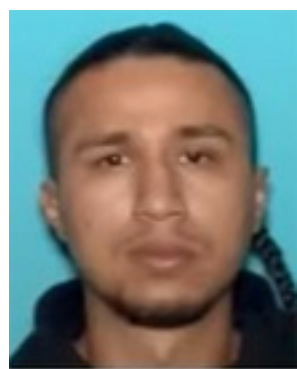
From their nearby vantage, deputies saw the assault and roughly two minutes later they came to the spot of the assault, whereupon a shoving match ensued between two of the deputies and two of the Enamorados. Within minutes, at least eight deputies had arrived. Narrowly, Edin Enamorado avoided arrest, but the deputies took two of the Enamorados – Chávez, who was arrested on suspicion of assault with a caustic chemical and unlawful assembly along with Luján, who was arrested on suspicion of assault with a caustic chemical, obstructing a peace officer, battery and unlawful assembly – into custody at that time along with two other protesters, 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.

Upon her booking, Luján provide 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, came to believe was an effort to protect Edin Enamorado, with whom she cohabited in Upland, from being connected to what had occurred that day.

Edin Enamorado uploaded to his social media platforms several videos of the two violent confrontations in Pomona on September 3 as well as one extended video, and two shorter videos, of the protest including the assault of the couple in the Hyundai on September 24 to a social

media account on TikTok he controlled under heading "Edin Enamorado is going live." The videos were presented to the public within a context in which it was suggested that what had occurred were demonstrations of the noble efforts of the Enamorados to stand up to racism. The "Edin Enamorado is going live" posting did not dwell on the consideration that the passenger of the Hyundai who was assaulted in the Victorville incident is Hispanic.

Relatively shortly after the Victorville



Gullit Acevedo

protest, "Jaguar" Acevedo, who was one of the Enamorados who had participated in the assault on the Hyundai passenger, 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 Fincel 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.

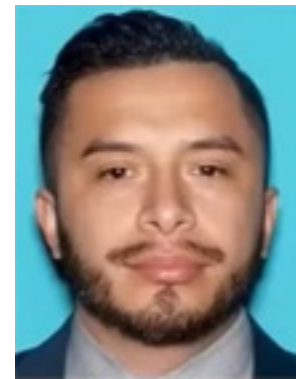
Acevedo's and Chávez's requests and Enamorado's reaction came too late. Sheriff's Department investigators had already begun monitoring the Enamorados' social media postings and communications, had ascertained Enamorado was their leader, were giving him especially close scrutiny and had begun to secure copies of the videos and other materials that were being uploaded to various websites and social media accounts. Those materials would form a substantial basis of warrants the investigators would obtain, which led to further discoveries and, penultimately, arrest warrants which were served by San Bernardino County sheriff's personnel on the morning of December 14 between 3:20 a.m. and 4:46 a.m. at the Los Angeles residence of López, the Upland apartment of Enamorado and Luján, the Riverside abode of Chávez, Carrasco's domicile in Ontario, Acevedo's San Bernardino premises and Amesquita's habitation in the same city and Peña dwelling in Los Angeles, where all eight were taken into custody.

They were arraigned before Judge Shannon Faherty on charges adjusted by the prosecutor's office from the charges they were arrested under. At once, the support network around them came forward to maintain that they were being criminally charged for merely engaging in social reform advocacy and that holding the octet, referred to, variably, as the "Justice Eight" or the "Freedom Eight" to account for their aggressive form of activism was a violation of their First Amendment rights. Deputy district attorneys Wilkinson and John Richardson, however, argued before Judge Faherty, as well as Judge Melissa Rodriguez during other pre-trial hearings and before Judge

Arredondo throughout the preliminary hearing process that their social activism crossed the line from speech to criminal, and in some cases, felonious violence. Given Enamorado's, Luján's, Chávez's, Carrasco's, Amesquita's, Peña's and López's insistence and that of their supporters that their actions in combating racism were morally and legally justified, Wilkinson and Richardson convinced judges Faherty, Rodriguez and Wilkerson that the seven remained a continuing threat to the community that could not be contained in any other way than incarceration, such that they remained in jail with no bail holds.

Defense attorneys explored multiple avenues on behalf of their clients, one of which included seeking a change of venue from San Bernardino County Superior Court to Los Angeles Superior Court with regard to the charges stemming from the incidents that took place in Pomona – which lies within Los Angeles County – on September 3. Enamorados' attorney, Rosenberg, in particular was hopeful that removing the various cases other than those relating to the September 24 Victorville incident would auger well for the defendants, since Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón is understood by virtually everyone to be far more "progressive" in his attitude than San Bernardino County District Attorney Jason Anderson and thereby understanding and compassionate toward individuals who cross a perceived legal line in carrying out a personal crusade to effectuate what they consider to be social justice. Rosenberg, along with Quintero, Contreras, Said and Hammett, respectively, Amesquita, Luján, Peña and López, and Damon Alimouri, representing Carrasco, and Edwin Salguero, representing Chávez, sought to have the venue on the case relating to the Pomona attacks changed to Pomona Superior Court,

with hope of then having the matter moved to 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. But both Wilkinson and Richardson thwarted that strategy by pointing out to the court that when Enamorado on September 3 had rallied Luján, Amesquita, Peña, López, Carrasco and Chávez to rendezvous



Edin Enamorado

with him in Pomona to administer the summary punishment they visited upon the security guard, John Doe Number 1, at the El Super, which then led to the confrontation with John Doe Number 2 in front of the Pomona Police Department Headquarters and at John Doe Number 2's house, he did so by making cellphone calls to the others from his residence in Upland, with those calls being relayed by a cellphone tower in Upland, which lies within San Bernardino County. Thus, a key component of the crimes being alleged took place within San Bernardino County, the proper legal venue for which would be the San Bernardino Superior Court, the prosecutors asserted and the court concurred.

With the prospect of having to go to trial on the multiple felony cases against them at some indefinite point in the near-to-distant future and that they would remain incarcerated until the end of the trial, Luján, Amesquita, Peña, López, Carrasco and Chávez today entered single guilty pleas to bring their legal travails to an end or set events on a trajectory

thereto.

Acevedo, who is free on a \$60,000 bond, and Enamorado, who remains jailed, both face having to yet stand trial, an ordeal which promises to prove rough for both, primarily because of the videos of Enamorado's action and that of his followers which have now fallen into the possession of prosecutors. Those video feature the application of violence as the standard method employed by the Enamorados to "protect" and "shield" the vulnerable victims of racism Enamorado saw it as his calling to serve. Intended more for the consumption of Enamorado's followers than the public at large, the videos cavalierly and brazenly posted to the internet on various social media platforms are now in the hands of prosecutors and represent airtight evidence in the cases being made against him and Acevedo. Moreover, Acevedo's communication to Enamorado in late September asking for the video of the attack on John Doe Number 3 to be removed from those platforms followed by Enamorado's scrubbing of those videos stands as, prosecutors allege, a demonstration of what they term "consciousness of guilt" on both Acevedo's and Enamorado's parts, further evidence which is likely to damn both at their trials, if they indeed take place.

With the remaining charge against Acevedo having been reduced to a misdemeanor, he stands, at most, the risk of having to serve something under a year in county jail and having his record blemished with the conviction.

Enamorado is in a far more serious bind. He faces 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 false imprisonment; PC207(A) – felony kid-

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As Local Republicans Have Inexplicably Placed All Their Chips On An Improbable Proposal To Have San Bernardino County Secede From California, Democrats Are Sensing That The Six Decade-Long GOP Domination Of The Region Is On The Brink Of Unraveling *from page 3*

San Bernardino County, that is only because several of those districts straddle San Bernardino County and areas in Los Angeles County, where Democrats are predominant.

Perhaps the best illustration of the strength of the Republicans in San Bernardino County can be seen in the results of the September 2021 effort to recall Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom. Statewide with 12,838,565 or 58.45 percent of the 22,057,154 total registered voters in California turning out to vote, Newsom handily turned back the challenge to his gubernatorial authority, as 7,944,092 or 61.88 percent voted against removing him from office and 4,894,473 or 38.12 percent supporting his recall. In San Bernardino County it was a much closer scrape for Newsom. Of the 575,241 votes cast in the county with regard to the recall, 286,364 or 49.78 percent of votes cast were in favor of jettisoning Newsom as the state's chief executive, while a thin majority, 288,877 votes or 50.22 percent, were registered against the recall. Of note, there was a stark contrast in the voting that took place that year when the place or methodology of casting ballots was considered. Setting aside 2,970 provisional ballots that were eventually counted several days after the election concluded, Newsom did relatively well among voters casting mail-in ballots – 232,560 favoring the recall versus 269,294 opposing it. Among voters using the traditional method of casting their ballots at polling places, however, the vote against Newsom was overwhelming, with 51,945 supporting his ouster and 18,472 opposing taking that action.

To the extent that the Democratic Party represents itself as the representative of the downtrodden, San Bernardino County would seem a fertile expanse in which to recruit members. Fully 56 percent of the county's population is Hispanic. According to the Pew Research Center, 61 percent of American Hispanic voters are Democrats or lean to the Democratic Party, while 35 percent reliably vote Republican or are Republican leaners. A significant percentage of Latino Republicans are Cuban expatriates or their descendants, such that approaching 70 percent of California Hispanics tend to favor the Democratic Party. The county's per capita income is \$31,521, which is roughly two-thirds of the \$46,661 per capita income in California and about three-quarters of the \$41,804 per capita income in the United States. The median household income in San Bernardino County is \$79,091, about 90 percent of the \$91,551 median household income throughout the state and above the \$74,755 median income throughout the United States. The number of San Bernardino County residents living below the poverty level is 13.4 percent, translating into 289,277 county residents. For those under 18 years of age, that figure jumps to 18 percent. As the Democratic Party touts itself as the representative of the downtrodden and the economically disabled, it has made considerable headway in getting San Bernardino County residents to register with the party. Indeed, since 2009, when the number of Democrats first eclipsed the number of Republicans in the county, that lead has consistently wid-

ened to the roughly 4-to-3 advantage that exists countywide today.

Remarkably, however, local Republicans, despite the registration disadvantage they face, have succeeded in holding onto most of the county's elective offices they controlled in their heyday, at least so far. Like Republicans throughout the United States, San Bernardino County's Republicans turn up to vote in far higher percentages than do Democrats. In San Bernardino County, the party structure the Republicans have – the Republican Central Committee – has proven far more energetic, efficient and engaged than the local Democratic Central Committee. Republicans have had little trouble getting all of their horses hitched up to the same side of the wagon and getting them to pull in the preferred direction at once, proving far more effective at raising money than the Democrats and have more experience and are therefore more accomplished in employing the money they have to run convincing and targeted campaigns – using newspaper ads and both television and radio spots, billboards, handbills, mailers, phone banks and polls and door-to-door voter appeals – to drive Republican voters to the polls and wage efforts against their Democratic opponents.

Nevertheless, at a glacial pace, the Democrats have made progress toward offsetting the GOP's advantage in San Bernardino County.

Despite the consideration that San Bernardino County is California's largest county geographically, in terms of population it is the Golden State's fifth largest county. As such, the state Democratic Party has not put as much emphasis on San Bernardino County as it might have otherwise, a decision which, given the more aggressive approach of the Republicans, has surrendered the jurisdiction, in large measure, to its rivals.

That suddenly changed two years ago, not so much as a result of action directly taken by the Democrats but rather their reaction to a move of questionable political wisdom by the Republicans.

A Republican-led insurgency manifested in San Bernardino County in the summer of 2022, one which called for San



Jeff Burum

Bernardino County declaring itself an independent entity and seceding from California.

On July 26, 2022, Jeff Burum, who has historically been one of the top two or three contributors to Republican causes, came before the board of supervisors, decrying the State of California Allocation of resources, telling the panel as much as asking it to put what he termed was termed an "advisory" measure in the form of a question on the November 8, 2022 ballot that was to be worded thusly: "Do you support having the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors and all federal and state elected officials representing citizens within San Bernardino County to seek the approval of Congress and the State Legislature to form a state separate from California?" His was, Burum insisted, a "bold initiative forward." Burum was accompanied to the meeting by two of San Bernardino County's top tier Republican officeholders and major recipients of his political largesse, translating into thousands of dollars in donations, Fontana Mayor Acquafredda Warren and Upland Mayo Bill Velto, who both enthusiastically endorsed the concept.

While placing initiatives on the ballot is normally an undertaking which requires

months and months of lead time, the alacrity with which the four Republican members of the five-member board of supervisors – First District Supervisor Paul Cook, then-Second District Supervisor Janice Rutherford, Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe and Fourth District Supervisor Curt Hagman – reacted stood as a testament to the influence Burum and his political contributions to the county's officeholders had in shaping public affairs in the county.

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors had an absolute drop-dead deadline of August 12, 2022 by which it had to formulate what was to be on the November 2022 ballot. In order for citizens to place an initiative on the ballot, they must gather the signatures of 8 percent of the voters who participated in the previous gubernatorial election where the initiative is to apply. That meant that for Burum and those he was affiliated with, he would need to gather 42,981 valid signatures of the county's voters, which was .08 of the 537,253 San Bernardino County voters who cast ballots for governor in 2018. Such a feat in the less than three weeks that existed between July 26 and August 12 was an impossibility. The board of supervisors, however, could use its authority to call upon the registrar of voters to proceed with the countywide vote on what Burum was asking for. To do so, under the state election code and the county charter, the board needed to vote on the matter and then confirm the first vote with a second vote, thereby authorizing the registrar of voters to put the question before the county's electorate. The board of supervisors, however, had not scheduled any discussion of the secession proposal, and had only heard of it that day. Under the Brown Act, California's open public meeting law, it could not hold an impromptu vote on something brought up during the course

of a meeting, but had to schedule such a vote ahead of time by placing it on the agenda for a meeting and giving the public 72 hours preview of the agenda before the meeting took place. As things stood, the board was not scheduled to meet again until August 9, which gave the board sufficient time to put the item relating to the ballot initiative on that agenda. Still, that would be only a first vote and action to direct the registrar of voters to alter the ballot, and a second vote to confirm the first was needed. To accommodate Burum, the board scheduled an emergency meeting on August 3, at which the board took a vote calling for the ballot initiative. Then, at its August 9 meeting, it cast a second, confirming vote, directing the registrar of voters to give San Bernardino County's voters an opportunity to secede from the State of California.

Indeed, what was enumerated as Measure EE was placed on the ballot, asking voters whether they supported having the elected representatives for San Bernardino County research and advocate for all methods, including secession from the state, for receiving an equitable share of state funding and resources.

Ultimately, 212,615 or 50.62 percent of the 420,054 county's voters who cast votes on Measure EE supported it, while 207,439 or 49.38 percent opposed it.

The concept of secession inherent in Measure EE has languished for what is now 19 months since its passage. Next week, at its June 11 meeting, the board of supervisors is scheduled to accept a staff report that is to detail how the county will move ahead with Burum's proposal. Supervisor Cook, current Second District Supervisor Jesse Armendarez – a Republican, Supervisor Rowe and Supervisor Hagman have absolute control over the county's governmental machinery and thereby County Chief Executive Officer

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Some Teacher Layoffs Being Rescinded from page 7

those employees fully understood that their positions were not permanent ones and that they would be among the first wave of layoffs, as school districts adhere to what is a traditional "last hired, first fired" policy. Simultaneously, the school boards in some but not all districts in San Bernardino County have fallen into a pattern of having the districts they oversee provide senior administrative personnel, predominantly superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals and vice/assistant principals with raises and pay enhancements on a virtually automatic annual basis. This has detracted from the ability of some districts to shift, reprioritize or redistribute funding to keep instructors in place. The Ontario-Montclair School District is the county's eighth largest district with 18,500 students behind the San

Bernardino City Unified School District with a 49,407 enrollment, the Fontana Unified School District with a 33,410 enrollment, the Chino Valley Unified School District with an enrollment of 31,992, the Rialto Unified School District with its 24,461 students, the Chaffey Union High School District with 23,854 students, the Colton Joint Unified School District with 19,986 students and the Redlands Unified School District with an enrollment of 19,773. Despite its more modest size in comparison to those other districts, the Ontario Montclair District appears to have anticipated the then-future reductions in funding that are now impacting educational institutions with a greater degree of precision than their larger counterparts throughout San Bernardino County. Based on the most pessimistic worst-case projection cast for what was then the upcoming school year, Ontario Montclair officials planned for a \$5.5 million deficit and in May 2023 voted to ap-

prove a 2023-2024 school budget which included significant job cuts, affecting both teachers and paraprofessionals. Thus, the Ontario-Montclair School District had already streamlined its instructional workforce, and did not need to make any radical adjustments for 2024-25. For many unfortunate instructors elsewhere, particularly younger one at the beginning of their teaching careers, they were rudely informed in March 2024 that they should not count on being employed beyond the current school year. Roughly ten times as many pink slips went out countywide to teachers in San Bernardino County in March 2023. In some cases, however, those tentative lay-off notices have been rescinded. Layoffs extend to both teachers, who have teaching credentials, and non-teachers or classified employees. Classified positions include librarians, psychologists, school nurses, teacher assistants, secretaries,

custodians, food-service workers and electricians. A minor financial adjustment that San Bernardino County school districts have had to make is the diminishing funding they are receiving as a consequence of a corresponding reduction in enrollment, which is driven by a maturing of the population coupled with declining birth rates within the current generation of child-bearing couples, decisions by parents to homeschool their children or send them to private schools and escalating truancy that has gone unaddressed by education officials. Since September 2016, public school enrollment in San Bernardino County has declined by 2.2 percent, according to the California Department of Education. The San Bernardino City Unified School District Board of Trustees, which oversees the large educational operation in the county, in March eliminated the positions of five teachers, probationary ones with minimal experience, along with eleven full-time

maintenance or educational augmentation, i.e., non-teaching, employees and one part-time non-teaching employee. A dozen other non-teaching employees were to have their hours cut in 2024-25. At this point, the district is going to renew the contracts with four of those probationary teachers who had expected to be laid off. The non-teaching employees will remain with the district but work reduced hours. While the Fontana Unified School District Board of Education in March voted to eliminate two teachers and two counselors, retirement or naturally occurring vacancies in those positions eliminated the need for layoffs. In February, the Redlands Unified School District had district staff inform 15 preschool teachers their services would no longer be needed, particularly as the district was jettisoning its preschool program at Franklin, Lugonia and Victoria elementary schools. However, the California Preschool

Program at those locations is being transferred to oversight by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, such that the 15 positions are being restored. Other Redlands district employees in the preschool program have been moved to positions elsewhere. The Rialto Unified School District Board in March let 29 certificated personnel working on a probationary status go along with 10 classified employees. At this point, the probationary teachers are yet out of both luck and employment, while the reduction in classified – that is, non teaching, employees – will be changed to six, sparing four. Layoffs within some districts were avoided or rescinded in certain cases because in a handful of cases there were unanticipated retirements which allowed certain employees to move into other open assignments. In a few cases, employees departed from the district that employed them to positions available elsewhere.

Long Portrayed By Republicans As Wild-Eyed Liberals, Democrats Turn The Tables, As Local GOP Big Wigs Are Pursuing The Radical Goal Of Removing The County From California

from page 9

Luther Snoke and the remainder of county staff, who have been put in the position of having to lay out a report favorable toward proceeding with San Bernardino County's secession.

Despite the favor shown toward the subject within the confines of the five-story county administrative headquarters in San Bernardino referred to as the Taj Mahal, there are outlying political realities that auger against the creation of the 51st State bordering California, Arizona and Nevada. If San Bernardino County is to declare its independence from California and effectively throw off the shackles that bind it to Sacramento, both houses of the California Legislature and both houses of Congress would need to approve the split. Since California was granted

statehood in 1850, there have been 222 attempts to bifurcate or trifurcate the state. None have succeeded. Within San Bernardino County itself, an effort in the late 1980s and early 1990s was undertaken to remove what was essentially 90 percent of the county's land mass to the north and east, leaving roughly 10 percent of the jurisdiction, that being its southeastern corner from Chino Hills to Yucaipa, intact, such that the proposed Mojave County would include Hesperia, Apple Valley, Victorville, Adelanto, Barstow, Big Bear, Twentynine Palms, Yucca Valley, Needles and more than three dozen desert and mountain communities. That effort came to naught.

Of issue is financing. Burum and the San Bernardino County secession enthusiasts maintain that the State of California has deprived San Bernardino County of its "fair share" of a return on the taxes collected within its confines and that in comparison to practically all of the other 57 counties in the state, San Bernardino County is receiving the least or very nearly the least of monetary sustenance among all of its

counterparts statewide from Sacramento. A study the county undertook with regard to that complaint in 2022, however, demonstrated that was clearly not the case. Moreover, the provision of state services, many of which are coordinated with or delivered through county government and its various departments, entails a bureaucracy of considerable extent. Were the county to end its connection with Sacramento, the sheer enormity and expense of recreating that end of the bureaucracy that is currently handled by the state would result in the new state of San Bernardino reducing considerably its already compromised delivery of services or having to create another taxing regime which would entirely contradict the rationale given nu Burum and others for wanting out of the State of California – excessive taxation.

Kristin Washington, the chairwoman of the San Bernardino County Democratic Party, has taken up the issue of San Bernardino secession, just as it is about to be pursued in earnest by San Bernardino County's Republican leadership and just as the November

2024 election is around the corner.

"Putting Measure EE on the ballot was a waste of time for the voters," she said. "This is something that will never take place. Seceding from the state is not something that is even remotely realistic, for too many reasons to enumerate and mostly because of all the steps that actually go into it."

The San Bernardino County Democratic Central Committee has also taken up issues that transcend San Bernardino County and California.

On January 24, it passed a resolution demanding "an immediate bilateral ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas Conflict."

The resolution states, "Whereas, we affirm that the right to human life according to the Geneva Conventions must be protected even in warfare; WHEREAS, on October 7, 2023, the terrorist group Hamas attacked Israel to capture, hold hostage, and kill more than 1,100 innocent Israeli, American, and other international civilians, and in response, the Israeli government invaded Gaza; and Whereas, unfortunately, this assault on Palestinians in Gaza has escalated into an unspeakable tragedy with Israel's disproportionate retaliation killing more than 24,000 residents of Gaza to date, decimating their homes, schools, and hospitals; then we resolve that the indiscriminate killing must stop. Israel declared war with Hamas – not innocent Palestinians. We, the members of the San Bernardino County Democratic Central Committee, who care deeply about the lives of all people, call for an immediate bilateral ceasefire to preserve civilian lives and rush humanitarian aid and supplies to the hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians who are running out of food, water, and time; negotiate the release of innocent hostages; reduce the threat of a regional or worldwide conflict; and allow

our shared humanity a chance to illuminate the way forward. We ask that the California Democratic Party join us in our efforts to demand an immediate bilateral ceasefire, coordinating with the [Joseph] Biden Administration to use its considerable political, financial and military influence to bring about an immediate de-escalation of this world tragedy happening before our very eyes."

The San Bernardino County Democratic Central Committee, as led by Washington, is also pressing forward



Kristen Washington

with making a high profile statement regarding Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual Queer plus rights, believing doing so will hit a resounding chord with the San Bernardino County's voters. Simultaneously, their Republican counterparts believe that to be a mistake, one which they welcome the local Democrats to make.

In recent days and weeks, two of San Bernardino County's cities took contrasting positions with regard to this issue. In San Bernardino, for the first time, the San Bernardino City Council and its mayor proclaimed that it would recognize June as "Pride Month" for those whose sexual orientation does not conform with the traditional heterosexual norm. In Redlands, a divided city council voted 3-to-2 against flying the lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer rainbow pride flag along with the American, California and Missing In Action flags at City Hall.

In making its statement, which was attributed to Washington as the committee's chairwoman, the San Bernardino County

Democratic Central Committee saluted the action by the San Bernardino City Council while remaining silent on the vote by the Redlands City Council.

"As we join the nation in a glorious, month-long celebration of the lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer plus community, we want to highlight this week's news that the City of San Bernardino just proclaimed June Pride Month for the first time," the central committee posted on its website. "At a time when anti-lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer plus activists throughout the country are banning lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer plus themed books, inclusive curriculum, and recycling harmful lies about lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer plus educators and mentors, we need more city leaders to stand tall, risk pushback from hate-filled groups, and show support for the members of the lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer plus community."

Washington's committee webposting continues, "At a time when an unprecedented number of anti-lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer plus bills have been introduced in various states that are sometimes passing in state legislatures and are often targeting lesbian gay bisexual transsexual queer plus youth and specifically transgender youth, we need more leaders to use the power of their position to protect members of our communities and our youth from such dangerous attacks. That is because these are the times we've heard about; when leaders do what is right, even when it feels uncomfortable."

The posting continues, "While the San Bernardino County Democratic Party has no flagpole on which to fly a flag, we will continue 'flying' the flag this month on our Social Media sites and other forms of communication, because we know that the pride flag is not merely a symbol of the lesbian, *Continued on Page 16*

Vandalism & Street Takeovers By Car Club Members Merits Mass Arrest In Adelanto

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the Hesperia Station and the Apple Valley Station traced out who were involved in the street takeover phenomenon, determining that they were related to car clubs in the High Desert area. An Investigation into the High Desert car clubs showed they were involved in multiple similar street takeovers and sidschows, with their members having posted videos on social media showing sidschow events performed in stolen vehicles. The participants openly displayed firearms as they performed a sidschow on private

property in Adelanto. As a result of the investigation, several search warrants were served in the city of Victorville. The search warrants yielded stolen firearms and a stolen Dodge Hellcat. On June 1, 2024, an Operation Consequences deployment involving personnel from the Victorville Station, Victor Valley Station, Hesperia Station, Apple Valley Station, Sheriff's Gangs/Narcotics Division, and SANCATT was made at an abandoned property in Adelanto where members of High Desert car clubs had converged and were performing sidschow maneuvers on that private property without the consent of its owners. Investigators and deputies detained participants and spectators as they fled from the location,

collaring 7 adults and 19 juveniles. The arrested adults were taken to the High Desert Detention Center and, after being processed, were cited and released from the facility. The juveniles were taken to the Victorville City Sheriff's Station and issued a citation and then released to their families. Additionally, 23 vehicles were towed, and a stolen Chevrolet Camaro was located. "This type of recklessness won't be tolerated in San Bernardino County," said Sheriff Shannon Dicus. "Arrests will be assured, and cars will be impounded if these street-takeovers continue."



Enamorado's Conviction Could Carry With It The Price Of Being Deported To Guatemala *from page 8*

napping; 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. The charges, or most of them, are backed by video evidence Enamorado himself posted to his own social media accounts, including the videos of the September 3 Pomona incidents, the videos of the September 24 Victorville incident and a video of him using a firearm to take target practice at a shooting range.

There are a range of witnesses against Enamorado, as well as witnesses to incidents other than the three he has been charged with, including assaults against

individuals who attended hearings at Fontana City Hall in October and November in which the Fontana City Council adopted an ordinance relating to regulating street vending and sidewalk vending, swarm protest tactics within residential neighborhoods in Apple Valley, Upland, Fontana and Rancho Cucamonga which targeted public officials, law enforcement officers and citizens Enamorado claimed were racists, as well as incidents in which the Enamorados approached, surrounded, accosted or attacked individuals

by mistake, including a 92-year-old Upland man, the father of another Upland man who had antagonized the Enamorados by public utterances questioning the accuracy of their characterizations of law enforcement action as racist.

Reportedly, multiple individuals in Southern California who have had encounters with Enamorado directly or his followers, including ones in San Diego County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County and Los Angeles County are requesting that San Bernardino Authorities

make Edin Alex Enamorado's deportation to Guatemala a condition of any punishment for his conviction or plea arrangement relating to the charges he faces in San Bernardino County.

While Rosenberg previously maintained that that the criminal case against the eight Enamorados had strengths and weaknesses and he conceded that the strongest elements of the case pertained to his client, Edin Enamorado, the leader of the Enamorados yet claims that the social and political order and establishment in

Southern California is one that is illegitimate, indefensible, racist and inherently discriminatory and hostile toward the Latino population. The only antidote to this injustice, Enamorado propounds, is to abrasively and aggressively assert the rights of the oppressed masses. In doing so, it is his position, the Enamorados have never run afoul of the law, even if the corrupt system has been able to use its unfair advantage to induce guilty pleas from innocent victims of that injustice.

Unpermitted Pyrotechnic Video Shoot On Desert Dry Lake Brings Federal Charges Against Korean Filmmaker *from page 3*

The butterflies got away. You know I'm going to be okay, It's a party in the USA the video also shows Choi standing in front of the hovering helicopter near the ground as it moves forward to bump him in the chest.

Law enforcement believes that Choi committed the offense sometime in June 2023, that he did not have a permit to film a shoot using fireworks on a helicopter, and that he purchased the fireworks in Nevada because they were illegal in California.

According to Jones' affidavit, "I obtained raw video footage from the camera company of the filming associated with the "Destroying a Lamborghini with Fireworks" on Choi's YouTube Channel. The videos appear to be taken by cameras mounted on a vehicle and depict the same events from different angles. Based on the file name of those videos, it appears that Choi filmed footage on June 8, 2023, and again on June 27, 2023. Videos from both dates, show fireworks being shot out of a helicopter."

While there is no definitive proof provided to indicate that Choi was driving the Lamborghini

while it was being targeted by the fireworks, according to the affidavit, communications Choi had with someone involved in setting the videotaping gives that impression.

"In a text message exchange dated April 25, the sender proposes to Choi an idea for a Fourth of July short vertical sponsored video in which Choi captures an 'insane 360-degree bumpers shot with firecrackers,'" according to Jones' affidavit. "In a later response, dated April 28, Choi wrote, 'I'll go to a salt flat, tape as much fireworks as you guys are willing to purchase for me on the car, do drifts (the firework will look super cool through 20 clouds of dust) while i set off the fireworks. I can even get my friend with a helicopter out and attach cameras on the helicopter while he chases me.' The next text message from Choi reads, "i can even have someone sitting in the helicopter and have them shoot fireworks back at me."

Jones' affidavit states, "In an e-mail dated May 13, 2023, from an email account depicting Choi's name as the username, Choi wrote that he would shoot at El Mirage. Choi wrote his idea was to make a short, one minute video of an 'attack helicopter shooting missiles (mortar style fireworks) at the car, while the car is trying to run away and dodge the missiles using flares (roman candle

fireworks attached to the back of the car).' Choi also wrote, 'As these fireworks are expensive and I plan on letting them all off at the same time, to make a crazy,

hectic, firework show.' Choi wrote that the cost break down would be \$2100 for the helicopter (700 per hour x3) and \$500-700 for the fireworks."

Jones' affidavit does mention the helicopter pilot but does not dwell at length upon his potential legal transgressions.

"A records request to the Van Nuys and Riverside3 FAA Flight Standards District Offices found that none of those offices issued a motion picture and television filming waiver and/or approved a plan of activities for filming with the helicopter at El Mirage on June 8, 2023, or June 27, 2023," Jones wrote. "I also spoke with a special agent with the Bureau of Land Management ('BLM') who informed me that based on where BLM located tire marks, they believe the video was filmed on the federally owned portion of the El Mirage Dry Lakebed. BLM took photos of the tire

marks on July 24, 2023. Based on my review of the video, in which the Sportscar is seen turning in circles, I believe that these tire marks are associated with the



filming of the "Destroying a Lamborghini with Fireworks" video. In addition, BLM informed me that BLM issued no permits to Choi or any other individuals or entities for Choi's video filmed on June 27, 2023. BLM also informed me that Choi would have needed a special recreation filming permit, proof of insurance, and would likely require a pyrotechnician and fire crews on site for the use of fireworks. BLM informed me that all fireworks are banned on all BLM property without a permit. ATF also provided records to me indicating that no explosives licenses or permits were issued to Choi, Choi Corporation, the pilot-in-command of the helicopter used for the video shoot, or the name of the individual billed as the logistics manager in the credits of the "Destroying a Lamborghini with Fireworks" video.

It is unclear whether the U.S. Department

of Justice is pursuing charges against the helicopter pilot or anyone else involved in the making of the video. The helicopter pilot is not identified by name in Jones'

affidavit. The U.S. Department of Justice has suggested that at some point Choi recognized that what he had done was illegal and he attempted to dispose of evidence implicating himself.

According to a footnote in Jones' affidavit, "As of May 28, 2024, the video is no longer publicly available for view on Choi's YouTube channel. Posts related to the video on Choi's Instagram account were also no longer publicly available. The Department of Investigation Office of Investigations forensically saved a copy of the video and the Instagram posts before they were publicly removed. Videos containing footage from the shoot involving fireworks shot from the helicopter remain publicly available through other YouTube channels and social media accounts.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, "A complaint is merely

an allegation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law."

If convicted, Choi would face a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison.

The United States Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are investigating this matter.

Assistant United States Attorney Dominique Caamano of the Environmental Crimes and Consumer Protection Section is prosecuting this case.

Local Democrats Promoting Progressive Ideas & Ideals, While Expressing Growing Confidence For Their Electoral Prospects For November 2024 *from page 15*

gay, bisexual and transgender community, but it's a symbol of love, of struggle, and sacrifice. Next year, we hope more cities will celebrate pride month along with us, not only with a proclamation, but by flying the pride flag, too. And we look for the County of San Bernardino to follow the lead of the progress just made by the County of Los Angeles, by flying the flag with pride throughout San Bernardino County."