

Happy Holidays!



# La Nueva Voz

The New Voice, a Bilingual (English/Spanish) Publication  
Pomona's only community newspaper!



Pomona Chamber of Commerce



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## VICTOR GLOVER'S TIPS FOR KIDS

### Pomona Christmas Parade grand marshal – a Pomona native who became an astronaut – offers advice to local students

Hey, kids, here's another first for Pomona – one of Pomona's own went on to become an astronaut and came back to serve as grand marshal in this month's Pomona Christmas Parade – and to offer a game plan for students who want to either do the same thing or simply succeed in life.

Astronaut Victor J. Glover, Jr., 45, a National Aeronautics and Space Administration astronaut of the class of 2013, and a pilot

on the first operational flight of the SpaceX Crew Dragon to the International Space Station, told the Pomona Christmas Parade's official master of ceremonies Fred Van Allen it was "truly amazing to be back home."

"I was born here, my father was a police officer in this city for many years, and so it's just really great to be back home with all of you," he said to a cheering audience near the parade's announce-

ment booth.

"Commander Glover, Petty Officer Van Allen reporting," Van Allen, a Pomona realtor, a U.S. Navy Reserve veteran, and member of the parade committee, said as he introduced himself to Glover, a commander in the U.S. Navy where he pilots an F/A-18 and is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School.

Glover thanked Van Allen for his service and added that this was his first time to see the Pomona parade.

La Nueva Voz asked Glover what message he has for kids in Pomona who may be considering going into NASA and becoming



Astronaut and Pomona native Victor Glover, Jr., is interviewed during this month's Pomona Christmas Parade in Downtown Pomona. He came back to Pomona -- and saw the Pomona parade for the first time -- to serve as grand marshal in the annual celebration.

an astronaut.

"Listen, this is for kids everywhere, especially here in Pomona, because I came from here, I grew up here, and I think they need to

understand these three things, no matter what they want to do in life – NASA, whether they just want to be a good guy or good gal, they need to be resilient," he said.

"This last year has shown us all how important resilience is," he said.

"They also need to be lifelong learners, learning inside the classroom, outside the classroom, learning a foreign language, learning the code and also learning the lessons that you learn in sports on the field," Glover added. "You know, whether you win or lose a game, what do you do on Monday, you go to practice, right?"

"And the last one is to be a good teammate," he said. "The world needs more people who understand how important it is to be a good teammate."

"And if you can do those things, be resilient, be a lifelong learner and be a good teammate, the world will be a much better place," Glover said.

Glover, a graduate of Cal Poly University San Luis Obispo, served on board the International

Pomona's astronaut... pg. 11

### Interim Fairplex CEO Marquez officially named to top spot by board

Walter M. Marquez, who has served as Interim CEO of Pomona's Fairplex since January, has been selected to officially take over the reins of the organization this month as President and CEO.

Marquez, who joined the Los Angeles County Fair Association in 2018, will be the sixth CEO to serve the organization in its nearly 100 years.

His predecessor, Miguel Santana, announced he would not seek an extension of a four-year contract when it expired in late 2020.

Santana replaced Jim Henwood



Walter M. Marquez . . .  
... takes over at Fairplex

following Henwood's departure after more than 20 years at the helm.

Marquez... pg. 6

PAID ADVERTORIAL

## How caregivers can ease compassion fatigue - A message from Tri-City Mental Health

The holidays are traditionally a time of joy and celebration spent with family and friends. With our community experiencing ongoing stressors and shared trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic, social isolation and the loss of health and loved ones, this holiday season may be more difficult than years past. Many of us will try to offer comfort to those who have suffered, while managing to care for ourselves and our families.

Compassion fatigue is the emotional strain that can sometimes result from caring for people who have suffered from trauma or who are under significant emotional distress. It is also known as vicarious or secondary trauma, referring to the way that other people's trauma can become our own. Compassion fatigue develops over time and you can spot the signs if you know what to look for. Common symptoms include mental, physical or emotional exhaustion, feelings of helplessness and powerlessness, feeling overwhelmed or detached, and increased anxiety, sadness, anger and irritability.

At Tri-City Mental Health, we believe that support and connection are central to maintaining the well-being of our community. It is just as vital that we tend to our own emotional and physical health while we are involved in providing care for others. If you suspect that you or someone you know may be experiencing compassion fatigue, there is hope. There are simple things you can do to protect yourself.

- **Know that your reaction is normal.** Experiencing compassion fatigue is a common experience for those who care for others who are in pain or suffering.
- **Take time to care for yourself.** Practice mindfulness and self-compassion, establish a good self-care routine and reach out to friends, colleagues and family for support. We cannot help support others until we are strong enough to stand on our own.
- **Learn to set boundaries.** It's okay to prioritize your own needs and feelings. Acknowledge your own limits by saying no to things that are beyond what you can do in the moment and set realistic expectations on the type of help you can offer.
- **Practice gratitude and being in the present moment.** Sometimes we can get so caught up in the work we do that we forget about our reasons for helping that made us want to reach out in the first place. This can be a vital part of the healing process while you continue to help others during this time.

Tri-City is here for those who need support. Call us at (866) 623-9500 or visit [www.tricitymhs.org](http://www.tricitymhs.org).





**POMONA OPTIMIST ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SPREE** -- Members of the Pomona Optimist Club held their 21st annual holiday “shopping spree” this month at Pomona’s Target for 23 outstanding students selected from five area elementary schools -- Arroyo, Diamond Point, Pantera and Ranch Hills Elementary Schools and La Verne Academy. Each student was given \$125 at an early 7:30 a.m. Sunday morning event to shop for items needed for the winter months, according to Optimist President Lorraine Canales. Student helpers volunteering to be personal shoppers for the event were from the JOI Club at Pomona’s Village Academy High School. Pictured in the group photo, from left, are Pomona City Councilmember Steve Lustro, Optimists Ruby Jung, Debra Martin, Hugo and Sonia Molina, President Lorraine Canales, Optimist Paulette Young, Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval, Pomona Unified School Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman, and Optimist Ruth Alvarez.

Photos by Debra Martin and Eric and Ruby Jung

### ‘Pomona Goddess Day’ art event set for kids in civic center

Kids ages 5 to 12 are invited to participate in a free “Pomona Goddess Day” art celebration next month in the Pomona Civic Center.

Participants will receive all supplies needed including paint, canvas and a goddess sash and head wreath.

The event is scheduled for noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 15.

For registration and information, contact (909) 291-9382.

“Pomona” was the Roman goddess of fruit trees, gardens and orchards and appears in the city’s logo and other materials.



Pomona Police Officers Erik Ramirez and Garrett Dulong, both assigned to the Pomona Police Department’s Downtown Unit, were this year’s honorees for their service at the Pomona Chamber of Commerce Holiday for Heroes luncheon held last week at Coco Palm Restaurant. Pictured, from left, are Deputy Police Chief Christian Hsu, Chamber Board Chair Annette Limon, Ramirez, Dulong and Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares.



Two Los Angeles County firefighters -- Fire Fighter Specialist Ryan Corbett of Pomona Fire Station 182 and Fire Fighter Neil Polakovic of Pomona Fire Station 185 -- were honored by the Pomona Chamber of Commerce last week at its annual Holiday for Heroes luncheon. Pictured, from left, are Chamber Board Chair Annette Limon, Corbett, Polakovic, and Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares.



United States Army veteran Jeff Hodge and United States Marine Corps veteran Sam Cafiero were honored by the Pomona Chamber of Commerce last week at its annual Holiday for Heroes luncheon at Coco Palm Restaurant in Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Hodge, Cafiero, and Pomona’s American Legion Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold, who introduced the military honorees. The annual event recognizes Pomona’s public safety officers and veterans for outstanding service.

# Happy holidays, neighbors.

We wish all our neighbors a safe and happy holiday season and the very best in the New Year. It’s a true joy to be part of such a wonderful community.

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Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz poses with Santa Claus (James McAnally, police department range master) this month at the Pomona Police Department "Stuff a Cruiser" event.



Aracely Rodriguez, 5, a student at Kingsley Elementary School, sneaks a peek at Santa while her mom takes her picture at the Pomona Police Department "Stuff a Cruiser" event this month.



The back of a huge SWAT vehicle is well on its way to being completely full of toys for the kids at this month's "Stuff a Cruiser" event sponsored by the Pomona Police Department in Pomona's Target shopping center. Pictured, from left, are Natalie Diaz and Norma Macy, of the police department's crime prevention section, and Pomona City Councilmember Steve Lustro. Representatives of the Credit Union of Southern California office two doors down from the event stopped by to present a check for \$10,000 to the Pomona Police Department in support of the department's annual Operation Santa Cop toy drive effort.

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Photo by Jeff Schenkel

Things were coming together quickly this month on the Cal Poly University Rose Float entry in the school's new Rose Float Lab. One weekend students – from both the school's Pomona campus as well as the San Luis Obispo campus -- could be seen hard at work welding together the final pieces of frame. And only days later, the huge room was tented and cleared out for "foaming," or spraying the foam on the frame to provide a surface for both final decorative touches and those little water-filled tubes stuck into the foam to hold the individual roses and other flowers.

### Assistance League fundraiser valentine tea party set for February

Sponsorship opportunities are available for the annual Assistance League of Pomona Valley "Vintage Valentine Tea" fundraiser, scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 13, at the Ebell Club in Pomona.

Payment for sponsorships is due by Jan. 21 and can be made online at [www.ALPV.org](http://www.ALPV.org). Spon-

sorships range from \$1,000 to \$100.

Doors open for the event at 12:30 p.m. and lunch will be served at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$50 per guest before Feb. 1 and \$60 per guest after Feb. 1.

Event occupancy will be limited, and masks are required to

enter.

Tickets also can be purchased online.

The Assistance League is a non-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer organization. All of the net proceeds will be used to provide critically needed help for children and families in the local community.



Photos by Tom Zasadzinski  
Students donned goggles and breathing masks and grabbed a spray gun to foam the float this month and get it all ready for the final steps before the long and slow drive to Pasadena for final assembly before the Rose Parade. It was the first float to be constructed in Cal Poly Pomona's new \$5.5 million, 7,200 square foot Rose Float Lab on the Pomona campus. The float is a collaborative effort each year by students on both the Pomona and San Luis Obispo campus locations. The San Luis half is trucked down each year on a flatbed and bolted to the Pomona half for the next steps in building the final product that will drive down Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena on New Years Day. This year's Cal Poly float, "Stargazers," will tell the tale of how the cow jumped over the moon using a jet pack. The school's floats have been student-built since 1949.



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Mitchell Todd, Joel Diaz, Nina Hernandez, Rudy Urrea  
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Members of the Assistance League of Pomona Valley turned out to support the Pomona Chamber of Commerce at its annual "Holiday for Heroes" luncheon last week and, while they were there, had a little conversation with Santa (OK, it is really John Forbing of State Farm Claremont/Pomona). Pictured with Santa, from left, are Assistance League Public Relations Chair Renee Barbee, Strategic Planning/Corresponding Secretary Nitzi Barker, Second Vice President of Philanthropies Donna Spencer, President Jane Hubbard, and Recording Secretary Lisa Frazier.

## Gas Company partners with 'Project Homekey' homeless program

Southern California Gas Co. is partnering with the organization People Assisting the Homeless and LA Family Housing by providing more than \$300,000 in assistance towards energy efficiency programs to support Project Homekey, a statewide effort between Los Angeles County and the State of California to relocate unhoused individuals into permanent housing.

The Gas Company has installed equipment in more than 650 Project Homekey Units since the program began in 2020 and is supporting a total of 11 Project Homekey properties.

"Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Los Angeles County has taken many actions to reduce and prevent the spread of the virus among people experiencing homelessness, including rapidly standing up long-term, permanent housing opportunities at hotels and motels through Project Homekey," said Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair Hilda Solis.

"The program is a crucial development and turning point for Angelenos where we can help offer long-term housing for those

experiencing homelessness," she added.

Project Homekey is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The state has allocated \$2.75 billion in federal funds towards this initiative for the next two years.

Funding is available to local public organizations within California to purchase and rehabilitate housing, including hotels, motels, and vacant buildings and convert them into long-term housing in an effort to support Californians impacted by COVID-19 and experiencing homelessness.

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**EAGLES COLLECT HOLIDAY TOYS FOR THE KIDS** -- Pictured is Eagles Auxiliary member Lorena Manriquez with some of the toys collected for kids at holiday time. She said the group coordinated with several car clubs in the Hemet and Victorville areas to collect the toys under the leadership of Auxiliary President Janine Hernandez. Some of the toys reportedly already have been distributed, others will go out with Christmas baskets to be assembled by the Auxiliary and the rest will be distributed to local organizations.

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## Marquez... from pg. 1

Marquez came on board initially as vice president and chief financial officer.

A La Nueva Voz source close to the Los Angeles County Fair Association Board of Directors said the decision to offer the top spot to Marquez was made on a unanimous vote.

Board Chair Heidi Hanson said offering him the job was an easy decision, especially after seeing him handle the challenges of the pandemic over the last two years.

“Walter’s experience in finance, land management and planning is perfect for leading Fairplex out of the pandemic,” she said. “The last two years have been incredibly challenging for the organization as an events space. Walter has helped lead Fairplex through extensive layoffs, a reimagining of the campus as a true community benefit organization and has already developed a vision for the future.”

Marquez grew up in the Inland Valley and has family roots in Pomona going back to 1917.

He was raised in the Ontario/Montclair area, according to a Fairplex news release.

He attended Mt. SAC and received his bachelor’s in business from Cal State University San

Bernardino. He received an MBA from Cal Poly University Pomona and a Doctor of Education degree from the University of La Verne.

Prior to joining Fairplex, Marquez spent nearly 20 years in higher education finance and planning primarily with the California State University system, and most recently at Cal Poly Pomona.

He plans to work with the regional leadership, local community, and institutional partners to discover how the organization can begin to lift the region and bring the area back from the pandemic.

“It’s not just Fairplex that has suffered these past two years, the entire region has,” he said. “We have many opportunities, like Gold Line Extension in La Verne and the Specific Plan we are working on with the City of Pomona. It’s a great opportunity for Fairplex to use our site to benefit the area and come out of the pandemic better than we went in.”

“As Fairplex prepares for its centennial celebration in 2022, I look forward to our continued role as a presenter of unique experiences, being a regional economic engine and a community partner for the next hundred years,” Marquez said.



Tri City Mental Health, serving Pomona, Claremont and La Verne, held a virtual farewell celebration honoring Toni Navarro, pictured at left, who is stepping down after 13 years as executive director of the agency to take a position in Santa Barbara County as Director of Behavioral Health. Rimmi Hundal, at right, Tri City’s director of mental health and ethnic services, served as a master of ceremonies at the on-line event attended by staff, friends and colleagues in the field from several counties. (We don’t want to get into too many details but there was a slide show and even a “Toni Trivia” game at the party.) On a personal note, La Nueva Voz publisher Jeff Schenkel served as a public relations consultant operating his own company for 28 years before launching La Nueva Voz and wrote the news release announcing Toni’s appointment to the position 13 years ago in Pomona. Congratulations, Toni, on the new opportunity. You will be missed here in Tri City land.

## Poison control officials urge caution using cannabis edibles around kids

The California Poison Control System has issued a reminder to all adults to practice caution when using or serving cannabis-containing edible items such as cookies, candies, pastries or beverages to minimize the risk of accidental poison exposure to children or teens.

“Children can be exposed to marijuana either by breathing in smoke or eating foods containing marijuana,” said Dr. Cyrus Rangan, assistant medical director of

the organization’s Los Angeles Area Education Program. “Keep your home and car free of the smoke, and keep food or drinks in their original containers locked up away from young children or teens. Kids and cannabis don’t mix.”

He suggested treating these products just like alcoholic beverages using “caution and common sense.”

Rangan added that symptoms can be more severe in children than in adults and can range from sleepiness to difficulty breathing or even coma.

He said hospital rooms and poison control centers have received many cases of young children who accidentally ate marijuana edibles and required hospital admission due to the severity of their symptoms.

Rangan said if there is a chance a child has accidentally consumed marijuana-containing products, call poison control at (800) 222-1222 and a trained specialist can answer specific questions and guide callers to an emergency facility if needed.

The service is free and confidential.



Photo by Renee Barbee

Santa visited Pomona’s El Sushi Loco (1542 W. Holt Ave.) this month during a day-long toy drive collecting toys to be distributed to local kids. LA 101.9 on air host Evelyn Sicairos was on hand for the event, and the restaurant received special certificates of recognition from State Sen. Connie Leyva to the restaurant and owner Francisco Mendoza. Victory Outreach also helped with the toy drive. Pictured, from left, are Griselda Mendoza, kids Diego and Valentina Mendoza, Francisco Mendoza and, of course, Santa.



Members of the Smiles and Tears Board of Directors and staff held their holiday party this month at McKinley’s Grille inside Pomona’s Sheraton Fairplex Hotel. Pictured at the head of the table is CEO Jose Islas with his wife and son. Others in attendance were board members, staff members and social workers. Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, a board member at Smiles and Tears, is pictured at front left. Smiles and Tears, a Pomona-based foster family agency, works to provide quality foster care through partnerships with resource families, staff and community to benefit the lives of children in their care. It is located at 925 N. Garey Ave., Pomona, (909) 469-9580.



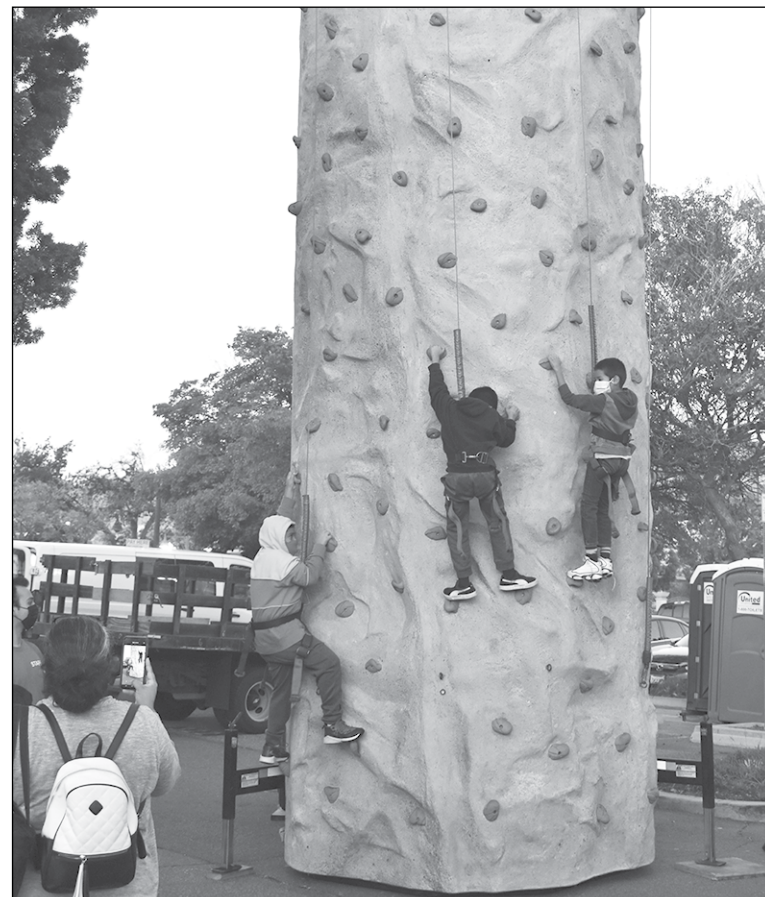
It wouldn't be Christmas in Pomona without a snow slide back behind Shaun Diamond Plaza, guaranteed to put a smile on your face.



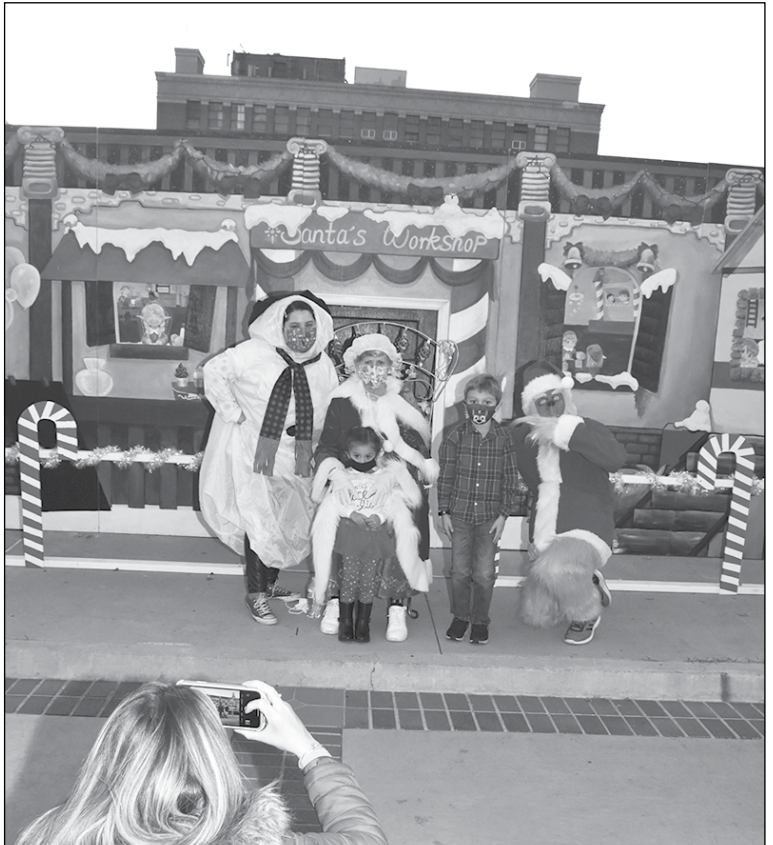
The stage in Downtown Pomona's Shaun Diamond Plaza was decked out with Christmas trees and lots of holiday lights creating just the right mood for the Holiday at the Plaza.



Official parade announcer Deborah Clifford, at left, prepares her notes for another year of parade duties on the microphone. Also pictured are Marco Argote of the Downtown Pomona Owners Association, parade producers, who was busy, well, with a little bit of everything, and Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz and a long-time member of the Pomona Christmas Parade committee, who was busy as usual live-streaming video of the entire parade. She reported more than 450 views and shares from Facebook friends of the two-hour parade as of deadline day for this issue.



Kids were enjoying a little wall climbing before the parade in Shaun Diamond Plaza where the DPOA had an entire "Santa's Workshop" and "Holiday at the Plaza" set up. This year parts of the plaza event will continue through the end of the month.



A mom grabs a photo of her kids, sizes small, medium and large, in Santa's Workshop posing with Mrs. Claus and the Grinch.



Kids are always an important part of what the Pomona Christmas Parade is really all about.





Pictured is an inside look at the Catalyst Cannabis Co. showroom on opening day this month.

**RIBBON CUTTING AT CATALYST** -- Pomona Chamber of Commerce and city officials helped cut the ribbon this month to officially open Catalyst Cannabis Co., Pomona's second legal cannabis dispensary, located at 456 E. Holt Ave. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Planning Commissioner Yesenia Miranda Meza, Mark Ramos, President of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1428 in Claremont; Po-



mona Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz; Benny Ayala, representing State Sen. Connie Leyva; Catalyst CEO Elliot Lewis; Sharon Alvey, owner of AJ's Superpaw and a partner in the new business; Doug Alvey, also part owner of Catalyst who has worked at AJ's next door for the past 36 years; Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanara; Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole; Marco Argote of the Downtown Pomona Owners Association; and, holding the ribbon just out of the shot, Pomona's American Legion Post 30 Commander Roberto Arnold.

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**MESSAGE OF THE MONTH**

**Your Voice Matters**

- Experts estimate that 1 in 10 children are sexually abused before their 18th birthday.
- 30% of children are abused by family members.
- As many as 60% are abused by people the family trusts.
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## State Sen. Leyva – facing possible redistricting out of Pomona and Chino – appeals to community to ask commission to keep cities in Inland Empire

State Sen. Connie Leyva – currently at risk of being redistricted out of Pomona and Chino after representing the cities since she was elected in 2014 – issued an appeal to a Pomona library donors group this month to call on the 2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission asking them to keep Pomona and Chino in the Inland Empire.

“I need your help – right now, I’ve been redistricted out of Pomona and, if we cannot get the

commission to change by Christmas Eve, I will no longer get to be your senator, which would absolutely break my heart,” Leyva told a group of Pomona Public Library donors at an event at the library to update names on the library foundation’s donor “wall.”

“They have taken Chino and Pomona out and put me in the San Gabriel Valley, which means I would have to run against (State Sen.) Susan Rubio,” Leyva explained. “And it breaks my heart

because my two favorite cities are Pomona and where I live (Chino).”

“So, I’m going to ask all of you to do me a favor and hopefully yourselves a favor and reach out to Benny (Field Representative Benny Ayala) or to Manny (District Director Manuel Saucedo) and find out where you can comment and say, ‘please keep Pomona and Chino in the Inland Empire’ because I want to represent you for

my last five years in the Senate,” she said.

Leyva would term out after another five years in office.

Term limits for California legislators were changed by the passage of Proposition 28 in June 2012 and now allow legislators elected for the first time in 2012 or later to serve a total of 12 years in either the Senate or the Assembly or split between the two houses.

Members of the public can provide redistricting input on the “Public Input Form” found on the redistricting commission’s web site at [www.wedrawthelinesca.org](http://www.wedrawthelinesca.org).

Leyva was invited to the event as a major supporter of the library. She was successful in June 2019 in getting \$280,000 in the state budget for Pomona library im-

**Facing redistricting... pg. 17**

### Use an ATM card and assessed a surcharge?

### You may be eligible for “cash back” from a pending \$67 million class action settlement!

JP Morgan, Wells Fargo and Bank of America have agreed to settlements resolving claims in a class action lawsuit that alleged defendants violated federal anti-trust laws by adopting restraints that allegedly inflated the ATM surcharges paid by the class.

The defendants have denied the allegations and the court has not decided who is right, according to a PRNewswire news release.

Settlement class members include bank customers who at any time between Oct. 1, 2007 and Nov. 12, 2021 paid a surcharge to withdraw cash from a bank ATM in the U.S.

Additional details are available at [www.ATMClassAction.com](http://www.ATMClassAction.com).

The settlements provide for the payment of \$66,740,000 in cash to resolve the claims.

To receive money from the settlement, class members must

complete a claim form that asks customers to state under oath that they were assessed ATM surcharges. Class members are not required to provide documentation with the claim form, although settlement administrators reserve the right to request bank statements or other documentation supporting claims.

Claims can be completed online or downloaded for mailing at [www.ATMClassAction.com/claims](http://www.ATMClassAction.com/claims).

Deadline is May 11, 2022.

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia is scheduled to hold a hearing at 3 p.m. May 17 to consider whether to approve the settlements.

The court has appointed the law firms of Hagens Berman Sobol Shapiro LLP; Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP; and Mehri & Skalet, PLLC as class lead counsel to represent settlement class members.



Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce turned out this month for a ribbon-cutting and resource fair to officially open the new location of the San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps and Youthbuild Charter School of California. The Corps moved out of Pomona in March 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic to temporarily share space with its El Monte office but moved back to Pomona in August after a year and five months. The new offices are on the campus of Charisma Life Church, at 305 E. Arrow Highway, Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares, Chamber Ambassador Co-chair Roberto Arnold, Jenny Macias representing Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, Aldo Macias Arellano, representing Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang, Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado, Youthbuild Charter School Principal Tizoc Brenes, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee, SGVCC Chief Executive Norma Quinones, Chamber Ambassador Sal Ayala, Youthbuild Supt. Rudy Cuevas, Ambassadors Angie Leyva and Alvin Luna, and Ambassador and Chamber Board member Jeff Johannsen. Members of the Conservation Corps work and serve in their communities, building a future for themselves in which they can realize their full potential.

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**SPECIAL LIVE 'AFTER PARADE' CONCERT** -- Student artists from Pomona's nationally award-winning School of Arts and Enterprise (The SAE) belted out a live set of holiday tunes in a free "SAE Bells Ring" concert on the sidewalk along the parade route (in front of their school). Needless to say, they were amazing and the audience loved it! The non-profit charter school is now enrolling for students interested in art, dance, design, music, photography and theatre.



**ROTARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH** -- Pomona Rotary Club announced its "student of the month" winners for November last month. Pictured, from left, are Rotary President Jill Dolan of Mt. SAC, Pomona Unified School Board member Arturo Jimenez; winners Luis Castro-Limon, a student at Pomona's Diamond Ranch High School; Katelyn Caudillo, a student at Palomares Academy of Health & Science; Claudia Reveles, of Garey High School; Narlyn Rodriguez, of Village Academy High School; Rotarian Lorraine Canales; Pomona Unified School Supt. Richard Martinez; and Pomona Unified School Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman.



# A La Nueva Voz special “pull out” section: The 2021 Pomona Christmas Parade Brought to you by Valley Vista Services

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## Pomona’s astronaut... from pg. 1

Space Station some 254 miles above the earth while orbiting at more than 17,000 miles per hour.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in general engineering, and master’s degrees in flight test engineering, systems engineering and military operational art and science.

He and his wife, the former Dionna Odom of Berkeley, and their four children have been stationed in many locations in the U.S. and Japan, and he has deployed in both combat and during peacetime.

In 2012, he was selected for a legislative fellowship and was assigned to the office of a U.S. Senator. While in Washington, D.C., he completed a certificate in legislative studies at Georgetown University. It was during his work as a legislative fellow that he was selected as an astronaut candidate.

He has accumulated 3,000 flight hours in more than 40 aircraft, has made more than 400 landings on aircraft carriers, and has flown 24 combat missions.

He was selected in 2013 as

one of eight members of the 21st NASA astronaut class.

While on the International Space Station during Expedition 64, he completed 168 days in orbit and participated in four spacewalks.

His contributions while aboard the space station included scientific investigations, technology demonstrations, growing crops and taking hundreds of pictures of earth.

Glover graduated from Ontario high School in 1994 and was named “athlete of the year” the same year.

Glover’s appearance in the annual parade literally created more excitement here than any grand marshal Pomona’s parade – or even the Rose Parade in Pasadena, for that matter – has seen in quite some time. After all, as one La Nueva Voz news source pointed out, Glover’s not even from the same planet as the others.

The two-hour nighttime parade, with cool temperatures and clear

skies, attracted 97 entries, each making its way along the parade route down Second Street and around Downtown Pomona as some 3,000 spectators lined the streets – in some places four and five deep – to watch and cheer on their favorites.

Included were bands, youth groups, car clubs, service organizations, dignitaries, floats, drill teams and more.

Produced by the Downtown Pomona Owners Association, it was the community’s “back to normal” parade after last year’s parade – due to COVID restrictions – was the first ever “drive through” parade with spectators driving through to view the floats and exhibits.

The theme of this year’s parade was “Holiday Under the Stars.”



Valley Vista Services owner David Perez drives the company’s classic truck, decorated with everything from holiday ribbons and bows and lights to classic Christmas scene streetlamps on the back -- another great float design from Valley Vista. Pictured in the truck cab, from left, are Bella, Nathan and Alma Martinez and Perez.



Elizabeth Lozano, AKA “Captain Marvel,” is out front on Pomona’s Second Street “pulling” the Valley Vista Services entry in the parade. The theme of the Valley Vista float this year was “Ad astra per aspera,” or Latin for “To the stars through hardships” (also the motto of Kansas).



Representatives of Pomona Unified School District were getting all set to line up before the parade. Pictured, from left, are Kairi Jimenez, Pomona Unified School District Board member Arturo Jimenez, Cristian Jimenez, PUSD Deputy Supt. for Human Resources Darren Knowles, Pomona Unified School District Board members Lorena Gonzalez and Dr. Roberta Perlman, and PUSD Supt. Richard Martinez.



Costanoan-Rumsen Tribe of Native Americans “head man” Tony Cerda, riding shotgun, and his wife, Emily, at rear, say hello to the crowds in the parade.



Employees and families of Valley Vista’s Pomona Valley Transfer Station in Pomona rode on the back of the Valley Vista truck “hayride” style this year.



From left are Pomona Chamber of Commerce Board member Nef Cortez, Board Chair Annette Limon and Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares cruising down Second Street.



Three Valleys Municipal Water District Board member Carlos Goytia and his wife Catalina wave to the crowd in the parade.



State Sen. Connie Leyva poses for the cameras on Second Street.



## Special Valley Vista Services “pull out” section -- The 2021 Pomona Christmas Parade



Pomona Police Chief Mike Ellis rides in Walt Barkley's classic police patrol car with Walt at the wheel and his wife, Sylvia, in the back seat.



Members of the Black Knightz Motorcycle Club posed for cameras in the parade.



Native American drummers on a huge drum perform a ceremonial drum cadence in the back of the Costanoan-Rumsen Tribe truck.



Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval walked the parade route with his wife, Criselda, and their son, Roy.



Pomona Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole



Pomona Councilmember Nora Garcia



Pomona Councilmember Victor Preciado



Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, at left, is interviewed by parade Master of Ceremonies Fred Van Allen as Freddie's wife, Michele, looks on.



Pomona Councilmember Robert Torres



Deputy Police Chief Christian Hsu rides in the parade with Corporal Chris Lewis at the wheel.



Congresswoman Norma Torres is interviewed by parade Master of Ceremonies Fred Van Allen.



It would not be the same without the Downtown Pomona Owners Association trolley, with Augusto Vivanco of DPOA at the wheel and DPOA Executive Director Lorena Parker waving to the crowd.



**Valley Vista Services  
and  
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Businesses of the City of Pomona  
a Very Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year!**



Members of the Ganessa High School marching band looked and sounded great in the Pomona Christmas Parade.



The girls from "dancemaker -- The Performing Arts Studio" in Covina were looking good in the parade. (Just for the record, the studio uses lower case for its name.)



Members of the Pomona Host Lions Club marched in the Downtown Pomona parade. The club is celebrating its 100th anniversary.



Members of the Garey High School marching band were in fine form in the parade.



Members of the Pomona Valley Branch of the NAACP marched in the parade.



Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang rode in this year's parade with his dog Theo, looking at the camera.



Pomona's inaugural poet laureate David Marcus Oliver (Judah 1) waves to spectators in this month's Pomona Christmas Parade. The city's poet laureate program was created by and is funded by the Pomona Library Foundation.



Members of the Pomona Girl Scouts were well represented in the parade.

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The Pomona High School Red Devils looked good in this year's parade with the school's Army Junior ROTC bringing up the rear.



Athens Services decorated a trash truck with festive Christmas lights for this year's parade.



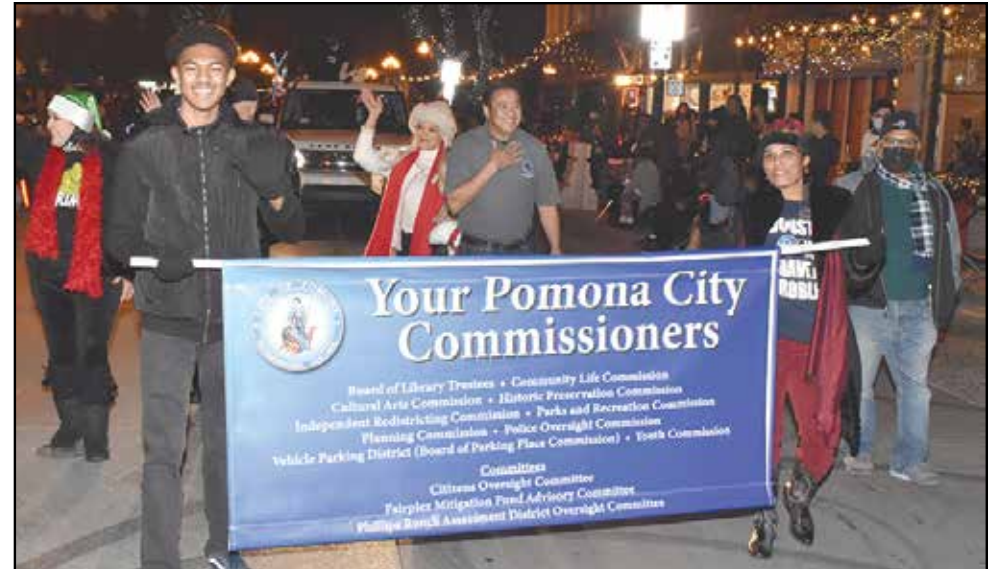
Pomona Optimist Treasurer Fernando Meza was driving his pickup in the parade -- and was credited with taking care of most of the decorations -- with a good group of members in the back. Pictured, from left, are member Rudy Herrera, Secretary Ruth Alvarez, President Lorraine Canales and Past President and District Governor M. Joyce Bakersmith.



The JOI Club students, about 30 of them altogether, most of them students at Village Academy High School, walked in the parade with the Pomona Optimist Club to wish season's greetings to the community.



Members of the Rotary Club of Pomona ride in the parade with members of their families waving to the crowd. The club is observing its 100th anniversary this year.



A sampling of Pomona's city commissioners walked the entire parade route waving to the crowd behind a banner carried by Youth Commissioner Ryan Houston, at left, and his mom, Community Life Commissioner Donna Houston.



Members of Pomona's Diamond Ranch High School marching band were looking good in this year's parade.



Representatives of the Kennedy Austin Foundation marched in the parade, under the leadership of their founder, Ethel Gardner, waving to the camera at right.

**‘AROUND TOWN’**

**Pomona residents part of the story of Victor Glover and NASA**

Astronaut Victor Glover’s selection as grand marshal for this year’s Pomona Christmas Parade was made possible through the assistance of two Pomona residents and prompted a mention of two others who had a history with NASA and the nation’s space program.

Pomona Christmas Parade committee member and volunteer coordinator Chara Swodeck, it turns out, is friends with Kim Johnson, co-chair of Pomona’s annual Christmas on Columbia neighborhood holiday lights display (see “Columbia” photos in this issue).

It turns out Johnson, growing up in Pomo-

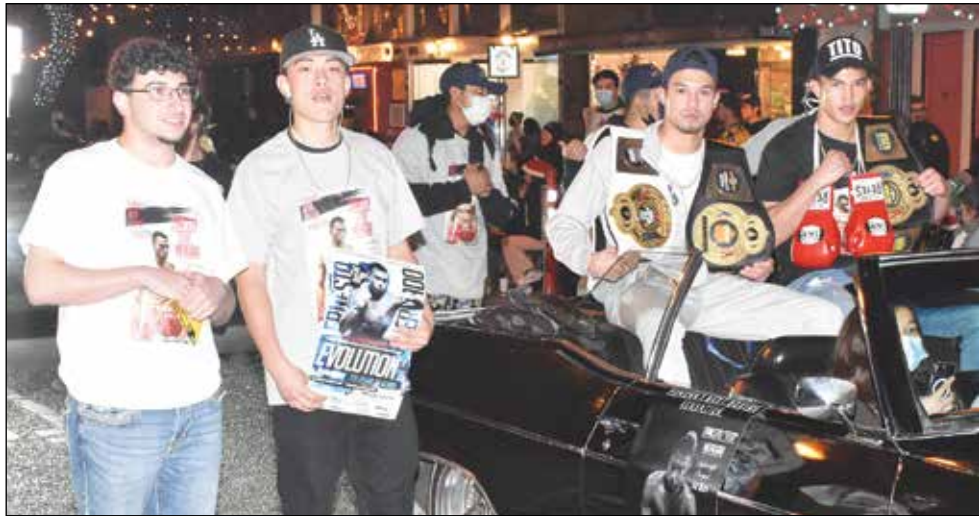
na, once lived next door to the Glover family and was able to assist the parade committee in making contact with NASA and Glover to confirm his participation in this year’s parade.

Meanwhile, Pomona Community Life Commissioner Donna Jackson-Houston told La Nueva Voz that when the astronauts first launched to the space station in November 2020, she contacted Chara to make sure her son logged in to watch. Chara contacted her son’s teacher at Lincoln Elementary School and the entire class watched together.

At that time, Donna became interested

**Around Town... pg. 20**

**Parade... from pg. 14**



Pomona’s next boxing sensation Ernesto “Tito” Mercado, second from right, poses for the La Nueva Voz camera with family, friends and several awards in the parade.



The parade included lots of cars this year with everything from vintage cars to a classic “Woody” decorated for Christmas and ready for Santa to go surfing.



Pomona Library Trustees Mike Suarez, at left, and Tom Rodriguez wave to the crowd in the Pomona Christmas Parade.



Pomona’s Mt. San Antonio College Board members Peter Hidalgo, at left, and Dr. Manuel Baca ride in the Pomona Christmas Parade... pg. 18

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**OPTIMIST CLUB STUDENTS OF THE MONTH** -- Pomona Optimist Club students of the month have been announced for the months of September and October. All students are from Pomona's Arroyo Elementary School, this year's "adopted" school for the student of the month program. Pictured, from left, are Lucas Carter Muro, sixth grade, who is on track for exceeding the Lexile Reading Level for his grade; Andres Cervantes, sixth grade, who has made a 55-point gain in his Lexile Reading Level during the first month of school; Demi Garrido, sixth grade, who holds the highest Lexile Reading Level in sixth grade at her school; and Sophia Austin, fourth grade, who holds the highest Lexile Reading Level in her grade at Arroyo. Awards were presented during a recent ZOOM meeting. Congratulations, students!



**TREES DOWN IN LAST WEEK'S STORM** -- Last week's wind and rain storm resulted in a tree down on San Antonio Avenue in Pomona between Sixth and Ninth Streets, resulting in closed streets for a brief period of time. According to Pomona police, the tree took power lines down with it as well. City public works and Southern California Edison crews immediately went to work to reopen the streets.

Photo courtesy of Pomona Police Department



Hablo Español



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## Casa Colina earns ‘Gold Seal of Approval’ for hip and knee replacement certification

Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare has earned the Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval for Advanced Total Hip and Knee Replacement Certification by demonstrating continuous compliance with its performance standards.

Given in collaboration with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, this specialty certification focuses on the entire patient care experience – from pre-surgical consultation to the actual joint replacement procedure, and then rehabilitation activities and follow-up visits with the orthopedic surgeon.

It is the highest certification recognized by the American Academy of Orthopaedic Sur-

geons.

Casa Colina’s award-winning “Revive Joint Replacement Program” is nationally renowned for a minimally invasive approach, where orthopedic surgeons use state-of-the-art robotic-assisted technology that minimizes pain, accelerates recovery, and leads to better outcomes, according to a news release.

“We commend Casa Colina for using this certification to strengthen its program structure for orthopedic patients,” said Mark Pelletier, chief operating officer for the Joint Commission, an independent, not-for-profit organization and the nation’s oldest and largest standards-setting accrediting body in health care.

## Facing redistricting... from pg. 9

provements.

She is continuing to work with the Pomona Public Library Foundation on developing a proposal to bring additional funds to the local library since, as she told library supporters, “our work is not done here.”

California voters passed the Voters FIRST Act in November 2008, authorizing the creation of the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to draw new district lines, taking the job out of the hands of the California Legislature and transferring it to the citizens.

In 2010, the VOTERS FIRST Act for Congress added the responsibility of drawing Congress-

sional districts to the commission.

The concept is based on an effort to keep track of how the state’s population has shifted while trying to keep an equal number of people in each district.

Every 10 years, after the federal government completes the U.S. Census and releases the updated population count, California must redraw the boundaries of its congressional, legislative and Board of Equalization districts so all correctly reflect the current populations.

Preliminary draft district maps were released last month. Deadline is Dec. 27 for final district maps to be certified by the California Secretary of State.

## Tips for purchasing medical equipment

By Kathy SanMartino, PT

Purchasing medical equipment should be done with professional guidance. Oftentimes, it can be a complicated and frustrating process!

To determine whether an item is covered by your insurance, you can contact your insurance or vendor directly. When choosing a vendor, it is important to choose one who is a preferred provider for your insurance company. This will ensure the lowest possible co-pay for you. If coverage for an item is denied, it is important to see the reason for the denial in writing. Sometimes, it is simply a technicality—e.g. the dates on a form—that is the cause of the denial. Other times, it is an incomplete justification for the equipment.

Wheelchairs are perhaps the most challenging “Durable Medical Equipment” for which to submit. Most insurance companies will follow guidelines similar to Medicare. If a power wheelchair, scooter, or custom manual wheelchair is requested, it must be required for mobility within the home. A physical therapy evaluation is required to evaluate the individual’s needs. The physical therapy evaluation must explain why a lesser piece of equipment is inadequate—i.e., if a power wheelchair is recommended, we must explain why a walker, manual wheelchair, or scooter is inappropriate. The physician must also evaluate the individual, and their documentation must reflect the findings of the physical therapist.

When shopping for a wheelchair, you should look for a vendor with Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) certification. This certification indicates that the vendor is competent in evaluating an individual for assistive technology, such as wheelchairs. You should also look for a physical therapist who has ATP certifi-

cation. This provides more assurance that the paperwork will be submitted correctly. If the paperwork is not compiled appropriately or is incomplete in any way, a denial may occur, or the whole process may be greatly delayed with resubmissions. If the wrong equipment is ordered for you and you accept it, you must keep it for five years. Your insurance will not consider ordering a new wheelchair for you unless your equipment is at least five years old or you have had a significant change in condition.

Taking an active part in the whole process can speed up delivery of your medical equipment. This could include following the paper trail to ensure the physical therapist, physician, and vendor are completing and submitting the paperwork in a timely manner.



Kathy SanMartino, PT  
Casa Colina Hospital

If you would like to learn more tips for purchasing durable medical equipment, please call Casa Colina’s Outpatient Services at 909/596-7733, ext. 3500.

*Editor’s Note: Kathy SanMartino, a physical therapist, heads up the wheelchair and seating program at Pomona’s Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare.*

### A new La Nueva Voz publishes each month on the fourth Thursday of the month.

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- Downtown Pomona Owners Association, 119 W. 2nd St., Pomona
- Pomona Unified School District administration building lobby
- Western University of Health Sciences Patient Care Center
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## Parade... from pg. 15



Pomona Unified School Supt. Richard Martinez, at left, and Pomona Unified Board member Lorena Gonzalez lead the PUSD delegation in the Pomona Christmas Parade.



Students from Pomona's School of Arts and Enterprise (The SAE) march in the parade to promote a special "after the parade" holiday concert in front of their school.



Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 12034 "Band of Brothers" of La Verne Color Guard marched in the parade.



Members of the Pomona Historical Preservation Commission ride in the parade, driven by Jim Gallivan. The commission's theme this year was "Preserving the Future." Asked by La Nueva Voz why the telescope, Gallivan said it was for "looking to the future."



Leading this year's Pomona Christmas Parade was the Color Guard from Pomona's Post 30 American Legion. Pictured, from left, are Post 30 Finance Officer Alejandro Escobedo, American Legion District 18 Commander Auggie Galaviz, Post 30 Adjutant Sam Cafiero, and Post 30 Second Vice Commander Bob Radcliff, Color Guard leader.



Bringing up the rear and signaling the traditional end of the parade is Santa himself, although he sure looks a lot to us like Jeff Keating of Western University of Health Sciences. Nah, couldn't be!

Parade... from pg. 18



Here's one we watch for every year -- the Diamond Ranch Performing Alumni marching musicians.



Three Valleys Municipal Water District Board member Danielle Soto, at left, riding in the parade with Pomona Planning Commissioner Yesenia Miranda Meza, is interviewed by parade Master of Ceremonies Fred Van Allen while Marco Argote, at right, of the Downtown Pomona Owners Association grabs a little video on his phone.



Two, well, somethings were marching the parade route representing The Stage Global on Second Street in Pomona while somebody, we're not sure who, was doing we're not sure what but they were doing a pretty good job of it moving around a pole with a hoop attached to the top. Oh, that's Jehan Izhar, founder and owner of the company on the "lollipop!" Stage Global is a cirque arts, fitness and dance center that offers professional training.



Day One was represented in the Pomona Christmas Parade.



Reverend Jan Chase of Unity Church of Pomona, at right, walks the parade route in Downtown Pomona.



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## Memorial service set for beloved 35-year Pomona Unified teacher who 'changed lives'

A memorial service will be held next week for long-time Pomona Unified School District teacher Esperanza Maria Flores who died last month in Upland. She was 82.

"Mrs. Flores," as she was known to more than a thousand young Pomona Unified children from 1976 to 2010, had an ability to change lives, according to her family.

She taught at Westmont, Washington, and Vejar Elementary Schools, and taught summer school, bilingual education and even home-bound children. She also served in migrant education in Los Angeles County.

Born in Chihuahua, Mexico, she was sent on a visa to the United States in the late-1950s as a young teenager by her oldest brother for a chance at an education and a better life. When she learned that it would take "getting an education" to stay in the U.S., she jumped at the chance. She excelled in completing 12 years of education in less than four years.

She married in her early 20s and had three children. She later started working on her undergraduate degree. She studied education and was immediately offered a job with Pomona Unified during her on-campus interview. She began teaching at Westmont Elementary School in 1976. She later com-



**Esperanza Maria Flores**

pleted her master's degree in bilingual education. She took a position teaching bilingual classes at Washington Elementary in 1990, and moved to Vejar Elementary in 2000, before retiring in 2010.

Mrs. Flores was loved by her students and deeply respected by her classroom parents and colleagues. She touched the lives of her students and their families with her exceptional ability to teach, motivating students to achieve beyond their expected levels. Year after year, parents requested that their children become her students because of her reputation for inspiring learning. She was also known for accepting those considered difficult to teach. Those same students would often end the school year above grade

level.

"Anyone can teach the brightest students," she was known to say. "I can teach anyone."

Her love for her students and the teaching profession was apparent in how she prepared for classroom instruction. She invested hours daily, on weekends and throughout the summer to ensure that her students had the clearest and the most impactful instruction possible. Her intuitive ability to create multi-disciplinary lessons out of any concept never ceased to amaze those around her.

Mrs. Flores leaves a legacy of students, many of whom because of the knowledge, skills, and values she instilled in them are now adults working in various professions and other responsible positions.

Even in retirement, she never stopped finding a way to teach children, whether they were her own grandchildren or those in her neighborhood.

She is survived by a loving family, including her children Jolynne, Norman (Debbie), and Kenneth (Adriana); and grandchildren Kristina (Mike), Sarah, and Elizabeth.

A memorial service is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 27, at St. Paul the Apostle Church, 14085 Peyton Dr., Chino Hills, with a reception to follow at the American Legion Post 299, 13759 Central Ave., Chino.

## Around Town... from pg. 15

in learning exactly what Pomona schools Glover attended, so she researched it.

But it turned out, she said, the schools were unable to provide an answer.

So when she interviewed him at Shaun Diamond Plaza after the parade (streamed on Facebook), that was one of the first questions she asked him.

And the answer? The astronaut attended Allison Elementary School in Pomona, although he did not attend middle school here.

In addition, Pomona residents and volunteers Gary Lett, a Pomona artist, and his wife Lisha Lett both worked at Hugh L. Dryden NASA, now known as the Neil A. Armstrong Flight Research Center, at Edwards Air Force Base.

Lisha worked for former astronaut David Scott as the first junior secretary at the facility, and Gary, a 1974 Garey High School graduate, worked there in the engineering department through a college student work program where he

performed testing on various parts of the first space shuttle.

Both were present the day the shuttle flew its first flight "piggyback" on a 747.

And Gary's brother, Leo Lett, a 1972 Garey High School graduate, worked at NASA as a flight crew chief and retired as a deputy branch chief.

Even Congresswoman Norma Torres has been involved in connecting Glover with Pomona – she was able to arrange a "live" lesson from outer space – when Glover still was working on the space station – last March (see La Nueva Voz March 25 issue, page 3, at [www.lanuevavoz.net](http://www.lanuevavoz.net) under "past issues") when Glover and flight engineer Dr. Shannon Walkerspoke to Inland Empire students – including students from Pomona – in a special connection 22-minute live-streamed program.

Students from seven area school districts participated in the event and more than 1,100 viewers logged in.

The following public service ads are courtesy of La Nueva Voz

**Project Sister Family Services**  
Sexual Assault and  
Child Abuse Services  
909-626-4357  
or 626-966-4155  
[www.projectsister.org](http://www.projectsister.org)

**Feeding the Hungry,  
Sheltering the Homeless**  
Grocery Distribution at  
209 W. Pearl St.  
Pomona  
  
Volunteering: 909-622-3806  
[www.inlandvalleyhopepartners.org](http://www.inlandvalleyhopepartners.org)

**HOUSE OF RUTH**  
Abused by your partner  
and need help?  
24-hour hotline:  
**(909) 988-5559 or toll  
free at (877) 988-5559**

**Pomona Public Library Hours**  
("Walk up doorside service" only)  
**Noon to 5 p.m.**  
**Monday through Thursday**  
(For "Walk up doorside service,"  
please use south parking lot  
entrance due to construction.)

**Info on student group programs at AGRiscapes:**  
**[www.agriscapes.cpp.edu](http://www.agriscapes.cpp.edu)**  
4102 S. University Drive, Pomona (next to the Farm Store)

**Sign up for Pomona Unified School District's**  
Free 'Early Learning Literacy' App!  
It's a fun way to improve reading skills.  
Register at [www.myf2b.com/register/pomona](http://www.myf2b.com/register/pomona)  
footsteps2brilliance  
La Nueva Voz is a proud member of PUSD's Literacy Collaborative.



**STATE SEN. LEYVA SPEAKS AT LIBRARY FOUNDATION EVENT** -- State Sen. Connie Leyva, center, speaking last week at a Pomona Public Library Foundation "donor wall" update at Pomona Public Library, told library supporters she's working with the foundation to try to get more state money for the library as "there's more money in the budget this year." Name plates were added to the wall for 10 new \$1,000 donations and eight name plates for donors reaching new levels with their continuing contributions -- two to the \$10,000 level and six to the \$5,000 level, according to Foundation President Duane Smith, pictured at right, who said it was the third update of the donor wall.

**Do you have a news story?**  
**We want to hear from you or your organization.**  
**Send your news tips to: [reneebarbee7@gmail.com](mailto:reneebarbee7@gmail.com)**



Pomona Police Officer Glenn Sabey helps make sure a “customer” gets just the right Christmas present in the “boys age 6-8” section. Selected Pomona kids were invited to City Hall last week for the annual “Santa Cop” event, presented by the Pomona Police Department and friends. Sgt. Brad Paulson, who supervises the department’s community programs unit, said the turnout was “great” this year with close to 1,200 kids coming out. He said they usually get about 600 to 800 kids. “The donations this year have been extremely generous,” he said. “The kids have been having an absolute ball.”



A new feature of the Pomona Police Department’s “Santa Cop” event this year was photos with Santa in front of an entire backdrop in the lobby of Pomona City Hall.



Pomona police supporter Virginia Madrigal, at right, helps check in children and parents for this year’s Pomona Police Department “Santa Cop” event.

## Region’s business activity approaching pre-pandemic levels

The Inland Empire’s business activity is expected to reach pre-pandemic levels by the end of the year, although available labor supply should be among next year’s biggest restraints on growth, according to the UC Riverside School of Business Center for Economic Forecasting and Development.

A report this month showed the Inland Empire continues to outpace the nation in its recovery from the pandemic with third quarter business activity expansion of 4.5 percent,

compared to a national growth rate of only 2.1 percent.

Over the next two quarters, local business activity is forecast to rise between 3 and 6 percent.

Growth rate actually declined in the third quarter from 8 percent in the second quarter this year and 7 percent in the first quarter, a slowdown the report said was expected as the region approaches pre-pandemic conditions.

The local labor market has added back 185,600 jobs since hitting rock bottom in April 2020.

# MAKE TODAY “DAY ONE” OF YOUR JOURNEY TO BECOME TOBACCO FREE — MAKE IT A NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION

### Here’s how:

Go to **Kick It California’s** mobile-friendly website **KickItCA.org** or call **1-800-300-8086** (English) or **1-800-600-8191** (Spanish) to find out how to get a personal quit coach and make a plan customized to your circumstances to quit for good. **Kick It California’s** services and programs are free, in English and Spanish, and accessible for all.



**Quitting tobacco use can result in positive outcomes including improvements to your physical and mental health.**

### The first week is the toughest but:

**Minutes after** your last cigarette, your blood pressure drops and within 24 hours your nicotine level in the blood drops to zero.

**Several days after quitting,** your carbon monoxide level drops to normal.

**Within 1 to 12 months,** coughing and shortness of breath decreases and you breathe easier. And after 1 to 2 years of quitting, your risk of heart attack drops sharply.

*“I started smoking at the age of 18, and it made me feel cool and mature, but I was wrong. Too many people are just killing themselves with this bad habit. After constantly experiencing shortness of breath and the other ways my body was letting me know to think about quitting smoking, the day came to quit, and it’s one of the best decisions I have ever made! Never in my life could I imagine being smoke free. Thank you Kick It California for giving me the most important tool I needed to save my life.”*

— Juan E., Quit with Kick It California

**Quitting isn’t easy.** Sometimes, it can feel overwhelming or downright impossible, but Kick It California can provide the help and support to take that first step toward being tobacco free.



**KICK/IT**  
California

**KICKITCA.ORG** | **1-800-300-8086** | **1-800-600-8191**

ENGLISH

SPANISH

## Residents celebrate 'Christmas on Columbia' in community event that grows bigger each year

It is often said that Pomona is really “just a big, small town.”

And when it comes to neighbors coming together for a cause – and then celebrating their work with food, music and merriment in the street – well, that’s pretty much exactly what happens each year at “Christmas on Columbia,” an entire block party enjoying the new holiday lights and decorations.

Committee co-chair Kim Johnson told La Nueva Voz those lights



Need a trim? They were even doing haircuts in the street on opening night this month.



Hungry for hot dogs, hamburgers, tamales? It was all there in the street on Columbia Avenue this month.



Holiday candles of all shapes and sizes were for sale at Christmas on Columbia this year.

and decorations are now everywhere on the block – the festive effort has had 100 percent participation for the second year in a row – all 24 houses on the block had lights, animals, inflatables and more.

And they remain up throughout the entire month of December.

She and co-chairpersons Albert and Veronica Perez, who live

mid-block just across the street, opened the ceremonies early this month for the sixth annual event – just as the sun went down at 5 p.m.

Johnson explained the idea was an outgrowth of the block’s very active “Neighborhood Watch” group.

This year, the entire community was invited on opening night



**CHRISTMAS ON COLUMBIA!** -- Have you been by yet to see the Christmas lights on Columbia Avenue (take White Avenue and turn east)? This year’s the sixth year and it is better than ever with 100 percent participation on the block for the second year. And it goes through the end of the month. Pictured are the neighbors who live on the street plus Pomona City Councilmember John Nolte (back row, third from left) and Pomona Deputy Police Chief Christian Hsu, at far right. And Pomona Police crime prevention officer Norma Macy is pictured front row, third from right. Committee co-chairs for the event, pictured at center, are Kim Johnson and Albert Perez.

to have free dinner at tables and chairs set up in the street (for donations), to participate in the raffle, to get free haircuts, to listen to live music, to watch free movies and more.

There was even an ROTC drum line from Ganesha High School, folklorico dancers in the street, and congratulatory wishes from Pomona City Councilmember John Nolte and Deputy Police Chief Christian Hsu.

And, for the first two Saturday nights, the neighbors even offered

free hot cocoa and movies projected in one neighbor’s front yard.

To make things even easier, the entire block was being closed to parking throughout viewing hours to make it easier for the community to get a good look at the lights.

The group is believed to be the only Neighborhood Watch group in Pomona that donates toys to the Pomona Police Department toy drive.

In fact, organizers were presented with a “making a difference” award for their support of

the police department’s “Santa Cop” program.

Then what got the residents of Columbia into the holiday spirit?

Neighbors simply wanted “to shine a positive light on the City of Pomona to build a better and safer community,” Johnson told La Nueva Voz.

Neighbors were encouraged to bring unwrapped toys to be donated to the Pomona Police Department as part of their toy drive for local kids. Those donating toys

**Christmas on Columbia... pg. 23**



Neighbors line up in the street during a raffle drawing to check their ticket numbers. Free movies could be seen after dark on that front yard screen at rear.

## Christmas on Columbia... from pg.22

were automatically entered in a raffle for donated prizes.

La Nueva Voz discovered the lights “by accident” last year and the event has continued to grow.

Don't miss this one!

Take White Avenue to West Columbia Avenue (just south of the San Bernardino Freeway) and have your cameras and phones

ready as you drive east along Columbia to Wisconsin Street.

The lights will be on through the end of the month from 5 to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 5 p.m. to midnight Friday through Sunday.

And follow the activities on Instagram at @therealxmasoncolumbia.



Here's just a sampling of what is on display this month during the lights of Christmas on Columbia.



The Columbia toy drive was an important part of the event this year. Toys went to the Pomona Police Department as part of their toy drive for local kids.

Grilled hot dogs and conversation in the street were all part of the fare at Christmas on Columbia.



You can't have a celebration in the street without homegrown musical talent. And they had it in one driveway near center court at Christmas on Columbia -- they were going back and forth from “oldies” rock to traditional Mexican tunes.



It was pretty much all about tamales in the street with neighbors to give Christmas an old-time small town feel.



Hey, dad, take my picture! Even a car show in the street was part of the evening on opening day at Christmas on Columbia.



Pomona City Councilmember John Nolte kicked off opening night of Christmas on Columbia with his holiday wishes to the neighborhood as the lights went on officially for the first time. From left are Nolte and co-chairs Kim Johnson and Veronica and Albert Perez (with Lorenzo Perez, standing, and Alberto Perez, well, not standing).

### My COVID Christmas poem

## Christmases Long Past

By Susie Perales

Christmas lights, Christmas trees surround me, but it's not the same as years long past. The kids are grown and far away and life has changed so much ...

There are no children to hug and hold on Christmas Day. It's not the same as years long past. No photos, no new memories to cherish and love to share with our family and friends ...

The laughter, kisses and joy are just a distant dream of Christmases

long past. But, precious memories soothe my heart and warm my soul. So, I'll sit here and wait for things to change. I'll be home sitting by the window gazing at the moonlit sky – waiting for the joys of Christmas to come back and fill our home again ...



Susie and Angel Perales



Photos courtesy of Pomona Valley Hospital  
Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center resumed its traditional tree-lighting ceremony this month with hospital President and CEO Rich Yochum making Christmas official in Pomona. Because of COVID, the social distancing event included “drive through” photos with Santa as a precaution. Flipping the switch to light the tree atop the hospital tower are, from left, Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado, Yochum and, of course, Santa. Families were invited to celebrate the season by donating warm clothing to Pomona’s Project Horseshoe Farm, a non-profit that offers a helping hand to those in need.



**BLOOD DRIVE AT LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL** -- Students, staff and residents of La Verne and surrounding cities participated at a recent City of Hope blood drive at Lutheran High School La Verne where 37 people donated 26 pints of blood. City of Hope representative Cynthia Rochin said that translates to 78 possible lives being saved through the gift of giving blood. Lutheran High School Principal Kit Hittinger said more blood drives with City of Hope are planned for the future to “help students understand the importance of giving to others while helping the City of Hope get the blood that it needs to continue to do its good work.” Lutheran High School has provided quality education and meaningful ministry since 1973.

## Kick It California está aquí para ayudar a los californianos a dejar de fumar, y mejorar su salud mental y física

Por Mark Hedin,  
Ethnic Media Services

California vuelve a ser líder en la lucha contra las compañías de tabaco con la “Línea de Ayuda para Dejar de Fumar de California”, ahora rebautizada como “Kick It California”: un esfuerzo del estado para ayudar a la gente a dejar de fumar.

En *Kick It California*, toda persona que quiera dejar de usar tabaco —ya sea fumar cigarrillos, vaporizadores (“vaping”), masticables o cualquier otra cosa— encontrará una gran variedad de recursos disponibles de forma gratuita en el nuevo sitio web del programa, optimizada para teléfonos móviles [kickitca.org/](http://kickitca.org/) es. También puedes dar el primer paso para mejorar tu salud enviando un mensaje de texto con las palabras “DEJAR DE FUMAR” al 66819 (o “Quit Smoking”, si prefieres hacerlo en inglés) o llama al 1-800-300-8086. El programa ofrece servicios en inglés y en español, e incluye asesoramiento y, en algunos casos, ofrece parches de nicotina, chicles

o pastillas sin costo alguno.

“*Kick It California*” ha ayudado a más de un millón de californianos a dejar su adicción a la nicotina. Estamos aquí para ayudarte a dar el primer paso para dejar el tabaco, y te animamos a que visites nuestro sitio web para obtener guías y planes gratuitos para dejar de fumar, o a que hables con uno de nuestros asesores para dejar de fumar y hacer un plan personalizado que funcione para ti”, dijo Emily Aughinbaugh, directora del programa *Kick It California*.

Ahora más que nunca, es importante que los californianos den prioridad a su salud mental. Más de la mitad de los fumadores que llamaron a la línea de ayuda para dejar de fumar de California declararon que padecían una enfermedad mental, como depresión, trastorno de ansiedad,



trastorno bipolar, abuso de drogas o alcohol, o esquizofrenia, y dos tercios de ellos padecían más de una enfermedad.

Notablemente más del 70% de los fumadores de un estudio sobre salud mental de fumadores, de la Biblioteca Pública de Ciencia (PLOS), intentaron dejar de fumar, independientemente de su estado de salud mental. La gran mayoría de fumadores de la muestra que se hizo en este estudio buscaron ayuda para dejar de fumar, lo cual indica que el asesoramiento que dan los servicios ofrecidos por *Kick It California*,

pueden ofrecer una “excelente oportunidad para mejorar la calidad de vida de los fumadores”.

Dejar de fumar es un proceso que podría requerir de varios intentos para tener éxito. Pero el esfuerzo vale la pena, tanto para la salud física como para la salud mental.

Dejar de fumar a cualquier edad es beneficioso, ya que reduce el riesgo de muerte prematura por enfermedades crónicas y mejora la salud en general. Con el tiempo, se reduce el riesgo de padecer enfermedades cardíacas, problemas en la salud reproduc-

tiva y 12 tipos de cáncer, incluidos los de pulmón, hígado y vejiga. En las primeras 24 horas desde que se deja de fumar, los niveles de nicotina en la sangre descienden a cero. A la segunda semana, la circulación mejora y los pulmones empiezan a funcionar mejor. ¿Sabías que dejar de fumar puede añadir hasta 10 años a tu esperanza de vida?

Además de estimular las mejoras físicas, dejar el tabaco puede reducir la ansiedad y el estrés, e incluso mejorar el estado de ánimo y la calidad de vida.

*Kick It California* está aquí para ayudar a todas las personas de California que quieran dejar el hábito de fumar, no sólo para apoyar su bienestar físico, sino también su salud mental.

“Cada paso cuenta. ¡Empieza el 2022 sin tabaco!” recaló Aughinbaugh, directora de *Kick It California*.