

LOCAL NEWS

San Bernardino County, caregivers reach tentative deal for raises, more healthcare money





SEIU Local 2015 caregivers and supporters for In-Home Supportive Service Providers for San Bernardino County rally for better pay and benefits outside the San Bernardino County Government building Tuesday, March 12, 2019. (File photo by Jennifer Cappuccio Maher, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

By **SANDRA EMERSON** | semerson@scng.com |

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 8:53 am | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 8:54 am



San Bernardino County's caregivers have reached a tentative deal with county officials for a new contract that includes raises and more money to pay for health insurance, a union official said.

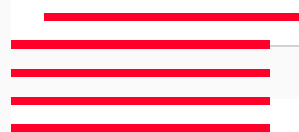
San Bernardino County and SEIU Local 2015, the union that represents more than 26,000 In-Home Supportive Services providers, reached a tentative, three-year, contract agreement Friday, Nov. 15, after more than a year of negotiations, protests and rallies outside county supervisor meetings.

If ratified by SEIU members and approved by the Board of Supervisors, caregivers will be paid more than the state minimum wage every year through January 2023, said Sergio Donis, regional director

for SEIU Local 2015. The state minimum wage will hit \$15 by 2022. The county will also contribute more dollars to health coverage, Donis said.

San Bernardino County spokesman David Wert said county officials declined to comment because the contract hasn't yet been ratified by members.

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Exact figures in the deal will be announced to members during a Tuesday, Nov. 19, rally outside SEIU's office, 195 N Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino.

"This is the first time in 10 years that the county has chosen to invest in the workers," Donis said. "It doesn't mean an end to poverty, unfortunately, for our members, but it's a step in the right direction."

The union has said the \$12 minimum wage that caregivers earn is not enough to live on, nor is it enough to attract new people to the job.

With the state's senior citizen population expected to grow 60% by 2030, to about 9 million, the unions representing caregivers across the state are looking to retain the caregivers already in the program and recruit new workers.

Program caregivers help clients with housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry and grocery shopping. They offer personal care services, accompany them on medical appointments and provide protection and supervision for the mentally impaired. Caregivers are often related to the person being cared for.

California's In-Home Supportive Services program pays for services that allow many seniors and the disabled to stay in their homes, which is cheaper than hospitals or other facilities.

In October, their counterparts in Riverside County, who are represented by the United Domestic Workers Union/American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3930, agreed to a new three-year contract that includes an additional 25-cent raise when the minimum wage goes up to \$13 an hour Jan. 1. Workers will receive another 25-cent raise when the minimum wage increases to \$14 an hour on Jan. 1, 2021. Their contract also includes more money for health coverage.

San Bernardino County caregivers reached their deal after 15 negotiation sessions. Union rallies outside supervisor meetings grew in size and intensity during the months members felt they weren't getting anywhere with the county, Donis said.

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“I think it was the persistence form our members and a lot of support from the community,” he said.

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Sandra Emerson

Sandra Emerson covers San Bernardino County government and politics for the Southern California News Group.

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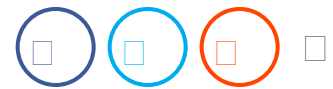
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By History Daily



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LOCAL NEWS

Riverside County supervisors OK 'Good Neighbor' warehouse guidelines



By **JEFF HORSEMAN** | jhorseman@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 4:47 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 4:51 pm



Large warehouses sought for unincorporated parts of Riverside County might have to follow planning guidelines meant to protect communities from air pollution and other harms linked to the logistics industry.

But the "Good Neighbor" guidelines, approved on a 3-2 vote by the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Nov. 19, only apply in a supervisorial district if that supervisor wants the rules. And the guidelines, which don't apply to projects already in the pipeline, include smaller buffers between warehouses and homes than desired by environmentalists and the California attorney general's office.

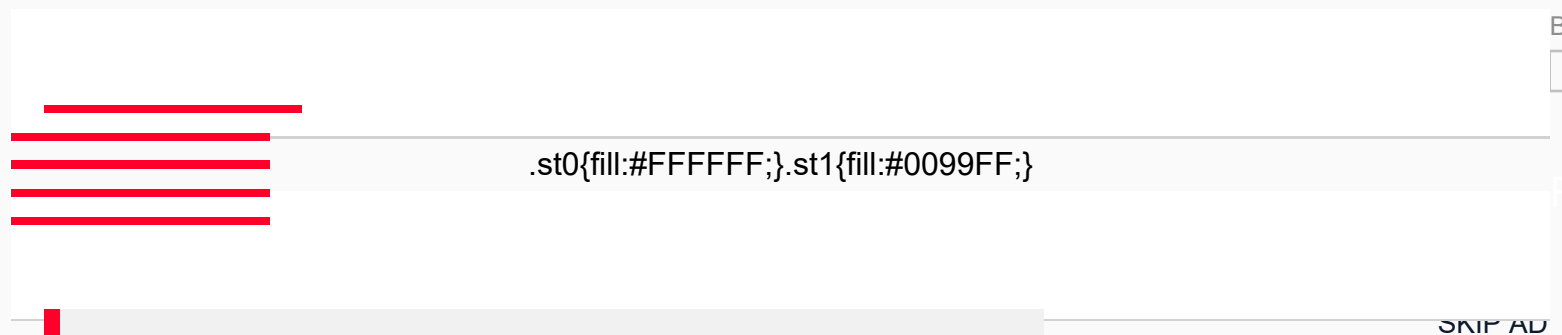
Tuesday's meeting almost ended abruptly after an angry outburst by a woman in the audience, who was confronted by sheriff's deputies. No one was arrested and she left the board chambers before returning, county spokeswoman Brooke Federico said.



Warehouses are big business in the county, which lies between the ports of Los Angeles and Long

Beach and the rest of the U.S. Compared to coastal areas, the Inland Empire has plenty of buildable land, making it attractive to developers who often build warehouses on spec, with clients customizing the space to their specific use.

TOP ARTICLES 1/5



The guidelines underwent several revisions as supervisors sought to balance logistics' economic benefits with concerns about how neighboring homes, schools and other "sensitive" areas might be affected by diesel exhaust from trucks streaming in and out of the warehouses, as well as traffic, noise, light pollution and other issues stemming from logistics activity.

As first drafted, the policy applied to logistics projects with buildings that are 250,000 square feet or larger. Besides requiring air quality and noise studies before building, the policy limits how much grading can be done per day.

Trucks would be limited to five minutes of idling to cut emissions. Truck bays and loading docks would

have to be at least 300 feet away from homes and other sensitive uses, and lighting would be directed downward into a project's interior.

The final draft called for on-site equipment such as forklifts to be electrically powered. The revised policy also applies to projects with any building at least 250,000 square feet in size with more than 20 loading bays.

Five people spoke in favor of the guidelines, including Dr. Karen Jackpor, a physician and American Lung Association volunteer.



Riverside County Supervisor Jeff Hewitt suggested that the Good Neighbor guidelines apply only if supervisors want the rules in their district. (File photo by Cindy Yamanaka, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG).

The number of people who die prematurely from air pollution is equivalent to two large airplanes crashing every day for a year, she said.

“I want you to picture more large airplanes crashing in Riverside County,” given its air-quality problems, Jackpor told supervisors.

The logistics industry weighed in on the rules, as did Attorney General Xavier Becerra’s environmental justice bureau. In a Nov. 13 letter to county planning chief Juan Perez, Becerra’s office suggested, among other things, boosting the 300-foot buffer to 1,000 feet and requiring off-road construction equipment to meet a stricter level air-quality standards set by the California Air Resources Board.

The higher standards concerned Supervisor Jeff Hewitt, whose district includes the Pass, Moreno Valley, Perris and Menifee. Many smaller construction companies, he said, could be shut out of building warehouses because they lack money to buy equipment that meets the stricter standards.

Noting each supervisor's district is different, Hewitt suggested having the guidelines apply only if a supervisor wants them in his or her district. That motion was supported by Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, who represents desert communities.

At that point, a woman in the audience began shouting at the board. Supervisor Kevin Jeffries, the board chairman, called a recess and later threatened to adjourn the meeting if there were more disruptions.

After the meeting resumed, Supervisor Chuck Washington questioned whether Hewitt's idea was workable. Jeffries said the district-by-district concept could cause a scenario in which warehouses on one side of the 215 Freeway in Jeffries' district are held to one set of standards while warehouses on the other side of the freeway — in Hewitt's district — are held to another.

"I'm not sure how we enforce anything at that point," Jeffries said.

Hewitt's motion also called for a 300-foot buffer instead of 1,000 feet. Hewitt, Perez and Supervisor Karen Spiegel voted yes, with Jeffries and Washington opposed.

After the vote, someone in the audience — it's not clear if it was the same woman — shouted: "You're killing people. I hope you know that ... Are you kidding me? Three hundred feet (for a buffer)?"

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NEWS > CRIME + PUBLIC SAFETY

Homeless living along Santa Ana River bottom are warned heavy rainfall to come



Mike Whitham, an Office of Homeless Solutions outreach worker, left, warns Gary Trent, who is staying near the Santa Ana river and who is also deaf, of the dangers of upcoming rain near Riverside's Fairmount Park on Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019. (Photo by Cindy Yamanaka, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

By **RICHARD K. DE ATLEY** | rdeatley@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 6:23 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 6:27

pm

Text messages, loudspeaker announcements from a police helicopter and one-on-one contacts were all used Tuesday to warn homeless people living along the Santa Ana River bottom and other Inland waterways about the forecast that heavy rainfall was due to hit the area.

“Are you gonna get up on the high ground? OK. Good luck, be safe!” Mike Whitham shouted to one person along the bike path of the Santa Ana River in Riverside Tuesday, under gathering clouds.

Whitham, an outreach worker for the city’s Office of Homeless Solutions, was spreading the word as a flash flood watch went into effect Tuesday for Riverside and San Bernardino counties that would last through early Thursday.

Driving a van along the path built for two-lane bike and pedestrian travel, Whitham whistled sharply and shouted out, “Anybody home?” as he came upon homeless encampments along the broad, brush-covered riverbed.

He warned anyone he met about the coming rain, and to get to the high ground. “That’s the best way – to tell one of them, and they spread the word, big-time,” Whitham said.

In San Bernardino County, Sheriff’s Deputy Mike Jones of his department’s Homeless Outreach and Proactive Enforcement — HOPE — program spent the early afternoon encouraging homeless people camped out along Lytle Creek, at the north end of Fontana to look for safer ground.

He also planned to talk to people in the Santa Ana River bed Tuesday, but said by phone, “There are also smaller creeks and water ways, as well. A lot of those are feeders to the Santa Ana River,” but are equally dangerous in a flash flood.

“Our main mission is to get these people connected with services as we go through the riverbeds,’ he said.

While many of those Whitham contacted in Riverside said they would be careful, none agreed to go with him to a shelter.

“You don’t want to go to the shelter for a couple of nights?” he asked Amber, who he knew from his work in the area. She could be heard declining. “Alright, be safe.”

The danger is real. In the Feb. 14 rain and floods that struck the Inland area one woman drowned when she and her boyfriend, who were living in a flood canal in Riverside near La Sierra and Indiana avenues, were swept away in neck-high water.

. At least 30 others were pulled from rushing waters in rivers, flood channels and inundated roads across Riverside County that day.

Along with the person-to-person efforts of Whitham and Jones, a text message crafted to reach river-bottom homeless people was sent out in the early afternoon.

“Our experience is that a fairly large population of homeless have cellphones,” said Shane Reichardt, spokesman for the Riverside County Emergency Management Department.

The message was sent from cell towers along the course of the Santa Ana River from Riverside to Corona, Reichardt said.

While that meant people who live in the general area also got the alert, it was another way to reach the homeless, Reichardt said.

The Riverside Police Department’s Air1 helicopter also was giving warnings about the flash flood danger through its public address loudspeakers, Riverside Police spokesman Officer Ryan Railsback said.

He added that the messages would not only be broadcast over the Santa Ana River, but along the drainage canal that flooded earlier this year and led to the woman’s death.

The flash flood watch was issued for the Riverside and San Bernardino counties and coastal San Diego County until 1 a.m. Thursday. A flash flood watch means that conditions might develop that lead to flash flooding.

Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms were expected to mainly affect San Diego County through Tuesday evening before heavier rain develops throughout the Inland Empire overnight, the National Weather Service said. The heaviest rain is expected Wednesday morning through evening. Many areas will receive more than an inch of rain with some areas getting 2-3 inches.

Flooding of poorly drained and urban areas will also occur, presenting a hazard for motorists. Safety officials urge drivers not to attempt to drive through accumulated water. Only a few inches of water can cause drivers to lose control.

Although the Orange County Sheriff’s Department recommended that residents [of the Holy fire burn area evacuate](#), no such evacuations were suggested for Lake Elsinore and Temescal Valley residents, said Reichardt.

That’s because the forecast rainfall per hour did not meet the department’s threshold, Reichardt said.

Staff Writer Brian Rokos contributed to this report.

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By Celgene



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Richard K. De Atley

A journalist since 1975 for City News Service in Los Angeles, The Associated Press in Los Angeles and New York, and The Press-Enterprise, Richard K. De Atley has been Entertainment Editor and a features writer. He has also reported on trials and breaking news. He is currently a business reporter for The P. E. De

UPDATE: Authorities identify 'Jane Doe' as L.A.-area woman

By **Matthew Cabe**
Staff Writer

Posted Nov 19, 2019 at 3:51 PM

Updated Nov 19, 2019 at 8:56 PM

VICTORVILLE — San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department officials have identified a woman who was brought to a local hospital on Nov. 9.

In a statement released shortly after 8 p.m. Tuesday, the Sheriff's Department said they had identified "Jane Doe," adding that the woman was returning to the Los Angeles area, where she lives. The statement did not include the woman's name.

Word of the positive identification came roughly six hours after release of a separate statement in which the Sheriff's Department asked for the public's help in identifying the woman.

The woman was found in the area of Valley Center Drive and La Paz Drive in Victorville, the Sheriff's Department said. A tag on her shirt read Annie Kim, but Sheriff's deputies were unable to confirm if that was her name.

She was described as being 5 feet tall, 115 pounds, with brown hair and brown eyes. Authorities said she was wearing a purple shirt, white vest jacket and black pants.

Before she was identified, the woman was confused and unable to provide medical staff or deputies with her name, age and place of residence, according to the Sheriff's Department. She had been receiving care at the hospital since her arrival.

Authorities thanked those who shared the woman's information, saying the help "was invaluable and made identifying her possible."

FEATURED, LOCAL NEWS, TOP STORY

DEPUTY INVOLVED SHOOTING AT MORONGO VALLEY HOME WHERE MAN BARRICADED HIMSELF

NOVEMBER 19, 2019 | Z107.7 NEWS | LEAVE A COMMENT



*The Hi-Desert Rod and Gun Club served as a staging area for Sheriff's deputies, fire and ambulances, a helicopter, and SWAT teams.
Tami Roleff photo*

A situation in which a man barricaded himself inside his home in Morongo Valley ended with a deputy-involved shooting Tuesday afternoon. Managing editor Tami Roleff was on the scene and said deputies went to a home in the 53500 block of 29 Palms Highway, just west of the Hi-Desert Rod and Gun shooting range sometime this morning. Roleff spoke with the suspect's mother, who said her son had called and said helicopters were circling overhead. The man—who has not been identified by the Sheriff's Department yet—barricaded himself in the house. Deputies called for a helicopter and the SWAT teams arrived and staged at the shooting range. At 1:28, at least one gunshot was heard coming from the direction of the house. Shortly after, ambulances could be seen moving in to position, and the SWAT vehicles moved closer to the house. At 2:04, a loud noise that sounded like small explosion was heard in the direction of the house. About 2:30, deputies were seen taking off

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their flak vests and putting their rifles away. A search dog and its handler started going around the desert surrounding the house. At this time, the Sheriff's Department is not confirming whether the man inside the home is dead or alive, although the Sheriff's department released a Tweet saying that a deputy-involved shooting occurred.



*A Sheriff's helicopter circles a home where a man barricaded himself in, just west of the shooting range.
Tami Roleff photo*

http://www.hidesertstar.com/news/article_1d72c128-0b21-11ea-826a-c3ac7ef141bb.html

TOP STORY

Standoff in Morongo Valley ends with deputy-involved shooting

By Stacy Moore, Hi-Desert Star Nov 19, 2019 Updated 18 hrs ago

1 of 2



A SWAT team responds to a call involving a man who barricaded himself in his home in the 53000 block of Twentynine Palm Highway in Morongo Valley Tuesday. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, the Morongo Basin Ambulance Association, the county fire department and the California Highway Patrol all responded to the scene.

Jené Estrada, Hi-Desert Star

MORONGO VALLEY — A standoff at a home on the eastern edge of Morongo Valley Tuesday ended in a deputy-involved shooting.

Sheriff's Department spokeswoman Cindy Bachman said the incident began at 8:16 a.m. when a man called law enforcement saying he heard gunshots and believed they may have been directed at his house.

"Deputies responded and attempted to make contact at the neighboring home where the shots were believed to be coming from," Bachman said.

That house is in the 53000 block of Twentynine Palms Highway, according to the Sheriff's Department.

The man inside would not cooperate and barricaded himself inside his home.

"All morning he was refusing to cooperate with deputies," Bachman said.

The sheriff's helicopter crew circled overhead, making announcements telling the man to surrender.

The Special Enforcement Division's SWAT team was called in but never made entry into the house.

At some point in the late morning or early afternoon, a deputy-involved shooting occurred. Bachman said she did not have any more information, because the investigation had just started. Specialized investigators were en route to the scene.

By around 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, one helicopter had landed near the property, while sheriff's patrol units, a bomb squad truck and ambulances circled around. Previously, ambulances and a medical engine from the fire department were staging a few blocks away.

Parked on a nearby driveway was a truck that appeared to be from the SWAT team. A Sheriff's Department helicopter still circled overhead.

The California Highway Patrol briefly closed Twentynine Palms Highway but it was open again by 3 p.m.

The Hi-Desert Star will report more information as it becomes available.



LOCAL NEWS

Redlands again approves police use of military equipment



Hailey Martinez, 9, climbs on a police vehicle during Redlands Police Tailgate with Cops at the University or Redlands' Ted Runner Stadium before a football game in Redlands on Saturday, Sep 21, 2019. (Photo by Terry Pierson, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

By **JENNIFER IYER** | jiyer@scng.com | Redlands Daily Facts

PUBLISHED: November 20, 2019 at 9:49 am | UPDATED: November 20, 2019 at 9:52 am



The Redlands Police Department's use of excess Department of Defense equipment garnered its yearly approval Tuesday, Nov. 19, from the City Council.

Some have called having surplus military gear, such as a Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle, excessive for a city police force, although none spoke at the City Council meeting Tuesday evening. The vehicle, which was procured in 2013 was used notably in response to the Dec. 2, 2015, terrorist attack in San Bernardino, and in a 2016 hostage situation that started in an Office Depot store on Orange Street.

The department has also received rifles and night vision gear through the program. The city only pays shipping and transportation fees for the gear.

The agreement must be approved annually.

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LOCAL NEWS

Daughter of late Montclair councilwoman appointed to fill her vacant seat





New Montclair City Council member, Corysa Martinez, 29, takes the oath of office administered by City Clerk Andrea Phillips while accompanied by her father, Manny Martinez, on Monday, Nov. 18, 2019. She was appointed to the City Council and takes the spot left vacant by the passing of her mother, Councilwoman Trisha Martinez, who died in September while in office. (Photo by Steve Scauzillo/Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

By **STEVE SCAUZILLO** | sscauzillo@scng.com | San Gabriel Valley Tribune

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 1:30 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 1:34 pm



In a meeting filled with tension and political intrigue, the Montclair City Council Monday night appointed Corysa Martinez, 29, to fill the council vacancy left by her mother, Councilwoman Trisha Martinez, who died in September while in office.

Corysa Martinez will serve on the City Council until Nov. 3, 2020, at which time an election will be held for her seat. Residents can run for the unexpired two-year term seat or two regular, four-year council seats.

Although she did not say directly, she implied during an interview Monday night that she is very interested in serving on the council longer than one year.

“I have always wanted to be on the City Council even before my mom was elected,” she said. She earned a law degree, passed the bar exam four years ago and practices law as part of her own business in Upland. “I thought having a legal background would help me politically.”

Martinez beat out 12 applicants, however only nine showed up for the appointment. One of those was Benjamin Lopez, a consultant and notary public who lost to Trisha Martinez in 2014 and 2018 and said the two were political rivals. He took to the podium, looked at Martinez and declared he would be running for a seat on the City Council in November 2020.

“I am always up for a strong adversary. I welcome the challenge,” Lopez said.

He was endorsed by the Montclair Professional Firefighters Association. In a letter to the City Council, the MFFA disagreed with the appointment process, saying Lopez should be awarded the seat because he received the next highest number of votes in those two elections. The letter cited cities of Chino Hills, Upland, Hesperia, Redlands and Grand Terrace in filling council vacancies using this formula.

The MFFA letter also said Lopez “understands the importance of local and regional fire protection” and would consider “all options to you as council members concerning public safety funding and structure” including pensions, staffing and compensation.

The appointment was made after each council member named their top three choices. If the same three candidates did not get named, the council began a next round. Eventually, Corysa Martinez was named by Tenice Johnson, then by Carolyn Raft and Mayor John Dutrey. When Raft pointed out there were three votes for Martinez, the three voted in favor.



New Montclair City Council member, Corysa Martinez, 29, stands in council chambers after being appointed to the City Council on Monday, Nov. 18, 2019. She takes the spot left vacant by the passing of her mother, Councilwoman Trisha Martinez, who died in September while in office. (photo by Steve Scauzillo/Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

Tension arose when Councilman Bill Ruh opted out of the process, saying a special election should have been held. “It (appointing) violates my beliefs and strong moral opinion that democracy is best served by an election,” Ruh said.

Later, he hinted at his distaste for appointing a family member or relative to fill the seat. When Mayor Paul Eaton stepped down in July 2018, his wife, Virginia “Ginger” Eaton was appointed mayor after a nasty battle. She later lost to John Dutrey in a mayoral election, forcing the appointment of Johnson in February 2019 to the vacant council seat.

As a result of Monday night’s selection of Martinez, two of the council’s five members are appointed. And for a second time, the City Council appointed a family member to fill the empty seat.

“I do not believe in dynasties or legacies,” Ruh said.

Dutrey said he hesitated to appoint a family member to fill Trisha Martinez’s seat but said her daughter, Corysa, “is your own person” and comes from a different generation that will bring a younger perspective to the council.

“I look forward to representing the median age group of the city of Montclair,” she told the audience. The median age for the city of 40,000 is 32. She also said her No. 1 priority was bringing the Gold Line light-rail into Montclair.

Congratulations came from council members, staff and challengers. “I’m sure your mother is dancing in heaven,” commented Edward Starr, city manager.

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FEATURED

Singleton Road-Bryant Street connection is now open

Karen daSilva Nov 15, 2019



Calimesa Mayor Bill Davis cuts the ribbon on the long-awaited Singleton Road-Bryant Street extension on Thursday, Nov. 7.

Photo courtesy of the city of Calimesa



After at least 40 years in the making, the Singleton Road-Bryant Street extension is open, allowing those who live in upper Yucaipa and Calimesa to connect without traveling down to Calimesa Boulevard.

Bryant Street is now an open thoroughfare between Singleton Road in Calimesa and Highway 38 in Yucaipa.

"I still have people who are doubting this," Councilman Jeff Cervantez said before the grand opening on Thursday, Nov. 7. "People said, I'll believe it when I see it."



They can believe it. By now, they may have even driven through it.

Calimesa Mayor Bill Davis had the honor of driving the first vehicle through the new road, near the Singleton Heights and JP Ranch residential developments. For the grand occasion, he brought out his 1928 Ford Model A and asked his friend, Claire Marie Teeters, to join him. Others in attendance, who included Riverside County Supervisor Jeff Hewitt, other Calimesa councilmembers and city officials, and dignitaries from the Yucaipa Valley Water District and city of Yucaipa, followed behind, creating a parade of vehicles.

"I think it is really a great thing," said Calimesa Mayor Pro Tem Linda Molina. "A test of time will be if the traffic is unmanageable. But it just opens up possibilities for further development to enhance everybody's lives."

When Davis first moved to his home, which is near the connection, he heard about the road possibly going through. That was back in the early 1980s.



"I told them, 'I don't think that is ever going to happen.' But, it did," Davis said. "That (road) has been discussed for probably ... over 40 years, maybe 50 years. Hyatt, he was always wanting that open. That was a big thing with him."

Davis was referring to late Councilman Jim Hyatt, who liked to tell the tale of when he first visited Calimesa back in the 1960s and how even then a paved connection between Singleton and Bryant was being discussed.

"Any day now," Hyatt said he was told about when the road would be completed.

He recounted that at a council meeting in March, when Public Works Director Lori Askew announced construction for the extension was finally underway. With the drainage improvements complete and approvals in place, Askew expected the connection to be finished soon.

"It's going to be pretty quick I think," she said at the time.

Eight months later the official ribbon cutting took place.

"I just wanted to thank everybody who worked tirelessly on making this project happen," Cervantez said. "Rumor is it's been in the works for 40 years ... I am not sure how accurate that is, but be that as it may, this is an important project for our city, especially those on the east end of Calimesa."

"Not only for those in our city, but for our whole region," he said. "I really am convinced this is going to be a main thoroughfare."



Completion of the extension finally began to move forward in December 2018, when a cooperative agreement between the city, Riverside County Flood and Water Conservation District and builder Highpointe was approved. The city and county district will maintain the road, which crosses the Garden Air Wash and required the drainage improvements.

Highpointe was responsible for constructing the connection as part of its approval process to build the final phase of homes in JP Ranch. Highpointe, however, transferred its obligation under the agreement to D.R. Horton, who purchased the remaining 121 lots in JP Ranch.

A couple of days after the ribbon cutting, Molina said she was already enjoying the new road's benefits.

"It shaved 10 minutes off of my travel time," she said about attending a meeting in Beaumont.

Karen daSilva



LOCAL NEWS

This Rialto high school is making sure no student misses breakfast



Eisenhower student Isaiiah Yglesias, 17, carts containers full of food to his second-period class for “Breakfast in the Classroom” at Eisenhower High School in Rialto, Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019. The Rialto Unified School District has launched the Inland Empire’s first Breakfast in the Classroom program for high school students. (Photo by John Valenzuela, Contributing Photographer)

By **BRIAN WHITEHEAD** | bwhitehead@scng.com | San Bernardino Sun

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 3:20 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 3:20 pm

On some days, the red and blue thermal bags lined neatly inside Eisenhower High's multipurpose room have oatmeal bars and fruit.

On others, waffles and pancakes.

On this weekday morning, peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches and raisins are the breakfast foods du jour.

No matter the contents, at around 8 a.m. every day dozens of students wheel the bags from the multipurpose room to their second period classrooms, where more than 2,000 teens take in the most important meal of the day at their desks.

Already implemented [at eight Rialto Unified elementary schools](#), Eisenhower is the only Inland Empire high school to have the anti-hunger Breakfast in the Classroom program.

On Tuesday, Nov. 19, school and district officials demonstrated the process for peers from neighboring cities.

"Kids get up early and stay up late so oftentimes they don't eat breakfast," art teacher Kelsey Gonzalez said. "It's really important for physical health, mental health and awareness that they eat. A lot of times, kids are snacking throughout the day and that causes disruptions. Here, it's a designated time for them to eat, be comfortable and get a little bit of that family environment because they're sitting together with friends, classmates.

"It's a nice way to wake up and build community."

Earlier this year, officials with No Kid Hungry California, a national anti-hunger organization, and Rialto Unified visited a Los Angeles high school to see the Breakfast in the Classroom program live.

Not long after, No Kid Hungry California provided the district a \$26,000 grant to launch the initiative at the North Lilac Avenue campus.

This summer, hundreds of students taste-tested different breakfasts and offered feedback.

Since launching the program at the start of the school year, Eisenhower has gone from serving breakfast to about 430 students to serving breakfast to north of 2,000.

“There’s no competition to be the first” high school to implement the model, Principal Frank Camacho said. “We just want to make sure we’re doing something right. We’re honored to be doing something successful and we want others to jump aboard to serve all our students in the community and in the Inland Empire.”

Convenient and accessible to all students, the Breakfast in the Classroom program bridges the cafeteria to the classroom to the community, said Fausat Rahman-Davies, who leads the district’s Nutrition Services Department.

No Kid Hungry officials have found that providing healthy meals to teens who start school on empty stomachs boosts attendance, engagement and academic success.

Rialto Unified officials hope to launch the program at another high school next year.

“We’ve definitely made a huge impact here,” said Daisy Munguia, a senior program manager with No Kid Hungry California. “We’re creating change in the entire Inland Empire.”

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By The Primary Market



Barstow teen arrested for allegedly threatening school shooting

By Martin Estacio

Staff Writer

Posted Nov 19, 2019 at 3:47 PM

A teenager from Barstow was arrested Monday morning for allegedly threatening a school shooting on Instagram.

Police arrested the 13-year-old boy, who was identified only as a Barstow High School student, after receiving multiple calls about the online post, according to the Barstow Police Department.

“The post stated that the subject was armed and implied that there was going to be a school shooting on Tuesday,” a BPD statement read.

Authorities first became aware of the post on Sunday night.

During an investigation, BPD Detective Tom Lewis learned that the poster was the 13-year-old boy after interviewing another teenager.

A search warrant was served at the boy’s house at about 3:10 a.m. Monday. Police spoke with the boy and his parents.

“A search of the residence revealed no firearms and the detective and officers confirmed that the 13-year-old does not have access to any firearms,” the statement read.

The boy was booked at the High Desert Juvenile Detention Center in connection with making criminal threats.

The boy’s arrest comes only four days after a 16-year-old boy opened fire at Saugus High School in Santa Clarita on Thursday.

The shooter, Nathaniel Berhow, killed two students and injured three before shooting and killing himself.

As of Friday, authorities said they were still searching for a motive for the shooting, the Associated Press reported.

Anyone with information regarding this investigation may contact Detective Tom Lewis or the Barstow Police Department at 760-255-5187.

Persons wishing to remain anonymous can contact the We-Tip Hotline at 1-800-782-7463 or online at www.WeTip.com.

Martin Estacio may be reached at MEstacio@VVDailyPress.com or at 760-955-5358. Follow him on Twitter @DP_mestacio.



NEWS CRIME + PUBLIC SAFETY

Security added at Yucaipa High after shooting threat



By **BRIAN ROKOS** | brokos@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 1:11 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 1:11 pm



Yucaipa High had extra security on campus Tuesday, Nov. 19, after a threat was found written in a bathroom, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

"The entirety of the threat was a brief note written on a bathroom stall threatening to 'shoot up' the school tomorrow," the Sheriff's Department said in a Facebook post on Monday. "A criminal investigation was launched and we have found no information to date to support that this threat is credible and do not know who wrote the message, or exactly when it was written."

The Sheriff's Department encouraged anyone with information on the threat to call 911.

The Sheriff's Department said it would add security Tuesday "so please don't be alarmed if you see extra patrol cars or deputies in the area," the post said.



The department promised to update the public if the threat proved credible.

https://www.newsmirror.net/news/yucaipa-high-school-student-arrested-for-possession-of-gun/article_77aaadb4-0b39-11ea-91d8-ff10f748ebd4.html

Yucaipa High School student arrested for possession of gun

Nov 19, 2019 Updated 15 hrs ago

Today, Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 19, an anonymous student reported to school officials that a 16-year-old student was in possession of a gun. Yucaipa Police Department was notified and immediately located the student at an off campus location, at approximately 1:10 p.m.

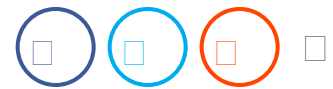
According to YPD, the student in fact, was in possession of a 22-caliber handgun. He was subsequently arrested and transported to Juvenile Hall.



The investigation is ongoing as YPD continues to find out additional information. YPD will determine if the gun was ever on campus and if the student had any intention of carrying out a school shooting.

As the events were unfolding, staff at YHS took precautions and secured the campus and safety of the students.





NEWS CRIME + PUBLIC SAFETY

Tip about armed Yucaipa High School student leads to his arrest at home



By **BRIAN ROKOS** | brokos@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 1:11 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 6:56 pm



A 16-year-old Yucaipa High School student was arrested Tuesday afternoon at home in possession of a loaded handgun after school staff members were tipped he was possibly armed, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department said.

The arrest came after extra security was sent to the campus Tuesday after a threat was found written in a bathroom, according to the Sheriff's Department.

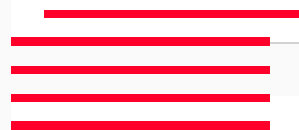
"The entirety of the threat was a brief note written on a bathroom stall threatening to 'shoot up' the school tomorrow," the Sheriff's Department said in a Facebook post on Monday. "A criminal investigation was launched and we have found no information to date to support that this threat is credible and do not know who wrote the message, or exactly when it was written."

Just after 1 p.m. Tuesday, the Sheriff's Department said, two more events unfolded on campus, and it was placed on lockdown. An additional threat was found written on a bathroom wall threatening a specific time a Tuesday shooting would occur. And, staff received the tip about the 16-year-old male



student possibly in possession of a gun.

TOP ARTICLES 1/5



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“There was no shooting, no gun found on campus and no one was injured. Deputies have not determined if the juvenile actually had the gun on campus at any time and deputies have not been able to link the threatening messages found on campus to the arrested juvenile,” a sheriff’s statement Tuesday night said.

The student, who possessed a loaded .22 caliber handgun, was arrested without incident and booked at juvenile hall in what the sheriff’s statement said was a case of a minor in a possession of a firearm.

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Colton police arrest shooting suspect; no injuries reported

By **BRIAN ROKOS** | brokos@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise
PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 6:34 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 7:36 pm

Colton police arrested a suspect in a shooting Tuesday evening, Nov. 19. Police said no injuries were reported.

Police blocked off the area of Mt. Vernon Avenue near Laurel Street about 6 p.m. and announced that a suspect was in custody at 7:30 p.m.

 **Lt Jim Jolliff**
@LtJimJolliff

Tactical operation 1300 block of North Mount Vernon. Suspect located investigation continuing.



8 6:49 PM - Nov 19, 2019

[See Lt Jim Jolliff's other Tweets](#)

No information on the circumstances surrounding the gunfire or the suspect's identity was immediately available.



NEWS CRIME + PUBLIC SAFETY

Person killed in Fontana-area shooting is identified as teenager





A San Bernardino County Sheriff's deputy investigates the scene of a shooting that left one dead and one injured in Fontana on Monday, Nov. 18, 2019. (Photo by Jennifer Cappuccio Maher, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

By **BRIAN ROKOS** | brokos@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 1:23 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 1:47 pm



The person slain in a shooting near Fontana on Monday was identified Tuesday, Nov. 19, as a 17-year-old resident of the city.

Ulysses Solis Morenda was found dead inside a vehicle in the 13800 block of Cobblestone Court, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department said. The second person shot, an 18-year-old, remained hospitalized in critical condition Tuesday. He was found outside the vehicle, a news release said.

Investigators are looking for three men who were seen walking up to the vehicle and speaking with the occupants before gunfire was heard and they were seen running.

Investigators ask anyone with information to call Detective Max Kunzman at 909-387-3589. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous can contact WeTip at 800-782-7463 or the website at wetip.com.

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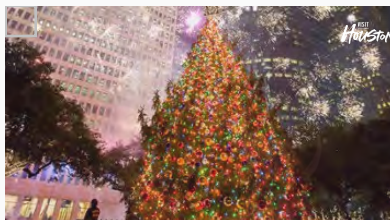
Uptick in school threats reported in region after Saugus High shooting in Santa Clarita

1 dead, 1 wounded in shooting near Fontana

One called 'Sweet Pea,' the other a leader: 2 students killed in Saugus High shooting honored at vigil

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Teenage boy is arrested on charge of human trafficking of a minor; authorities rescue 17-year-old girl

2 hrs ago



A 17-year-old boy was arrested on a charge of human trafficking of a minor, and a 17-year-old girl was rescued, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

A 17-year-old boy was arrested on a charge of human trafficking of a minor, and a 17-year-old girl was rescued, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.



On Nov. 13 at about noon, San Bernardino County Human Trafficking Task Force investigators received information that a juvenile female was possibly being trafficked from a hotel on S. E Street in San Bernardino.

Task Force members, assisted by members of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Narcotics Division, conducted surveillance at a motel in hopes of locating and identifying the juvenile.

Ad



Shortly after initiating surveillance, investigators noticed a female fitting the description of the juvenile, near an open room door. Investigators also noticed a male frequenting the same room the female was seen near.

During contact with both subjects, investigators determined the female was 17 and a reported runaway juvenile from San Bernardino County. Contact with the male subject also found him to be 17.

While authorities spoke with both of them at the scene, the girl began to display signs of medical distress. An ambulance was called and transported the girl to a local hospital for evaluation and treatment. During that time, the boy was transported to the Sheriff's Central Station for an additional interview.



During the interview with the boy, information was discovered which supported his alleged involvement in the human trafficking of the girl. He was placed under arrest, transported and booked at Juvenile Hall. He is being held without bail.

After receiving medical treatment, the girl was rescued, provided immediate services and safely released/returned to her family, the Sheriff's Department said.

Community involvement plays an integral part in the fight against human trafficking, and law enforcement appreciates and encourages the assistance and information provided by the public. Anyone wishing to report activities or concerns related to human trafficking can do so directly by calling (909) 387-8400 or by email at humantrafficking@sbcasd.org. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous may contact We-Tip at 1-888-78-CRIME or leave the information on the WE-Tip website at www.wetip.com.



NEWS > CRIME + PUBLIC SAFETY

Victorville man killed when struck by vehicles on 15 Freeway in Cajon Pass

By **BRIAN ROKOS** | brokos@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: November 19, 2019 at 2:35 pm | UPDATED: November 19, 2019 at 3:05 pm

A Victorville man was killed Saturday, Nov. 16, when he was struck by several vehicles as he walked across the 15 Freeway in the Cajon Pass, according to the the San Bernardino County Coroner's Office.

Reginald Elbert Ferguson, 54, was hit just about 8:09 p.m. in the southbound lanes south of Oak Hills Road in Hesperia. Paramedics pronounced Ferguson dead at 8:21 p.m., the coroner said.

The California Highway Patrol was investigating the case.

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'It's like torture': Families report deputy harassment to sheriff watchdog



Members of the L.A. County Civilian Oversight Commission listen to a testimonial by Michael Twyman, foreground, who lost his nephew Ryan Twyman in a L.A. sheriff involved shooting. (Genaro Molina / Los Angeles Times)

By ALENE TCHEKMEDYIAN
STAFF WRITER

NOV. 19, 2019
6:53 PM



One by one, grieving relatives stood before the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission on Tuesday and described the harassment they said they've faced since their loved ones were killed by Los Angeles County deputies.

Sometimes, speakers said, deputies slowly drive by their homes during family gatherings. They showed up at one man's funeral and, in another incident, pulled over his relative's car, commissioners heard.

"It's like torture for you to keep driving by us, and laughing or smirking or flicking us off and all that every single chance y'all get," said Davielle Johnson, the girlfriend of Ryan Twyman, 24, who was [shot and killed by sheriff's deputies](#) at a South Los Angeles apartment complex in early June.

After the testimony, the commission directed the Office of the Inspector General to examine whether patrol staff are harassing families of people killed by deputies. It also requested that the Sheriff's Department conduct its own investigation into conduct at the East L.A. and Century stations. Commissioners asked for reports back in 60 days.



Leah Garcia, who lost her son, Paul Rea, in a L.A. sheriff involved shooting earlier this year, offers her testimonial to members of the L.A. County Civilian Oversight Commission. (Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times)

“They feel intimidated,” said commission Chairwoman Patti Giggans. “It’s an issue that we really have to look into seriously.”

Asst. Sheriff Steven Gross, who oversees patrol operations, said the Sheriff’s Department takes allegations of harassment seriously and will look into any complaints brought forward.

“It is not acceptable for any of our personnel to harass anybody, period,” Gross said. “If anyone was engaged in misconduct we would want to know about it and we would want to hold them accountable.”

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By Go RVing

Find out how these parents learned to reconnect with the outdoors while teaching their children to appreciate nature’s simple pleasures.

Det. Ron Hernandez, president of the Assn. for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs, said: “Anytime an allegation of misconduct is made I trust it will be thoroughly investigated, and I have no reason to believe it will be any different, with or without the involvement of the Civilian Oversight Commission.”

In interviews with The Times, family members of three people killed by officer gunfire recounted what they described as harassing encounters with deputies.



Jaylene Rea, left, cries, while her mother Leah Garcia, off camera, addresses L.A. County Civilian Oversight Commission about allegations of harassment to her family affected by fatal uses of force by the LA County Sheriff's. Garcia's son Paul Rea, and Jaylene's brother, was killed in a Sheriff involved shooting earlier this year. (Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times)

Jaylene Rea said she and her family have created a roadside memorial at the site of her brother's death, down the street from their East L.A. home. A group gathers there most nights lighting candles next to photos and flowers.

Paul Rea, 18, was shot and killed in June during an altercation after a traffic stop. Authorities said a gun was recovered from the scene.

Four or five times a week, patrol cars slowly drive by during the family gatherings, Jaylene Rea said. She provided The Times with several video clips she, her sister and her cousins have recorded of the encounters.

In one, the deputy at the wheel holds his phone up as if he's recording. In another, a group of uniformed deputies walk up and one directs the group to stay off the street. Later an officer says: "We've had 39 calls, we're just saying keep it down." The deputies walk away and return to their cars soon after.

Rea spoke about her brother's death last month at a rally organized by the American Civil Liberties Union that was held outside the county Hall of Justice. Several affected families showed up to demand more information about the circumstances of the shootings.

After the rally, Rea and other demonstrators attended a town hall in Temple City, where her grandmother attempted to serve Sheriff Alex Villanueva with a lawsuit seeking police records under SB 1421, a [landmark transparency law](#) that requires public release of some records related to police misconduct and serious uses of force.



Davielle Johnson, from left, girlfriend of Ryan Twyman, Stephanie Luna, aunt of Anthony Vargas, and Michael Twyman, uncle of Ryan Twyman, listen to presentations of allegations of harassment to families affected by fatal uses of force by the LA County Sheriff's during an L.A. County Civilian Oversight Commission meeting. (Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times)

Later that night Rea and her family gathered at the roadside memorial.

After they arrived, Rea recorded two patrol cars slowly driving by. With his window down, one deputy waved.

Deputies returned later and ordered a member of the group to extinguish a marijuana cigar.

Rea said the man passed the cigar to her and she put it in her pocket so she could step back and record his arrest.

Moments later, she said, a deputy grabbed her wrists and lifted her arms behind her back, causing her to bend over in pain. She said she was put in the back of a patrol car, where she complained of excessive force and asked where she was going.

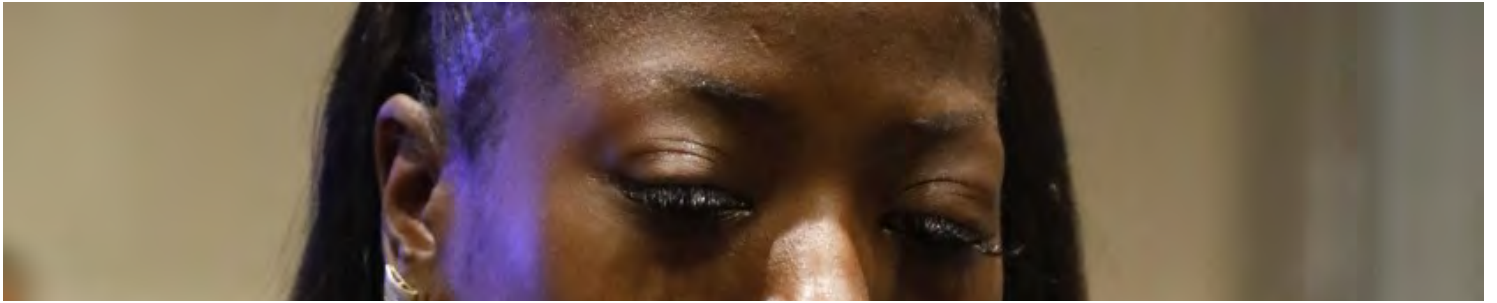
“None of your business,” she said she was told. “You’ll see when we get there.”

She was taken to a hospital for evaluation and later booked on suspicion of concealing evidence, a misdemeanor.

“At that moment I’m thinking, “This is it. I never got a chance to get my son back, now my daughter’s not going to come home either,” said her mother, Leah Lorraine Garcia.

L.A. County Sheriff’s Sgt. Tom Kim said deputies were arresting someone on suspicion of smoking marijuana in public when Rea took the evidence, which he identified as narcotics, and walked away. He said the investigation is ongoing.

Rea was held in a cell overnight. When her phone was returned, two videos she’d recorded of deputies the night before had been deleted, she said. She said she was able to recover the deleted files.



Los Angeles Times





Davielle Johnson, who lost her boyfriend, Ryan Twyman, in a L.A. sheriff involved shooting, pictured on her t-shirt, shortly before offering her testimonial to members of the L.A. County Civilian Oversight Commission. (Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times)

“Since the beginning, they’ve been messing with us, doing little weird things,” Rea said. “They’ve come by, laughed at us, took videos of us with their own personal cellphones.”

The Rea family spent the next two nights in a hotel, too afraid to go home.

Civil rights activists wrote a letter to the Board of Supervisors and Dist. Atty. Jackie Lacey saying they were “deeply concerned” about the arrest and urged an investigation.

“Family members have feared that deputy sheriffs will taunt them, arrest them, or even physically hurt them — not because they have done something wrong, but simply because they have spoken publicly about their loved ones’ deaths and have sought transparency and accountability,” the letter said. It was signed by the Centro Community Service Organization, Black Lives Matter Los Angeles and the ACLU of Southern California.

In interviews, relatives and friends of Twyman and Anthony Vargas, 21, who was [shot and killed](#) in August 2018, described similar encounters with deputies. Authorities said they were searching for three robbery suspects when they tried to detain Vargas and a violent [struggle ensued](#).

“If I wasn’t as nervous as I am, I would’ve reached for my phone to record,” said Vargas’ aunt, Stephanie Luna, referring to a night when a patrol car pulled up and stopped in front of her driveway with its lights off.

A staffer with the Office of Inspector General had asked Luna earlier at the hearing if she had videos because the office was collecting footage of the incidents.

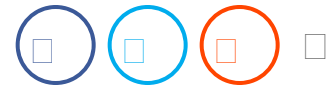
In another incident, deputies pulled up outside Twyman’s home in Compton during a gathering and asked if they could have a pin with his picture on it, Johnson said.

Twyman’s sister, Dominique Brown, has one young child; Twyman left behind three.

“How can we teach them to have faith if we don’t?” Brown said.

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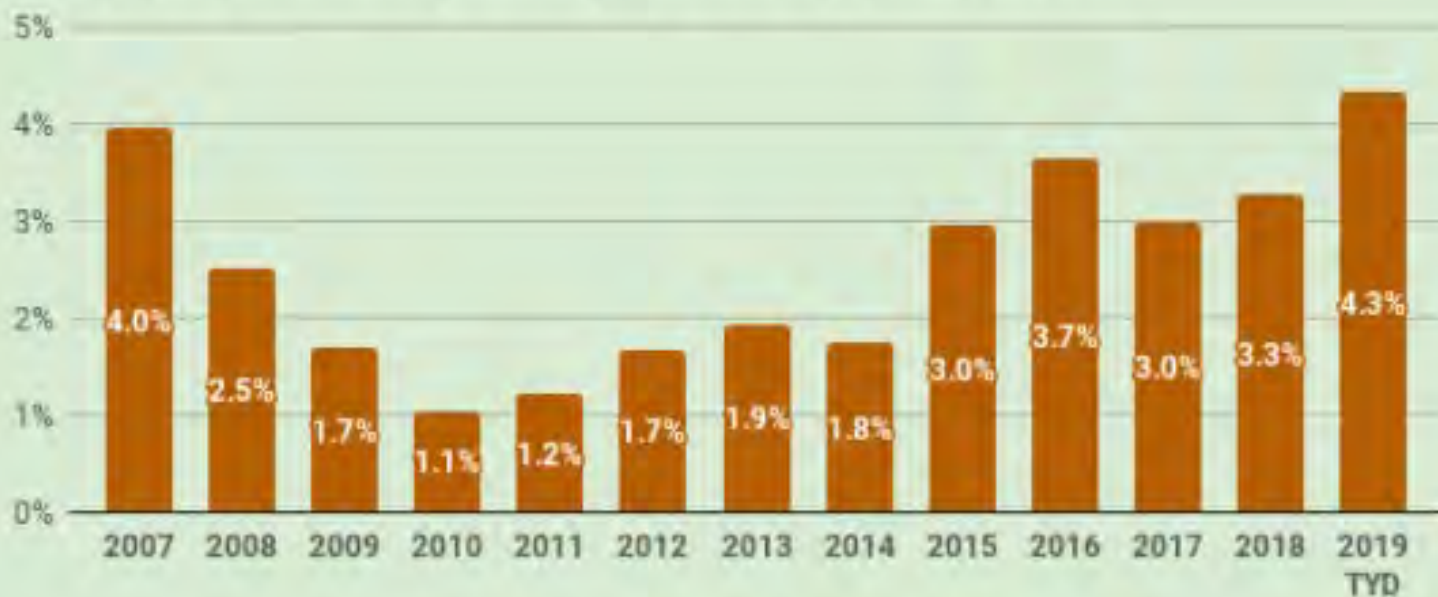
Southern California wages rise 4.2%, tops in US and biggest raises in 12 years

U.S. wages and salaries rose at a 3% yearly rate in September, says Employment Cost Index.



Southern California wages on the rise

Average yearly rate of change for wages in local Employment Cost Index



SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

STAFF GRAPHIC

By **JONATHAN LANSNER** | jlansner@scng.com | Orange County Register

PUBLISHED: November 18, 2019 at 7:00 am | UPDATED: November 20, 2019 at 8:16 am

Southern California bosses, fighting to keep full staffing amid low unemployment, are upping wages at the fastest pace since 2007.

Every three months, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Index tracks what it costs employers in wages and salary to keep and attract workers. The index for Southern California region — Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties — showed wages rising at a 4.2% annual rate in September — that's the largest jump in 12 years for a September and biggest increase among 15 major U.S. job markets tracked by this federal benchmark.

Here are seven other things the index told us about local pay patterns ...

1. Direction: The latest result was down from the previous quarter's 4.3% but up from 3% a year earlier.

2. Ranking: No. 1 in the previous quarter and No. 7 a year ago.

3. History: From 2010 to 2014, post-recession years, the index showed tight-fisted employers upping pay at just a 1.55% annual rate. Since then, local wages and salaries have averaged 3.39% increases.

4. Bay Area: Up at a 2.9% annual rate in September — the No. 7 increase among the 15 metros.

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5. U.S. extremes: Second best? New York and Phoenix at 4%. Low? Houston at 1.5%. Next? Philadelphia at 1.8%.

6. National pace: U.S. wages and salaries rose at a 3% yearly rate in September, same as three months earlier and down from 3.1% percent a year ago.

7. With benefits: When the index added benefit costs to track “total compensation,” Southern California labor costs for were up at a 3.7% annual rate in September — No. 2 among the 15 metros. That compares to 3.4% three months earlier and 2.4% a year ago. Nationally, total compensation rose at a 2.7% rate in September.

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The State Worker

Injured California workers who turn to workers' comp are waiting months for medical reviews

BY WES VENTEICHER



NOVEMBER 19, 2019 01:10 PM

State Auditor Elaine Howle (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)

State Auditor Elaine Howle (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli) RICH PEDRONCELLI AP

The California state agency responsible for making sure workers get treatment after injuries on the job is ignoring conditions that delay care and impair quality in the system, according to an audit published Tuesday.

Close Ad

When injured workers have disputes with their employers over things such as whether work caused their injuries, the extent of their injuries and the treatment required, they can request a review from a doctor through the Division of Workers' Compensation, which is part of Department of Industrial Relations.

Many workers who have requested reviews in recent years have met with months-long delays, according to Auditor Elaine Howle's report.

TOP ARTICLES

Too few physicians are doing the reviews, according to the audit. While requests for the reviews rose by 37 percent from 2013 through 2018, the number of available doctors dropped by 12 percent, according to the audit.

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When workers request reviews of their cases, they are offered a panel of three physicians. Often, none of those physicians are available within 60 days. In that case, workers or insurers can request a new panel to try to speed things up.

The auditor found the number of those delay-related requests rose sharply from 2013 through 2018. The number of replacement panels requested due to 60-day delays rose to about 19,000 in fiscal year 2017-2018, up from 4,600 in 2013-2014, according to the audit.

More than half the time, no one from that second panel is available within two more months, according to the audit.

The auditors' review raised concerns that workers could be prolonging treatment while they wait to figure out how it will be paid for, to the detriment of both employees and employers.

The Division of Workers' Compensation hasn't taken the most obvious step to increase the supply of doctors — increasing their pay, according to the audit.

While the division has increased what it pays for doctors to treat the patients, it hasn't increased the pay for the reviews since 2006, according to the audit. Doctors have been paid \$625 for the reviews since then, a figure that if adjusted for inflation would come out to \$812, according to the audit.

The division "should not continue to ignore the indicators of its dwindling supply of (doctors)," the audit states.

George Parisotto, the division's administrative director, said in a written response to the audit that the department isn't ignoring the decrease in doctors in the system.

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Parisotto said independent studies have suggested the problem lies in the distribution of doctors in the system, not their number. He said many are never assigned to the panels of reviewing doctors. He said the division would look at ways to improve the panel selection process.

He also cited a general physician shortage, saying supply overall is diminishing.

Driving doctors out

In some cases, the division may be driving doctors out of the system, according to the audit. Auditors identified a pattern: when an insurer accuses a reviewing doctor of overbilling, the division often denies the doctor's reappointment in the system rather than launching a typical administrative review.

Then the doctor, known as a qualified medical examiner or QME, is put in a position to try to settle the overbilling claims before receiving a fair hearing, auditors found.

"We believe the alleged violations remain allegations until later in the disciplinary process," the auditors wrote.

Parisotto, denied that assessment, saying the division follows standard disciplinary procedures.

No quality reviews

The audit also found the division rarely reviews the doctors' reports.

An associate medical director told auditors that when he did review a selection of the reports from 2015 and 2016, he found 85 percent of them were "substandard in one or more ways," according to the audit.

But the division never did anything about it, and the associate medical director stopped reviewing the reports, according to the audit.

“Ultimately, to meet its legal obligation, we believe (the division) has a responsibility to use existing resources or seek additional resources to help ensure the quality and timeliness of (doctors’) reports, which injured workers and their employers rely on to resolve disputes,” auditors wrote.

The audit suggests the Legislature should set up a process requiring the division to review its pay for the medical examiners every two years and make other changes to the way the panels are set up to improve the supply of doctors.

“This investigation finds serious shortcomings at (the division) that harm employers, injured workers, and the (medical examiners), the physicians charged with determining whether injured workers are eligible for benefits,” Gabor Vari, CEO of California Medical Evaluators, said in a statement. “As the audit recommends, the Legislature must step in, provide oversight, and pass legislation to hold the (division) accountable and make sure there are enough (medical examiner) physicians to meet workers’ needs.”

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WES VENTEICHER

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Wes Venteicher anchors The Bee’s popular State Worker coverage in the newspaper’s Capitol Bureau. He covers taxes, pensions, unions, state spending and California government. A Montana native, he reported on health care and politics in Chicago and Pittsburgh before joining The Bee in 2018.

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OPINION

Why the sluggish response to the homeless problem?





A homeless encampment is seen along Gilmore Street near Van Nuys Boulevard in Van Nuys on June 3, 2019. (Photo by David Crane, Los Angeles Daily News/SCNG)

By **SUSAN SHELLEY** | |

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Homelessness is an emergency in California, but what state and local officials are doing about it amounts to malfeasance bordering on municipal manslaughter.

An emergency is an urgent situation requiring immediate action. If people were sleeping on the sidewalks after a natural disaster, the governor would probably call out the National Guard.

If government officials treated homelessness like the emergency it is, they would construct temporary emergency shelters in appropriate locations. They would bring in case workers to evaluate individuals and assist them through a process that gets them off the street immediately. They would make efforts to reunite people with family members where possible. They would prioritize funding for necessary mental health facilities, such as psychiatric hospitals and residential facilities for the treatment of

substance abuse. They would build barracks-style and dormitory-style housing, quickly, and they would empower the police to enforce a ban on tent encampments.

They're not doing any of those things.

Instead, they're gazing moist-eyed into cameras and throwing taxpayer money at a corrupt plan to construct overpriced apartments built by campaign donors.

Then they tell you that if you don't like it, you're the problem.

This has not proved to be a political winner, as is evidenced by a new proposal from three members of the Los Angeles City Council. David Ryu, Joe Buscaino and Marqueece Harris-Dawson are proposing to grant emergency powers to Mayor Eric Garcetti to allow him to change zoning and suspend city rules that interfere with the approval of new sites for homeless housing and related facilities. They'd be happy to have the mayor take the heat from the community.

Their newly elected colleague John Lee is under tectonic pressure from the residents of Chatsworth to find another location for the homeless housing project he voted to approve just 200 feet from an elementary school. It would be surprising if Garcetti, already facing a recall effort, wants emergency powers to force voters to accept homeless housing in their neighborhoods.

People are rightfully furious that government officials who have presided over the spread of tent encampments throughout California are cynically using the crisis to push a "housing first" agenda that enriches cronies, but doesn't address and won't solve the problems of untreated severe mental illness, catastrophic drug addiction and in some places, rampant criminal activity.

By all accounts, the problem is getting worse despite billions of dollars spent. The New York Times

reported alarming new data from San Francisco showing a 30% increase in homelessness in the city year-over-year, to 17,595 people. That number, which comes from the city's database of homeless individuals who have used city services such as health care, is more than double the count from this year's one-night survey conducted by volunteers sent out by the city.

If we saw pictures on the news of tent encampments like this in another country, the United States government would send aid. Our state government acts like it's running its own country, so why not — we might as well accept foreign aid from Washington. And that might actually happen.

When President Trump was in California in September, he said his administration was looking at the problem of homelessness and he vowed, "We'll be doing something about it."

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The first thing he did was oust Obama appointee Matthew Doherty from his post as executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. "I believe I have been able to keep my integrity intact," Doherty said in an email obtained by The Washington Post.

Whatever Trump is planning, it sounds like Doherty didn't want to do it.

In October, Rep. Maxine Waters sent a letter to the Trump administration demanding to know the White House's plans on the homelessness issue. She asked whether the government is going to try to convert existing government properties to emergency shelters, and what role the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness will have in the effort.

We still don't know. But unless state and local officials in California develop an interest in addressing the problem with a realistic and affordable plan, a lot of fed-up Californians will welcome Trump's efforts with open arms, and they might even show up at one of his rallies.

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BUSINESS

GateHouse and Gannett combine, forming a newspaper giant. Next step: layoffs



USA Today is one of Gannett's newspapers. (Steven Senne / Associated Press)

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

NOV. 19, 2019
3:09 PM



GateHouse closed its \$1.1-billion takeover of USA Today publisher Gannett, becoming the country's largest newspaper company by far and pledging significant cost cuts at a time when print publications are in precipitous decline.

The merger brings together about 260 daily papers, including the Arizona Republic, the Providence Journal and the Austin American-Statesman, as well as hundreds of weeklies.

In an interview with the Associated Press, executives of the combined company, which will keep the Gannett name, acknowledged that there will be layoffs. The company has committed to cutting \$300 million in annual costs.

Current Gannett Chief Executive Paul Bascobert said front-line reporters are “the last place we want to touch” when it comes to job cuts. He cited “duplication of management” and potential excess costs in financial, printing and advertising divisions as opportunities to reduce costs, and said the company will further centralize editing and newspaper and web design functions.

Mike Reed, the media veteran who leads GateHouse’s parent company, will be CEO of the newly combined company. Bascobert, who has a background in e-commerce as well as media, will serve as CEO of the new company’s operating subsidiary.

“We believe we have a strategy that will result in not just preserving local journalism, but letting local journalism thrive,” Reed said. “National journalism as well. And fortunately, we’re going to be able to impact at least 260 communities.”

The company expects growth in digital operations even as print advertising declines and traditional online ads continue to be dominated by Facebook and Google. The executives envision a revitalization of the classified advertising model on newspaper websites that could offer an alternative to Yelp in helping readers find local businesses.

The new Gannett has set itself a challenging task in supporting local journalism by expanding a digital business involving marketing services and online subscriptions, as well as live events. Digital today makes up about a quarter of the two companies’ combined revenues.



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Additionally, there’s a high-interest \$1.8-billion loan to be paid back to private-equity firm Apollo. The stock price of GateHouse’s parent, New Media Investment Group, has also fallen 40% since it announced the Gannett acquisition, shaving about \$265 million from its market value.

Bascobert declined to give an estimate on how many layoffs were coming. The two companies have about 25,000 employees, said a Gannett spokeswoman, down from 27,600 at the end of last year. The company has laid off some workers since then, although it has not specified where those job cuts landed or how many jobs were involved.

Gannett expects to slow its revenue decline. According to predictions in financial filings, the combined company's revenue will drop 3.6% next year and less every subsequent year until 2023, when it will grow less than 1%. That would be a big turnaround: The old Gannett's revenue fell 9.5% over the last nine months. Excluding the effect of acquisitions, GateHouse's fell about 7%.

Reed said digital businesses will grow even as print advertising shrinks from 29% of total revenue in 2019 to 15% in 2022.

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Democracy Dies in Darkness



‘Meth. We’re on it,’ South Dakota says in ridiculed ad campaign that cost \$449,000

By **Michael Brice-Saddler**

November 19, 2019 at 4:51 a.m. PST

South Dakota is on meth — at least, that’s the message behind a new anti-drug ad campaign so widely mocked that one marketing expert could only laugh before calling it “a colossal blunder.”

The “Meth. We’re On It.” awareness initiative was unveiled Monday by South Dakota Gov. Kristi L. Noem (R) to address the state’s methamphetamine crisis. In a news release, officials underscored the importance of combating drug use in a state where twice as many 12- to 17-year-olds reported using meth compared with the national average.

“South Dakota’s meth crisis is growing at an alarming rate. It impacts every community in our state, and it threatens the success of the next generation,” Noem said in a public service announcement. “This is our problem, and together, we need to get on it.”

AD

“Let’s get meth out of South Dakota,” she added.

The state’s Department of Social Services paid a Minneapolis ad agency nearly \$449,000 this fall for the effort, the Argus Leader reported, citing the state’s finances website. Several of the advertisements feature photos of people stamped with the “Meth. I’m On It.” motto. Noem also requested more than \$1 million in funding to support meth treatment services, according to the news release, and a website — onmeth.com — promises to connect residents to preventive and treatment resources.

But Bill Pearce, assistant dean at the University of California at Berkeley’s Haas School of Business, said any sincere messaging by the governor was lost by an ad campaign that embodies “poor strategy and poor execution.”

AD

“I can’t imagine this is what they intended to do; any good marketer would look at this and say: ‘Yeah, let’s not do that,’ ” Pearce said. “I’m sure South Dakota residents don’t like being laughed at. That’s what’s happening right now.”

Pearce said the advertisements — which are placed on television, billboards and posters — feel like domestic policy more than an actual effort to reach the people who need the resources.

“This is not about trying to find people in the tough parts of town that are hiding from society and using meth,” he said. “This is about telling everyone in the state: ‘I know we’ve got a problem, and I’m addressing it.’ Nobody thought about the ramifications. The Twitter reactions are hysterical.”

AD

By Monday evening, social media had a field day with the slogan and accompanying ads, which, many said, make it sound as though everyone in the state is using the drug.



Dianna E. Anderson  @diannaeanderson · Nov 18, 2019

My home state just announced a new drug awareness campaign.

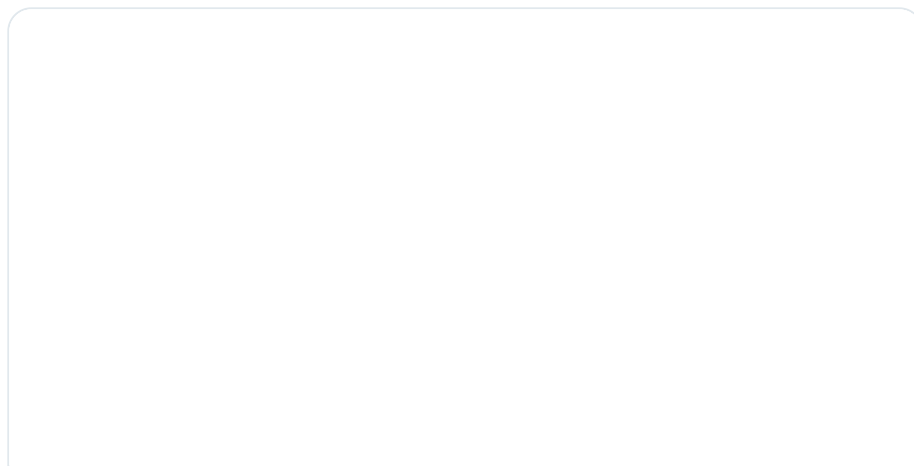
Here it is.



Dianna E. Anderson 🏳️‍🌈

@diannaeanderson

Yes this is real and yes the state spent nearly half a million dollars on it: [argoleader.com/story/news/pol...](https://www.argoleader.com/story/news/pol...)



'Meth. We're On It.': South Dakota spends \$449K on new anti-...

The state paid a Minnesota ad agency just short of \$449,000 for the campaign this fall.

[argoleader.com](https://www.argoleader.com)

1,706 10:50 AM - Nov 18, 2019

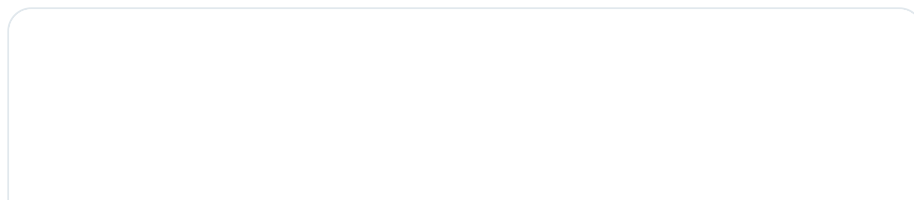
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Ben Collins

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The state paid a Minnesota ad agency just short of \$449,000 for the campaign this fall.

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849 12:46 PM - Nov 18, 2019

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@c0mic_sans

The state of South Dakota spent \$500k on an ad campaign to let everyone know we're on meth



13.9K 12:38 PM - Nov 18, 2019

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Beth Egan, an associate professor for advertising at Syracuse University, had similar concerns about the ad. Her first reaction, she said, was: “What were they thinking?”

“One of the things that struck me is, obviously everyone gets the play on words, they’re trying a twist,” she said. “But what they’re missing is that advertisers no longer have control over the conversation. You need to be mindful of how consumers are gonna take it and run with it in their own way.”

Egan was also struck by how much South Dakota spent on the campaign when about 882,235 people live in the state.

AD

“I know they’re not necessarily looking for a financial return, but that’s a lot of money,” she said.

Appearing to respond to the backlash in a Sunday evening tweet, Noem bought into the adage that any publicity is good publicity. She suggested the campaign was successful because so many people were talking about it.

In a separate statement emailed to The Washington Post, she called the anti-meth initiative “a bold, innovative effort like the nation has never before seen.”

“South Dakota’s anti-meth campaign launch is sparking conversations around the state and the country,” she said. “The mission of the campaign is to raise awareness — to get people talking about how they can be part of the solution and not just the problem. It is working.”

AD



Governor Kristi Noem

@govkristinoem

Meth. It's a problem and it needs to be addressed. Combating it needs to be a dinner table conversation. We need everyone on it.

We're starting the conversation - It. Is. Working.

[#MethWeAreOnIt](https://www.methweareonit.com)
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#MethWeAreOnIt

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But Pearce isn't buying it.

“There's another trope that goes, ‘When they're running you out of town, pick up a baton and pretend you're leading the parade,’ ” he said. “That's what this feels like.”

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Michael Brice-Saddler

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