



Dirty Water

Apodaca, Roybal & Vasquez Favor Website Company With Suspended Corporate License

By Brian Hews

The Central Basin Municipal Water District Communications Committee, chaired by Board President Robert Apodaca, along with committee members Leticia Vasquez and James Roybal, were all set this past Tuesday to approve the hiring of a website management and graphics design services company called 360 BC Group, also known as 360 Business Consulting (360).

But, Apodaca and Vasquez did not attend the meeting after they were asked to

See **CENTRAL BASIN** page 7

2014 Miss Artesia Gala Presents 2015 Contestants



Front row-Miss Artesia Taylor Harrison, Miss Artesia Princesses Kenia Avalos and Kristen Danielle Carlos and Miss Artesia Teen Anna-Marie Diaz; Miss Artesia Teen Princesses Krystal Rhaburn, Hee Won Kim. The 2014 Artesia Royal Court sit with 2015 Miss Artesia Contestants Delfina Aguilera, Francine Nguyen, Madyson Costa and Rocio Hernandez and 2015 Miss Artesia Teen Contestants: are Roxana Solis, Sophia Anigbo, Virali Patel, Alysha Godoy, Aditi Parikh, Jennifer Flores, Dana Minkus, Erin Manalo and Jennifer Sarabia.

Photo by Tammye McDuff.

HMG-CN FINALIST IN TWO LA PRESS CLUB AWARD NEWS CATEGORIES

Staff Report

For the third straight year, Hews Media Group-Los Cerritos Community News has garnered two Los Angeles Press Club finalist nominations to be awarded at the 57th Annual Southern California Journalism Awards, June 28, 2015 at the Millennium Biltmore in downtown Los Angeles.

The nominations are in two categories, Investigative Series and News Feature-Under 1,000 words.

HMG-CN was nominated in the News Feature Category for print newspapers for its hard-hitting investigative story entitled, "Lavish Friday Golf Outings Routine with Ex-Central Basin Water General Manager."

See **PRESS CLUB AWARDS** page 13

Local Cities Cope With State Drought Rules in Different Ways

By Rico Dizon

As the drought continues to plague California, cities in Southern CA have noticeably been taking varied approaches of their own to meet the state-mandated goals based on the community's per capita use of water.

For Lakewood, the City Council approved, at their May 26th meeting, a new ordinance that specifies two specific days a week in watering their yard. Residents of this city are now required to water only on household trash day and three days later for 10 minutes per station during the summer months of May through September. Watering is limited to the cooler hours before 8 am and after 8 pm to reduce water loss by evaporation.

Watering days for the business sector will have to conform with the residential trash collection day in their specific neighborhood.

The new watering rules will take effect immediately although the City Council directed the City Staff to engage in an

See **WATER** page 11

Citadel Outlet Owner Steve Craig Takes Advantage of His Commerce Council 'Relationships'

By Brian Hews

The Commerce Casino is by far the largest tax revenue generator for the City of Commerce. The city receives half of all its revenue from the Casino, yet the Casino is always treated like the proverbial stepchild when it comes to assistance from the City Council.

Meanwhile, the other company in Commerce, one that gives 85% less in revenue to the city, the Citadel Outlet Mall, is given everything, and then some.

In February of this year, Hews Media Group-Community News learned that the Citadel Outlet Mall's large double-faced digital signs located off the 5 freeway in Commerce were in violation of City, State and Federal outdoor advertising laws and that Mayor Tina Baca Del Rio, Mayor pro tem Lilia Leon, Councilmember Ivan Altamirano, Councilman Joe Aguilar, and City Attorney Eddie Olivo have been aware of the violations yet failed to take action.

At a February City Council meeting, they tried to cover their tracks by passing a sign ordinance amendment that brazenly read, "Conversion Of Citadel Digital Display Signs To Off-Site Digital Signs."

This was months after Craig held a fundraiser to pay for Commerce Mayor pro

tem Tina Baca Del Rio's \$26,000 FPPC fine and just after Craig donated \$40,000 to defeat Hugo Argumedo and Denise Robles in this year's City Council race.

In reviewing the new section, HMG-CN confirmed that the City Council approved the amendment to the exclusive benefit of the Citadel and Steve Craig.

The code exempted the Citadel as the only business in the City to be free from most sign requirements.

The proposed code gave digital billboard permits to the Citadel despite the 720-foot rule, which has been the law in Commerce for over 30 years.

Many residents are also angered over the Citadel Bus deal that was spearheaded by Councilman Altamirano.

In that deal, the city obtained a bus that is used almost exclusively to shuttle Citadel customers back and forth.

Altamirano said the bus would "pay for itself, with no impact on the city budget."

Documents obtained by HMG-CN show the city is paying for the bulk of the expenses of the bus to the direct benefit of Steve Craig and his Citadel Outlet.

Now, once again the City Council, consisting of Mayor Lilia Leon, Mayor pro tem Tina Baca Del Rio, Councilmembers

See **CRAIG** page 7

Carver Elementary Parents Irate Over Lack of Communication

Flap Has To Do With The Cancellation Of Carver's Annual Sixth Grade Science Camp.

By Tammye McDuff

Carver Elementary School and Carver Early Learning Academy are one of the finest schools within the city of Cerritos; the school has been a Magnet Learning Center for more than ten years.

The Magnet Program's motto is 'Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow' along with effective communication, obtaining and managing information, and being able to apply knowledge to real world problems.

However, if you had attended the last two ABCUSD board meetings and listened to Carver parents speaking during public comment, you would have to wonder if the motto was being followed.

Sixth Grade Science Camp Cancelled

HMG-CN was told last month that there were some very unhappy parents at Carver in relation to the Sixth Grade Science Camp.

See **CARVER** page 13

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La Mirada High School Students Take Part in “Every 15 Minutes” Program

La Mirada High School students attended an educational program this past week extolling the devastating impacts



A student reacts to the scene of the crash after being involved in a drunk driving traffic collision. The emotional, two-day program shows students the devastating impacts of drinking and driving on their friends, families and community.

drinking and driving can have on friends, families and community.

“This program is a tremendous cooperative effort involving La Mirada High School, the City’s Public Safety Team, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s and Fire Department, and California Highway Patrol,” says Safety Education Officer Mary Cipres. “The overall goals are to discourage underage drinking, especially drinking and driving.”

During the first day of the program, about 27 students and one teacher were pulled out of class every 15 minutes by a member of the City of La Mirada’s Public Safety Team and a volunteer dressed as the grim reaper. The dramatic visual exit of the student leaving class with the grim reaper was meant to illustrate the National Highway Transportation Safety statistic that someone dies in an alcohol related collision every 15 minutes.

The group of students was then taken to the White Emerson Mortuary in Uptown Whittier for an up-close look at a person’s final stop after death. The students then returned to La Mirada where they spent the night at the La Mirada Activity Center. During their night away from home, they completed alcohol education activities, watched anti-drunk driving videos and listened to a presentation by Deputy Creta. They read emotional good-bye letters



A drunk driving traffic collision was simulated during filming for the “Every 15 Minutes” program at La Mirada High School. La Mirada High School students volunteered to play the roles of teens involved in a fatal car collision as part of the program.

written to them by their parents and also wrote good-bye letters to their parents.

The following day, juniors and seniors attended an assembly at La Mirada High School where they heard stories from people affected by a fatal, alcohol-related auto accident and watched an anti-drunk driving film featuring some of their classmates who had volunteered to act in the film. The film depicts a group of teens who consume alcohol at a house party

and are later involved in a fatal auto accident which kills one of their classmates. It shows the fate of the teenage driver who is taken into custody and the accident’s impact on family and friends as they attend a funeral ceremony for the deceased victim.

“These incidents are common criminal offenses and are usually caused by regular, responsible people who made a poor, impulsive decision while under the influence of alcohol,” says Norwalk-La Mirada Sheriff’s Captain Curtis Jensen. “With this program, students are urged to make smart decisions now to avoid these long term ramifications.”

30 YEAR-OLD COLD CASE MURDER OF LA PALMA WOMAN SOLVED

A 65-year-old man was charged today with strangling a 30-year-old woman in her La Palma apartment more than 40 years ago.

Larry Stephens of Santa Rosa is accused of killing Patricia Ross on the evening of Dec. 11, 1974, Senior Deputy District Attorney Larry Yellin said.

The Orange County Crime Lab played a key role in solving the case by matching the blood at the crime scene to Stephens, who had to submit a DNA sample in March when he was arrested on suspicion of domestic violence, the prosecutor said.

“They’re the reason this case has been solved,” Yellin said of the crime lab experts.

At the time of her death, Ross was in the process of selling her plant store business to take a job at Hughes Aircraft Co. She was getting ready for a double date when her killer attacked, Yellin said.

When Ross did not show up for the date, one of her friends went to check on her and found her naked body in her bedroom, Yellin said. Her small dog was found inside a drawer in the bedroom, he said.

Investigators suspect the dog may have bitten the killer because there were tiny smears of blood left behind, Yellin said. Stephens is being held in the Sonoma County Jail, with no Orange County arrival or arraignment date immediately scheduled.



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Washington Elementary Children Receive Glasses From Vision2Learn With Help From Bellflower Rotary



103 children who attend Washington Elementary in Bellflower received their much needed glasses from Vision2Learn and Bellflower Rotary Club . **Photo by Dave Davis**

By Tammye McDuff

Friday May 29, 2015 was the day that 103 smiling, laughing, ecstatic, wonderful kids received their much needed glasses. They can now perform better in school and in other areas of their lives thanks to Rotary Club of Bellflower bringing Vision to Learn to Washington Elementary in Bellflower.

This journey started last year when Dave Davis, President of the Rotary Club of Bellflower saw a need at a Caring Connections Meeting. Several service organizations offered eye exams and glasses to counselors if they were needed, “all of the counselors raise their hands,” recalled Davis, “I stayed after the meeting and spoke

with them.” As it turned out, seven Title One schools in Bellflower have a great need for eye care.

Exploring the issue further, the Rotary club partnered with the program Vision to Learn. “After some research,” states Davis, “the club was able to have Vision2Learn bring their service to the city of Bellflower, if the Club could raise the funds.” The Club chose the largest Title One School, Washington Elementary, as the first of seven to procure the program. Vision2Learn pre-screened 140 kids, finding 103 in need of glasses.

“What a wonderful journey it has been,” stated Davis, “We hope to continue on to the other schools.”

La Palma-Cerritos AAUW Install New Officers for 2015-2016



La Palma-Cerritos AAUW President Barbara Atherton thanked her elected and appointed 2014-2015 Board members for their service and presented them with gifts. Atherton is pictured seated in the front row, on the left, with board members who were present at the Installation Dinner at Frantone’s Pizza and Spaghetti Villa in Cerritos on May 29, 2015.

Photo and story by Edna Ethington

The La Palma-Cerritos Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) gathered for dinner at Frantone’s Pizza and Spaghetti Villa in Cerritos on May 29, 2015. Members came to thank their 2014-2015 board members for their service and to install their new officers for 2015-2016.

Barbara Atherton, President of the 2014-2015 Board, welcomed 30 members and their spouses. President Atherton thanked her 2014-2015 Board members and presented them with gifts. She said that she enjoyed working with everyone and would still be continuing to help raise funds for the AAUW especially for Local

Scholarships.

Dr. Shin Liu, Cerritos College Board of Trustees member, asked to make a special presentation. She gave Certificates of Appreciation on behalf of the Cerritos College Board of Trustees to La Palma Cerritos AAUW Board members to thank them for supporting the women students with scholarships for so many years. Dr. Liu is also a member of the La Palma-Cerritos AAUW.

The AAUW's Fashion Show is at the Sheraton Cerritos on November 21, 2015. Anyone wishing to donate items for the Silent Auction can call Carol Marsh at 714-005-6141. Proceeds from the Fashion Show will benefit Scholarships for women students at Cerritos College.

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Kiwanis Circle K Club Delivers 100 Blankets for Needy Children at CHOC

Project Chair Debbie Scheibel reported that over 60 volunteers from service organizations were gathered at the Activities Center in La Mirada on Saturday, May 30 to participate in the La Mirada Kiwanis Club One Day Community Project.

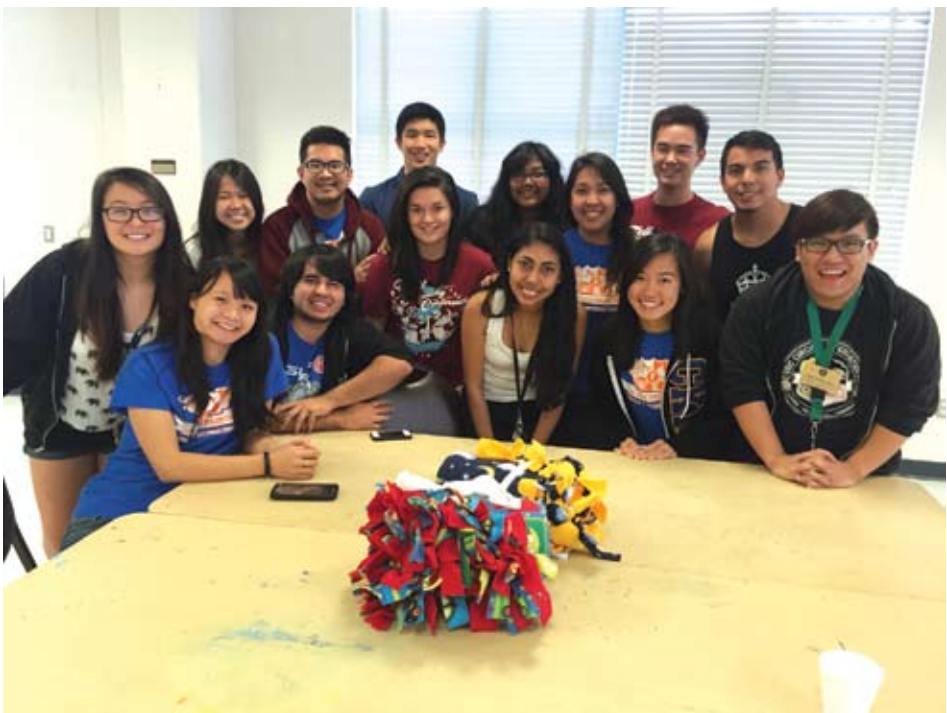
100 baby blankets were made to contribute to CHOC for needy infants.

The project involved tying together two colorful crib sized sheets of soft flannel material to make cozy blankets for new born babies.

The number 100 was selected to coincide with the 100th Anniversary of Kiwanis International being celebrated this year.

Kiwanis member Dr. Ed Norman concluded the activity with a summary of the excellent service work of Kiwanis throughout the years with a charge to the young volunteers for the day to understand the meaning of service to others in order to create a productive and worthwhile society for the future.

He quoted the purpose of Kiwanis International as "Serving the Children of the World." Karl Dash, Lt. Governor of Kiwanis Division 30, Mike Fields, Kiwanis Region 3 Trustee were present to support



Volunteers from Kiwanis Circle K Club at Cal State Fullerton. 100 baby blankets were made to contribute to CHOC for needy infants. The project involved tying together two colorful crib sized sheets of soft flannel material to make cozy blankets for new born babies. Photo courtesy Kiwanis Club.



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the activity.

Kiwanis Co-chair Amy Scheibel thanked the participating adult groups: City of La Mirada, La Mirada Volunteer Center, La Mirada Ebell, La Habra and Cypress Kiwanis Clubs, and the La Mirada Rotary Club. College groups included Circle K members from Cal State Fullerton, Cal State Long Beach, and UC Berkeley.

High School participants were Key Clubbers and Scholar Academy members from La Mirada High School, and Whittier Christian High School. Middle Schools Builders Clubs and ASB students from Hutchinson were present as were Elementary K-Kids from Dulles. The project proved to be an excellent collaborative community effort.

BRING A USED OIL FILTER & GET A NEW ONE FOR FREE

The City of Bellflower will be holding a used motor oil filter exchange event on June 13, 2015 from 9:00am to 1:00pm at AutoZone Auto Parts, 9031 Alondra Blvd. In exchange for their used motor oil filters, residents will receive new motor oil filters free of charge (limit two per resident, while supplies last). After your next oil change, bring in your used oil and filter and receive vouchers for new oil filters.

"Used motor oil and filters are highly recyclable," says Kevin Sales, Bellflower's Used Oil Recycling Program coordinator. "The City wants to make used motor oil and filter recycling as easy for the Do-It-Yourselfer as possible. The used oil and filter will be recycled; and you can redeem your filter voucher immediately for a free oil filter from AutoZone Auto Parts."

The City of Bellflower encourages all residents to participate in the event and to recycle their used motor oil and filters. Supplementary educational materials will be available as well as additional promotional items for eligible participants.

PICO RIVERA TIRE RECYCLING EVENT

The cities of Cerritos, Downey, La Mirada, Norwalk, Pico Rivera, and Santa Fe Springs are hosting a FREE used tire collection event at Pico Rivera City Hall Parking Lot, 6615 Passons Blvd. on Saturday, June 20th from 9am-1pm. Stop by to dispose of your used tires and help keep your city clean!

All Cerritos, Downey, La Mirada, Norwalk, Pico Rivera, and Santa Fe Springs residents are welcome! Proof of residency is required.

Help ensure that all used tires are collected safely and recycled. Residents can transport up to 9 tires maximum per trip. Multiple trips are okay. Please bring passenger and light truck tires only. NO semi truck, construction equipment or agricultural tractor tires are accepted. Tires from businesses and non-profits will not be accepted. ALL tires must be removed from the rims.

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Cerritos 1st CEB Welcomes Meritorious Marine



From left to right: Chris Tierheimer, Connie Edwards, Trisha & two sons (family of Sgt Smith)(flowers compliments of Jim and Connie Edwards), Bruce Barrows, Marlene Rofe, Sgt Adam Smith, Dorothy Owen (President of 1st CEB Adoption Committee/Friends of the 1st CEB and host), Mickey Christason, Mayor Carol Chen, Laurie Forward, and Councilman Jim Edwards. **Photo courtesy 1st CEB.**

Adam Smith began his Marine Corps career when he reported to recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego on September 2005.

His first assignment was Alpha Company, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion where he served as a combat engineer and M249 gunner, attaining the rank of Lance Corporal on June 2006.

In April 2007, Lance Corporal Smith was attached to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a Combat Engineer Fire Team Leader and Machine Gunner, attaining the rank of Corporal in July

2007 during his deployment.

In October 2011, Sergeant Smith attended the Combat Instructor School, School of Infantry. Upon graduation, he served with the Marine Combat Training Battalion until January 2013 at which time he was transferred to Headquarters and Instructor Company, Weapons Section, as a Primary Instructor.

Since February 2015 Sergeant Smith has been reassigned to Alpha Company, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, as a Squad Leader.

Sergeant Smith is married to Trisha, and they have two children.

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DIRTY WATER
Continued from page 1

comment the day before on a Hews Media Group-Community News investigation that revealed 360 to be a very questionable organization.

Acting on a tip of a possible kickback scheme, HMG-CN began to investigate 360 and found several suspicious problems with the company.

Company Suspended by State

A search on the California Secretary of State’s website of 360 Business Consulting, Inc. revealed that the Mission Viejo based company was “Suspended” by the Franchise Tax Board (FTB) sometime before 2010.

HMG-CN called 360 CEO Bridget DiRico this past Monday June 1 for comment. DiRico sent an email saying, “we suspended it because we changed our corporate name to 360 BC Group, Inc., our fictitious business name (FBN), also known as a DBA, is 360 Business Consulting, our new corporate name is 360 BC Group, Inc.”

But Kelly Aviles, an attorney based out of La Verne, told HMG-CN, “I don’t believe that a company can voluntarily suspend itself.”

Aviles sent a link to the California Secretary of State’s website that said, “there are three primary ways an organization may become suspended: failure to file your Statement of Information with the Secretary of State’s (SOS) office, failure to pay an amount due, failure to file any past due tax returns with the Franchise Tax Board (FTB).

FBN/DBA Expired

In her June 1 email to HMG-CN, Ms. DiRico indicated that, “our FBN/DBA is 360 Business Consulting.”

However, an examination of the Orange County Clerk’s website on June 1 revealed that the 360 Business Consulting’s DBA expired 4 months ago in Feb. 2015.

HMG-CN emailed DiRico on June 1 informing her the DBA was expired.

A visit to the Orange County Clerk’s website the next day on June 2 showed

that the DBA had been renewed. DiRico told HMG-CN the next day, “we had sent in our \$23 check and form in January of this year. Until you mentioned it, we hadn’t noticed that the check had not been cashed. We contacted the County, they had the paperwork but not the check, and no one knows why. We dropped off a check and they renewed it at once.”

Website Design Company Without a Website Address (WWW)

DiRico wrote to HMG-CN that the reason for the FTB suspension was because the company changed their corporate name to 360 BC Group, Inc.

DiRico’s company owns the name www.360businessconsulting.com, and that is the main website for the company even though DiRico claimed the company changed its name to 360 BC Group.

A competent business, once they filed their corporate name, would reserve the web address under that name, especially a website marketing company such as 360 BC Group.

But a search of the web address names www.360bcgroup.com and www.360bcgroup.netreveals they are available for purchase; www.360bcgroupinc.com and www.360bcgroupinc.net were also available.

When informed the names were available DiRico told HMG-CN, “we market and have URLs for our brands and products. 360 BC Group, Inc. is not a product nor a brand, so the URL is of no concern to us. It will never be.”

Tainted Selection Process

HMG-CN subsequently inquired about how 360 was selected and was told that a three-person team inside CB interviews companies and rates their service presentation on a numerical scale.

It was revealed that Priscilla Segura and Albert Plimpton were two of the interviewers, with CB GM Kevin Hunt refusing to reveal the third interviewer, only saying that “he was from the Metropolitan Water District.”

Segura is in her mid-twenties and is the Public Affairs Specialist at CB, Albert Plimpton in the head of Information Technology at the water agency.

HMG-CN asked DiRico for the docu-

ments her company sent in response to the Request for Proposal for Website Services from CB.

DiRico responded, "as a privately-owned company we do not disclose any information on our clients, finances or operations, other than what is mandated by the state. Because Central Basin is a government agency, they have reporting and public disclosures requirements. Please contact them for a copy of the RFP, proposals, agreements, etc., and they are in a better situation to provide whatever information is legally required, or they wish to disclose.”

When told about the interviewers, CB Director Art Chacon commented, “we already have a great employee in Albert, he does a great job, our website is award-winning, why are we looking to contract our services out at \$150,000?”

Bogus Business Office

When informed that HMG-CN was investigating 360, GM Hunt and Public Affairs Manager Joseph Legaspi sent documents via email in an apparent attempt to show 360 as a responsible and organized company.

HMG-CN was sent 360’s business license, which had a business address in the city of Orange, CA.

But on closer inspection, 360’s address, 307 E. Chapman Ave. in Orange-with no suite number-is the headquarters for the Orange Chamber of Commerce and other smaller businesses.

HMG-CN went to the building and could not find 360 Business Consulting.

Two tenants in the building were questioned and had never seen nor heard of 360 Business Consulting.

HMG-CN called the Orange Business License office and asked how long 360 Business Consulting had listed the address in Orange.

The representative indicated that 360 first took out a business license on Dec. 3, 2013, over 18 months ago.

HMG-CN emailed DiRico about the office in Orange, she responded by saying, “I am not certain why and where you are going with all of this, but I think you are taking this somewhere that is not backed up by the facts. As such, I will no longer communicate with you on this subject.”

rent City Council to a “quid pro quo”, that is, a “something for something” deal with Craig.

Earlier this year, HMG CM revealed during the 2015 City Council campaign that Craig set up an Independent Expenditure Committee and donated \$40,000 to defeat eventual winner Hugo Argumedo and incumbent Denise Robles.

Argumedo garnered the most votes and Robles lost in a close race to the Craig supported Oralía Reballo.

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CRAIG
Continued from page 1

Ivan Altamirano and Oralía Reballo, are favoring Craig and the Citadel by entering into a contract to hire two L.A. County Deputy Sheriffs to work exclusively inside the Citadel Outlet Mall.

With only Councilman Argumedo objecting that Craig should pay for both deputies, the remaining Council voted for a deal where Craig would pay for one deputy,

Commerce will pay for half of the other, with the remaining balance picked up by a grant from the state.

But, after one year, to the ire of Argumedo, the City would pay the entire salary plus benefits of one deputy who will work exclusively at the Citadel Outlet Mall.

The cost to the city, including salary and benefits, is well over \$110,000.

Argumedo argued vehemently before the vote for Craig to pay for both deputies but to no avail.

Many attribute the actions of the cur-

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CERRITOS SEES SEASON
HALTED ON RARE
GAME-ENDING TRIPLE PLAY

By Loren Kopff

GRAND TERRACE-Triple plays in high school softball are hard to come by, but a triple play to end a game is unheard of. Cerritos High found out the hard way against Grand Terrace in a California Interscholastic Federation-Southern Section Division III quarterfinal game last Thursday afternoon.

In the top of the seventh inning, sophomore shortstop Lailoni Mayfield reached on an error, senior center fielder Megan Darling connected on a line drive single to center and senior pitcher Jennifer Iseri was walked to load the bases with none out. On the very next pitch, freshman first baseman Kiarra Pope flied out to Morgan Parsons, who made a juggling catch inches above the ground.

The catch would have been good enough to send Mayfield home, but one of the field umpires ruled that Darling and Mayfield both left their respective bases early, thus ending the game which went to Grand Terrace, 3-2. Cerritos head coach Mike Freeman tried to get an explanation from the umpires but was only told that the runners left early.

CIF-SOUTHERN SECTION DIV. III SOFTBALL PLAYOFFS

“That’s the worst call I’ve ever seen in my life,” an irate Freeman said. “I’ve been coaching softball for 20 years and that’s the worst ump call I’ve ever seen. My runner tagged [up] at third because I told her to stay there until [Parsons] caught it. I’m not sure about the runner [at second] but I know the runner from third tagged [up].”

“I was concerned about third base and I know she tagged [up],” he continued. “So you can’t call her out, too. If you call Megan out, that’s two outs and Lo still scores; the game is tied. So that’s just [a] terrible [call]. It’s an awful call; they shouldn’t do that to these kids.”

The juggling act from Parsons may have confused the Cerritos runners, according to Grand Terrace head coach Bobby Flores, who saw the play in a different way.

“Everyone is going to say it’s my player, but I really did think it was a clean catch,” Flores said. “I think [the runners] just jumped the gun. Their coach thought it was dropped and that’s why their players took off running.”

Cerritos (20-8) was trailing 3-0 after four innings before finally getting on the board against the top ranked team in the division. With one out, Mayfield reached on an error and advanced on an infield hit from Darling. An errant throw on the play allowed Mayfield to reach third and

after Darling stole second, Melanie Olmos walked Iseri to load the bases. Another walk, this time to Pope, brought in Mayfield and senior right fielder Heather Cameron’s base hit to the left field gap plated Darling.

“They have heart but we made little mistakes,” Freeman said. “The game should have never been that close. Actually, we should have been up 2-0 after the second inning. Like I was explaining to them, little things like that always come back to haunt you.”

The Suburban League champion Lady Dons, ranked ninth in the division, had several chances to take an early lead. With Cameron on first with one out in the top of the second, senior left fielder Madison Lee was robbed of a hit when Marissa Jauregui dove forward in center to deny Lee. On the very next pitch, Cameron was caught stealing. Cerritos then left two runners on base in the third and stranded three more runners in the fourth without the benefit of a hit.

“You have breaks in a softball game and that was our opportunity to break the game open and we didn’t really do it,” Freeman said. “I can go back and I have 40 plays in my head that lost this game. I don’t look at [the seventh inning] as losing this game at all. We lost this game way

Gahr Comes Up Short in
Semifinals Against
Division’s Top Ranked
Team

By Loren Kopff

With the support of several high school softball fans and players from the general area cheering the team on, Gahr High was hoping to advance to its first California Interscholastic Federation-Southern Section divisional championship game since 1989. But the Gladiators, who scored once in the bottom of the seventh inning, left the tying run on first and fell to top ranked Grand Terrace in a Division III semifinal game.

Among the players who came on to support Gahr were from Cerritos, still hurting from a game-ending triple play that resulted in a Grand Terrace 3-2 win last Thursday in the quarterfinals. In that game, the Titans jumped out to a 3-0 lead en route to the victory. In the semifinals, Grand Terrace again had a 3-0 lead thanks to a pair of solo home runs from Morgan Parsons before the co-San Gabriel Valley League champions drew to within a run. But Gahr head coach Shawn Quarles found the Titans, with only one senior on their team, to be a tough foe despite having an advantage of seeing how they did against Cerritos.

“I knew they were a good team,” Quarles said. “I knew [Melanie Olmos] is a great pitcher. I know they hit the ball and they play aggressive defense. So, it is what it is. They outplayed us today.

“They came through when they needed to and I heard that their No. 6 batter was a good hitter,” Quarles added. “She had a lot of pop in that bat.”

Following Parsons’ first home run, Danielle Rico doubled and came home on a base hit from Alyssa Martinez. But the fourth ranked Gladiators, who didn’t have a hit through the first three innings, struck back in the fourth when freshman right fielder Madison Huskey singled to left and moved to second on an error. Following the fourth of eight strikeouts from Olmos, sophomore catcher Alyssa Kumiya cracked a two-run home run over the right centerfield fence. It was the fourth round tripper of the season for the University of South Carolina signee, tops on the team. She now has 14 home runs in two seasons at Gahr, tied with sophomore third baseman Malia Quarles for most four-baggers in school history since 2000.

“We were just trying to get a good pitch; trying to stay ahead in the count,”

See GAHR page 12

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WATER
Continued from page 1

extensive public information campaign about the new ordinance, making use of every conceivable form of communication there is.

"Lakewood has great community spirit. If we each do our part to reach our conservation goal we will be successful," said Lakewood's long-time Water Resources Director Jim Glancy. "Let us show Sacramento that we can do this. In the process, please be courteous and helpful toward your neighbors so we get through this in a positive way befitting us a community."

For La Palma, on the other hand, the city's new water conservation proposal presented to the City Council last June 2, focuses more on car-washing and pools. "Our goal is to simplify and clarify specific sections of the Water Conservation Ordinance so that it is easier to understand and achieve compliance," said La Palma's Community Services Director Mike Belknap.

The proposal, which is still awaiting the City Council approval pending request for more data, removed restrictions on specific days and hours but instead requires the use of hand-held bucket and hose equipped with an auto-closing nozzle. Should stricter measures be required, the proposed ordinance suggested no car washing allowed unless health and safety of public is affected.

For pools and spas, the city staff recommended that maintenance of water level be allowed up to one foot only per week. Refilling pool beyond one foot will require a pool cover to be installed. All new pools will require a pool cover.

The new water conservation proposal for La Palma included a lawn and garden demonstration that will replace 7,900 sq. ft. of lawn with artificial turf taking advantage of the Public Agency turf removal rebates. Along with this, is the suggestion to install a California native demonstration garden that will include the planting of drought-tolerant plants and use of highly-efficient irrigation systems. Estimated cost for this twin project would be from \$50,000 to \$60,000 per the report.

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Cerritos 14-Under
All-Stars Unable to
Hold Lead in Semifinals

By Loren Kopff

HUNTINGTON BEACH-Less than a week after winning the Orange Canyon Memorial Day Classic, the Cerritos Girls Softball Association 14-Under All-Stars were a strike away from advancing to the championship game of the South Huntington Beach Surf City Classic. But West Grove's Alyssa Canales laced a bases clearing double down the left field line and rallied for a 4-3 win last Sunday afternoon at Edison High.

The game was scoreless through the first five innings as pitcher Cassie Perryman was throwing a no-hitter until Sydnee Burns singled off of Perryman's glove with one out in the fifth inning. Before that, she had struck out eight batters and walked four. A defining moment came in the second inning when Burns fouled off 12 balls and forced Perryman to throw 16 pitches before she fouled out to first baseman Caitlyn Azevedo on the 17th pitch.

Still, West Grove had only one runner reach third base through the first five innings while Cerritos had a chance to score early. With two outs in the first, shortstop Kara Spoolstra singled and went to third when catcher Makayla Garcia was safe on an error. But center fielder Julia Enzmann



NEWS AND
NOTES FROM
PRESS ROW

popped up to second to end the threat. In the fifth, Samantha Monroe was stranded at third after she was walked, went to second on a wild pitch and moved to third on a one out groundout.

Playing under the international tie-breaker rules in the sixth with third baseman Dalia Morones at second, Perryman singled to put runners on the corners. Two batters later, Garcia reached on an error which allowed Morones and Perryman to come home. Following a groundout, Azevedo singled to bring in Garcia.

In the bottom half of the inning and with one out after Sydney Tengan reached on a fielder's choice, Perryman walked Ashley Siordia. Two batters later, Erica Lat was safe on an infield hit with Tengan scoring. Perryman then walked Chloe Gilbert to load the bases before Canales came through with the hit that found enough space between Morones and the left field line.

Cerritos had previously defeated Temecula Valley 10-3 before losing to Santa Monica 3-2 in pool play action last Saturday before knocking off Mission Viejo 8-2 in the quarterfinals last Saturday night.

Also in the tournament, the 8-Under All-Stars blanked Penasquitos 3-0 and tied

Temecula Valley 1-1 in pool play action while the 10-Under All-Stars remained winless in two summer tournaments after falling to Torrance 10-0, Temecula valley 6-1 and Palos Verdes 12-9 last Saturday.

TRAVEL BALL SOFTBALL

The first major showcase tournament of the summer takes place this weekend when a plethora of teams will participate in the Triple Crown Sports Zoom Into June tournament, to be played at various sites in the Inland Empire. The Artesia Punishers 18-Under Gold team managed by Bob Medina will have one game tonight, two on Saturday and two more on Sunday, all at Diamond Valley Park in Hemet.

Dave Lindsay's Artesia Punishers 18-Under team will play three games on Saturday and two more on Sunday at Big League Dreams Park in Cathedral City while the 16-Under team under the tutelage of Armando Canizales will also have three games on Saturday and two on Sunday at Big League Dreams Park in Riverside while Danny Guerrero's Artesia Punishers 14-Under team will play tonight, then two more the next two days at Big League Dreams Park in Perris.

Several other area players from Cerritos, Gahr, Norwalk and Valley Christian who play for the Cal A's and Downey Nemesis Elite Gold teams will also be in the tournament.

The Punishers 14 and 16-Under teams competed in the Premier Girls Fastpitch Las Vegas National Qualifier last weekend and had short stays. The 14-Under team lost two of its three games it played while the 16-Under squad went two and out.

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CERRITOS

Continued from page 10

before that.”

The Titans scored all of their runs in the fourth with one out. The big blow was a two-run line drive double to the right field gap from Danielle Rico. That came a pitch after Parsons brought home Alexis Lopez.



ENTER TO WIN
SESAME STREET
LIVE TICKETS!
SEE PAGE 3

Grand Terrace had entered the game batting .454 with 299 hits, including 78 doubles and 41 home runs. But Iseri, who along with Cameron will be taking their talents to the University of Hawai’i, allowed just three hits in the game.

“I thought she threw well,” Freeman said. “Even in the inning that they got the three runs, we had a base on balls and an error. So, she was still throwing well at that point. She hung a few, but everyone does. I thought she pitched very well today against a lineup like that.”

“[Iseri’s] a great little pitcher,” Flores said. “What she has is that back door curve ball that comes out and just gets on the outside of that corner. I already know about her. Our right fielder Morgan is going to Hawai’i with her, so they know each other. We knew it was going to be a pitching duel. I can see why Cerritos got here. They have a good team.”

Cerritos, which got four hits, was hoping to face city rival Gahr in the semifinals, played this past Tuesday. It would have been the first trip to the semifinals since 2000 when Cerritos won the second of its back to back Division II championships. Still, the Lady Dons, who will lose seven seniors to graduation, won 20 games for the second straight season. The last time that occurred was in 1999 and 2000. The game also marked the last for Freeman, who is stepping down after a brief career at Cerritos.

“This has been a blast coaching this group,” Freeman said. “When you have girls who are like sponges, it’s fun...when you don’t have the so-called superstar kids and the kids are eating up everything you say. It’s always fun to coach kids like that. So I had a great time coaching this team. And the seniors were awesome the whole time.”

GAHR

Continued from page 10

Shawn Quarles said of the fourth inning. “We know that sometimes [Olmos] has problems with her control and that she walks a lot of batters. But I’m real proud of my girls. They battled to the end and we had a great season.”

Gahr (24-8) had a chance to tie or even take the lead in the sixth. With one out, freshman shortstop Dejanae Davis hit a flare that bounced where the dirt and grass portions meet behind the shortstop position. Then with two outs, Olmos walked Malia Quarles before striking out Kumi-yama.

In the top of the seventh, the Titans got a huge insurance run when Destini Peck reached on an error and was replaced by courtesy runner Alexis Lopez. Olmos singled to right and after a groundout held Lopez at third, Parsons singled to center.

Gahr rallied in its half of the frame when junior center fielder Alyssa Cuffia, who has been hot both offensively and defensively in the postseason, hit a rocket that glanced off of Parsons’ glove and went all the way into foul territory down the first base line. Cuffia motored all the way to third where she came home on a fielder’s choice from senior left fielder Sabrina Quarles.

Senior pitcher Destiny Vasquez, who will be attending Eastern Michigan University in the fall, struggled with her pitch count early on but settled down towards the latter innings. She gave up 10 hits, struck out six and walked one. The 10 hits are the most the Gahr pitching staff had yielded since Mar. 10 and only the fourth time all season long the Gladiators had given up double digits in hits. Vasquez also got some nifty defensive catches behind her, including Cuffia who had six putouts including a sliding catch to end the fifth when Grand Terrace had runners at second and third.

“I thought she did a great job,” Shawn Quarles said. “I thought that she was what we had to go with and I thought she pitched a great game. So there was no reason to think about anything. Destiny’s our best pitcher, so we were putting our best foot forward and that’s what we were doing.”

The Gladiators, who had their highest win total since 2007 (24-5) won three playoff games in the same season for the first time since 1989 and only the second time in school history. Since advancing to the quarterfinals in 2008, Gahr has won a total of four playoff games. The loss also marked the final high school game for six seniors, including Brianna Besenty, Deidra Genera, Celeste Gonzalez and Deja Portillo.

“I think we overachieved,” Shawn Quarles said. “Most of all, the girls had a very positive season and I think they learned a lot, not only about softball, but they learned a lot about themselves. They learned how to focus and how to apply themselves and to really fight through adversity even when it’s just social adversity.”

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CARVER
Continued from page 1

Each year, all fifth grade students plan for the much-anticipated Sixth Grade Science Camp.

The Science Camp is fairly expensive, and some parents have taken advantage of the ABC and not paid for the annual excursion.

But, with no notice sent out, fifth grade parents discovered that Science Camp for the 2015-2016 sixth grade class had been cancelled.

The cancellation had to do with the cost of the camp and its effect on the school’s budget.

An email dated May 12 from Carver parent Natalie Torres to Carver teachers Elaine Kimura and Robert Wheelis described a “robo phone call” placed to all parents on the evening of May 11.

The phone call invited fifth grade parents to attend a meeting two days later to discuss the cancellation of 2015-2016 Science Camp.

Torres requested that an email also be sent to parents, stating that some did not receive the call.

The May 13 meeting was held, attended by Carver Principal Deborah Berlyn, who told the parents that teachers were “having difficulty collecting money for Science Camp.”

Another parent at Carver, Elizabeth Martinez, sent an email to Ms. Golden a Carver sixth grade teacher and member of the Teachers Union Board of Directors on May 17th saying, “the position teachers had been put in was regretful and that I, along with many other parents, would like the opportunity for our children to attend science camp next year.”

Martinez and the parents wanted to take charge of the process so everyone could attend the camp.

Martinez further stated that Berlyn seemed open to the idea because the teachers were very upset and might not want to collect the money.

Martinez added, “I would like to assure you that we are committed to doing as much of the work as we are allowed to do. We have already received commitments to pay by May 29, 2015 and commitments for donations of \$400.” Martinez attached a survey that had gone out to parents, requesting that Golden give feedback and share thoughts on the matter.

A phone call was placed to Berlyn Friday, May 15th by Martinez to discuss teacher’s input on the camp cancellation. Martinez told HMG-CN that she did not immediately receive a response to her phone call.

Given the lack of communication, Martinez, along with several other parents, went to the May 19th ABCUSD School Board meeting to address their concerns.

Six days passed, and Carver Parents United could wait no longer. On Monday, May 25th an email was sent to ABCUSD board members and Carver Elementary teachers once again expressing their concerns.

The letter stated that parents had been left in the dark regarding the Science Camp decision-making process. The letter also recommended a timeline with specific dates for payments and collections.

“We would like to work closely with our children’s teachers so that they are not burdened by the logistics and can focus on curriculum and instruction. This will give us enough time to assess the needs of the 5th grade families. We want to have access to the record keeping on Science Camp at any time, so that we know how much money we will need to raise. We want to be involved throughout the process. We urge you to please allow Carver parents to be involved.”

The email was forwarded to ABCUSD Board President Maynard Law, V.P. Olympia Chen, Clerk Armin Reyes, and Board Members Lynda Johnson, Celia Spitzer, Sophia Tse, Soo Yoo, and Lynda Johnson. The email was also forwarded to Berlyn.

Martinez received a reply from Board Member Lynda Johnson on May 26. Johnson stated that other parents had contacted her regarding concerns about the sixth grade camp.

Johnson wrote, “I certainly understand the issues you are going through and I am sure there will be a positive outcome. Please keep me posted on any updates and I will also follow up with the Superintendent.”

Carver Parents United also received a response from ABC Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu stating that Principal Berlyn will convene a meeting with all incoming sixth grade parents regarding the Science Camp. Sieu encouraged that further questions be directed to Principal Berlyn or Dr. Cheryl Bodger, Director of Schools.

Dr. Sieu wrote Martinez in an email, “after speaking with Principal Berlyn, she would like to meet with you personally to go over the process for the 6th Grade Camp next year. I would highly recommend that you meet with Dr. Cheryl Bodger and Principal Berlyn together.”

Martinez replied the next day saying, “thank you for informing me about the meeting, but Berlyn has not contacted me yet.”

Martinez also stated that she attempted to contact Berlyn without success.

Finally on May 28th Berlyn wrote an email to Martinez saying, “...therefore, with the busy week that we are having, we will send out the survey in June as I stated in the letter that was sent to all fifth grade parents. After we receive the surveys back, I will schedule a parent meeting to share the results and the next steps. I appreciate hearing your recommendations. I understand that you have been sending emails to teachers, parents, board members, and district officials regarding some concerns that you have. If you would like to schedule a meeting, I would be happy to meet and address your concerns.”

Angered, Martinez emailed Sieu stating that she was not interested in meeting with Berlyn or Bodger in a private meeting behind closed doors.

Martinez recommended in the past that Berlyn hold a public parent meeting where everyone would be able to receive the same information and have the opportunity to openly ask questions and address issues.

Then on May 28 Berlyn sent a letter to fifth grade parents addressing the issue of science camp, the issue of collecting monies, what families would be attending, and who would be able to pay the full or partial cost of the camp.

On June 1st, Martinez received an email from Bodger stating that Dr. Sieu had received a formal complaint and that Bodger and her meet.

Martinez replied that same day that all parents should be involved in any meeting.

Bodger responded June 2nd emphasizing, “I’d like to start the process by speaking with you and getting more information.”

In her response Martinez thanked Bodger for investigating the complaint and that all parents should be included in any communication.

Martinez then said Berlyn sent a letter saying, “the final decision will be made at the end of September. If we have collected all the money by that time, I will sign the contract to attend camp.”

“Considering that the funding of this trip is controversial,” writes Martinez, “we are asking Mrs. Berlyn to put a timeline in effect for payment due dates, we are trying to make sure that school budgets aren’t impacted, and that the teachers don’t bear any additional responsibilities. We are frustrated that we’re having such a difficult time

trying to get clear answers.”

Martinez said that a parent survey had finally been sent, but she told HMG-CN that she, along with other parents from Carver Parents United, did not receive this survey.

At the ABCUSD board meeting held on June 2nd, parents once again joined to file a formal complaint. Diana DelaTorre, a sixth grade parent, shared her concerns with the cancellation of the outdoor science camp.

DelaTorre stated that a group of parents met with Berlyn to ask what it would take for the parents to come up with the funds to continue the outdoor science camp for next year. The principal shared with parents that the decision was “based on the law” and the 6th grade teachers “did not want to continue the outdoor science camp.”

DelaTorre indicated that the decision to discuss the camp with all parents went another direction after an email was sent to the Board and Los Cerritos Community Newspaper.

She also cited other concerns at the school including the lack of School Site Council meetings, PTA Board elections, the outdoor barbeque for the 4th - 6th grade students, and the annual Knott’s Berry Farm field trip for the 6th graders.

DelaTorre asked for the Board to investigate the issues.

Martinez then chimed in saying her major concerns were that some parents knew about the decision before other parents and that there was some unprofessional comments made by Berlyn at a parent meeting. She urged ABC to form a science camp committee.

HMG-CN placed a call to Berlyn for comment but she deferred to Patti Levang who said all questions must be directed toward the Dr. Sieu.

Dr. Sieu returned a phone call to HMG-CN stating, “over the years, regrettably, some parents choose not to pay. In light of the fact that many parents are willing to raise the money, the principal has decided to revisit and reinstate the camp. There will be a meeting on June 10, inviting incoming sixth graders and their parents to meet the staff and discuss their concerns and issues.”

Sieu went on to say, “I believe that this issue originally stemmed from miscommunication and has unfortunately snowballed.”

PRESS CLUB AWARDS
Continued from page 1

The story outlined how former CB GM Art Aguilar took frequent Friday golf outings and did not report the green fees and other large expenses on his Statement of Economic Interests Form 700.

As a result of the story, the Fair Political Practices Commission ruled that Aguilar violated the Political Reform Act and fined him \$30,000.

HMG-CN is in the category that includes a much bigger publication in terms of circulation, the Los Angeles Business Journal.

HMG-CN was also nominated in the prestigious Investigative Series Category for Print Newspapers for its investigative story entitled “La Mirada Football Booster Club Under Scrutiny by Attorney General”

This story was about the football booster club and how they collected over \$1 million per year from parents of football players with no little or no oversight and no financial or company controls.

This story got over 23,000 hits and 1,400 Facebook likes. The story resulted in the Norwalk-La Mirada School District implementing wholesale institutional changes in their booster system, calling in a consulting company to completely revamp their entire policy and procedure

book of the school district and how they operate and manage all non-profit booster clubs, of which there are over 10.

Other newspaper finalists in this category include the Pasadena Weekly, the Los Angeles Downtown News, the Los Angeles Business Journal, and The San Bernardino Sun.

HMG-CN won four of the prestigious Press Club Awards in 2012 and 2013.

In 2012, HMG-CN won 1st place in the Investigative Series category for its exclusive expose on Assessor John Noguez in what turned out to be the biggest financial scandal in Los Angeles history.

As a result of the series, Noguez was arrested on bribery and corruption charges and is awaiting trial.

A number of other arrests were made, including Tax Agent Ramin Salari and Mark McNeil one of Noguez’ deputies.

Noguez was charged with 30 felony counts, including four counts of accepting bribes; five counts of perjury; two counts of conspiracy; and 19 counts of misappropriation by a public officer. The complaint alleges the fraud and embezzlement exceeded \$500,000.

If convicted as charged, Noguez faces up to 38 years in state prison.

Salari was charged with 59 felony counts, including 24 counts of bribing an executive officer; two counts of conspiracy; 19 counts of misappropriation; seven counts of embezzlement; and seven counts of grand theft.

If convicted, he faces up to 60 years in state prison.

McNeil was charged with 20 felony counts, including one count of conspiracy and 19 counts of misappropriation by a public officer.

If convicted, he faces up to 29 years in state prison.

Wholesale institutional changes were also made at the Assessor’s office to eradicate future abuses of the system.

The series also garnered a Pulitzer Prize nomination for HMG-CN.

HMG-CN took home 1st place in 2013 for Best News Feature entitled “Undercover FBI Agent Rocky Patel Used Dal Rae in Pico Rivera to Stage Calderon Sting Operation.”

HMG-CN also took home two 2nd place awards in 2013 for Hard News and Investigative Series.

On their website the Press Club stated, “this is proving to be the most competitive year in the Los Angeles Press Club’s recent memory with close to a thousand entries. So if there was ever a year when it is an honor just to be nominated, this is it.”

The awards will be held June 28, 2015 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

The 57th Southern California Journalism Awards will be dedicated to Rick Orlov, Al Martinez and Stan Chambers.

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