Fullerton Observer.com

News for the people, by the people

Published by Fullerton Observer LLC Est. 1978 • Year 48 #18 EARLY NOVEMBER 2026

contact@fullertonobserver.com • (714) 525-6402 • PO Box 7051, Fullerton, CA 92834 • Daily Stories at: *www.fullertonobserver.com*

Distributed the first and third Monday of every month except only once in January, July, and August



OktoBOOfest 2026 Lights Up Downtown Fullerton

By the time the sun dipped behind the rooftops of Wilshire Avenue on Thursday evening, the Downtown Fullerton Plaza had been taken over by witches, superheroes, dinosaurs and at least one very determined walking banana. Families turned out in force for an evening that felt like the whole town had agreed to celebrate Halloween two days early at OktoBOOfest 2026.

At 5:15pm the Fullerton Flashers took the stage for a quarter-hour set that had the crowd hooting and hollering. Fifteen minutes later came the event many had been waiting for: the pie-eating contest. Nearby, the kids' corner stayed busy from start to finish with a bounce castle and face painting while the JukeBoxx Band plugged in and the plaza changed gears.

When the last song ended, the crowds applauded. Tired children left clutching treat bags. OktoBOOfest 2026 was, by every sticky, sugar-dusted measure, a success. On a Thursday evening, Downtown Fullerton was the place to be for family fun.

Know Your Rights: Protecting Yourself From ICE in Orange County

by Saskia Kennedy

Everyone in the United States has constitutional rights, regardless of their immigration status. Knowing them before an encounter is your best protection.

On a recent Saturday in northern Orange County, ICE agents stopped a man who had gone out for gas and a car wash, and they took him into custody. His work truck was left in a parking lot. His wife, a U.S. citizen, and their U.S.-born children had to find him and get him his medication. USC sociologist Jody Agius Vallejo describes the arrest in a Los Angeles Times opinion piece published on October 25, 2026.

Local rapid-response groups say they are seeing a pattern: agents stop Latino men driving landscaping and construction trucks and leave the vehicles behind. That raises a hard question. How are agents choosing whom to stop, and is state data helping them do it?

This guide explains what is known about ICE and state data. It then lays out practical steps to protect yourself and your family at home, in public, online and on paper. It is general information, not legal advice. For your own case, talk to an immigration attorney or one of the nonprofit legal providers listed at the end.

Read more on page 12

Who is Making False and Misleading Claims?

by J.A. Kaluzny

An advertisement for Oscar Valadez, apparently directed at Democratic voters, accuses his opponent, Jozef Maldonado, of making "false, misleading claims." Yet the advertisement itself makes statements about the outcome of Valadez's lawsuit that the court's judgment does not support.

Valadez sued to force Maldonado to change his ballot designation, which identified him as a city commissioner. The case ended with Maldonado agreeing to change the designation.

According to Maldonado, he did not keep fighting the lawsuit because of the cost and time involved. He chose to drop the designation even though he is a sitting Parks and Recreation Commissioner.

The advertisement, paid for by "Valadez for City Council 2026," states in large, bold letters that "a judge ruled Jozef Maldonado broke election law." The audio repeats the statement and adds, "…with false, misleading claims."

Read more on page 2

Fullerton Council Advances Ban on Watering "Nonfunctional" Grass

by Saskia Kennedy

The Fullerton City Council voted 5-0 on October 20 to approve Ordinance No. 3360, which amends the city's municipal code to put in place a state ban on using drinking water to irrigate nonfunctional turf. The ordinance brings the city into compliance with California Water Code section 10608.14, created by Assembly Bill 1572. City staff told the council the state law is meant to support long-term water resiliency and help California use its limited water supply more efficiently in the face of future droughts and climate change.

The law prohibits using potable water to irrigate nonfunctional turf on commercial, industrial and institutional properties, and it is being phased in over several years. Staff noted that the law does not currently apply to single-family or multifamily homes.

Read more on page 10

CORRECTION

In the mid-October issue the calendar displayed a Noche De Muertos Celebration at the Fullerton Museum Center ad from 2025. It was a place holder that did not get replaced with the new advertisment.

The new advertisement is on page 11 and the Noche de Muertos Celebration will take place on November 7. It is a wonderful community celebration for the whole family. Fullerton Museum Center is located at 301 N. Pomona Avenue in the Downtown Plaza.

Fullerton Observer
Fullerton's Only Independent Newspaper

Thank you! You keep us printing by subscribing and advertising.

PRESORTED
STANDARD U.S.
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 1577
FULLERTON CA

Or current resident

Published the first and third Monday of every month except only once in January, July, and August

Fullerton Observer
PO Box 7051
Fullerton CA 92834

Letter to the Editor

Thank you Observer

I look forward to reading every edition!

Arlene Obremski Henderson, NV

Thank you Saskia and the Observer staff for a fantastic job in keeping us informed and alert.

Bobby Melendez Anaheim

Thank you for reporting insightful, informative, community news!

Gonzalo Hernandez La Habra

I am a proud subscriber! I think helping to preserve the publication of our community newspaper is a very important obligation. It is a critical key to preserving our American Way.

Keep on! ***Greta Nagel*** Fullerton

Suggestion

How about more articles on local hiking trails?

Alyse Streitberger Fullerton

Observer Response to Streitberger:

Emerson Little has reported extensively on trails in Fullerton.

You can read past issues and articles at *fullertonobserver.com* and s*ee Emerson's videos on YouTube @emersonlittle1901*

Fullerton Joint Union High School District

I'm disappointed that Ms. Buchi avoided the question about students who are missing school and falling behind. It's good that she works hard to "make school a place students want to be," but she doesn't seem to acknowledge students who are struggling.

Kathleen Davis Fullerton

Young Observer Journalists

One of the best things about the Observer is the contributions of the young journalists. Their articles are well researched and articulated. The discipline of meeting deadlines every two weeks in addition to their normal school work is outstanding.

The world needs journalists and you and the Observer are doing a fantastic job of providing opportunities for these young people to consider journalism as a career.

Morrison Clements La Habra

Who is Making False and Misleading Claims?

I gasped when I read Oscar's message! I am actually shocked that Oscar Valadez would stand behind lying to the public. That ad contains such flagrant flat-out lies. Those assertions about Josef are completely contradicted BY THE COURT RECORD!! Which anyone, everyone, can read on line at *occourts.org*; find civil case access. The case number is 30-2026-01592248-CU-WM-CJC. Or you can go up to the courthouse and read it on their public computer, Oscar Valadez, Petitioner, v. Bob Page Orange County Registrar of Voters' (and other) Respondents, Jozef Maldonado, Real Party in Interest.

JAK Fullerton

Who is Making False and Misleading Claims?

continued from front page

The ad displays "Orange County Superior Court" in a newspaper-style headline above a bold quotation: "… clear and convincing proof that the material in question is false, misleading…" The words "false, misleading" are highlighted in yellow. However, those words do not appear in the court's judgment or minutes. They appear in Valadez's petition for a writ of mandate, which sought to remove Maldonado's city commissioner designation from the ballot for City Council.

The petition quotes California Elections Code sections 13313 and 13314. Section 13313 describes when a court may issue a writ, including when "the material in question is false, misleading, or inconsistent with the requirements of this chapter," provided the other statutory conditions are met. This language describes a legal standard. Its appearance in a petition does not establish that a judge made such a finding in the case.

In signing the stipulated judgment, the court noted that no writ was necessary. The ad attributes findings to the court that the court did not make.

This reporter told Valadez that the ad contained untrue statements and asked whether he had approved it before his supporters published it. At the time, he said he would look into it. In an Oct. 24 email, Valadez said, "I stand by my campaign ads and have no further comments regarding the ad."

The advertisement concludes with the statement "Democrats Deserve Better" and identifies "Democrat Oscar Valadez for City Council."

Here is a link to the video of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting held on September 14, 2026, which was attended by Commissioner Jozef Maldonado.

https://fullerton.granicus.com/player/clip/2316?view_id=2&redirect=true



FULLERTON CERTIFIED

FARMERS' MARKET

Open Wednesdays · 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Fullerton Downtown Plaza, 125 East Wilshire Ave, Fullerton

The Fullerton Certified Farmers' Market is recognized as the oldest farmers' market in Orange County and offers a variety of fresh produce, including fruits, vegetables, eggs, honey, plants, orchids, nuts, and bread. It is operated by the nonprofit Fullerton Certified Farmers' Market Board and has developed a following based on the quality of its products.

To become a vendor at the certified farmers' market, contact **Jimmy Moreno** at **(951) 532-2822** or **jlmoreno1969@gmail.com**

FREE SANDBAGS



Public Works Maintenance Yard

1600 W. Commonwealth Avenue

Fire Station 5 (starting first week in November)

2555 E. Yorba Linda Boulevard

Available 24/7

Limit: 15 sandbags per household

Residents must fill their own sandbags

Fullerton Observer

The *Fullerton Observer* is a community newspaper founded in 1978 by Ralph and Natalie Kennedy, Roy and Irene Kobayashi, and a group of dedicated friends. Local volunteers are responsible for creating, publishing, and distributing the paper across the community. As a not-for-profit organization, all revenue is reinvested to enhance our independent and nonpartisan publication.

Our mission is clear: to inform Fullerton residents about the institutions and societal forces that impact their daily lives. We empower citizens to engage actively, ensuring that private and public entities serve the community in lawful, transparent, and socially responsible ways.

We offer local news coverage and a community calendar to strengthen connections and celebrate the diversity that defines our nation. As an all-volunteer newspaper, we rely on the support of our subscribers and advertisers.

Subscribe now for $39 a year and receive 21 issues delivered directly to your door.

How To Subscribe

Send $39, name, & address to:
Fullerton Observer, PO Box 7051,
Fullerton, CA 92834-7051
Or sign up and pay with autopay at
www.fullertonobserver.com

Distributed on the first and third Monday of every month except only once in January, July & August.

• STAFF•

- **CEO & Editor:** Saskia Kennedy
- **COO:** Mehul Desai
- **Copy Editor:** Stephen O'Connor
- **Calendar Editor:** NEEDED
- **Distribution:** Linda Gardner, Sue Harliss, and many others
- **Photographers:** Mike Ritto and Gaston Castellanos
- **Proof Reader:** Barbara Miller
- **Shipping:** Irene Kobayashi, Marjorie Kerr, Leslie Allen and Barbara Meyer
- **Social Media Manager:** Jennifer Romero
- **Young Observers Editor:** Tegan Yoo
- **Business Report:**Breanna Pineda
- **Council Report:** NEEDED
- **Education:** Vivien Moreno
- **Mental Health:** Jo Ann Brannock and Michelle Gottlieb
- **Our Town Crossword:** Valerie Brickey
- **Theatre Review:** Angela Hatcher

COLUMNISTS

- **At Home with the Homeless:** Andrew Williams
- **Hits & Misses Movie Review:** Pamela Mason Wagner
- **Legal Insights:** Katheryn Anderson
- **Out of My Mind:** Jon Dobrer
- **Science Behind It:** Yuvika Salman
- **Senior Life:** Edith Harvath
- **Video Observer:** Emerson Little

How to Advertise

Email: *ads@fullertonobserver.com*,
or call: (714) 525-6402

Created & Published
in Fullerton by
local volunteers since 1978
Published by Fullerton Observer LLC

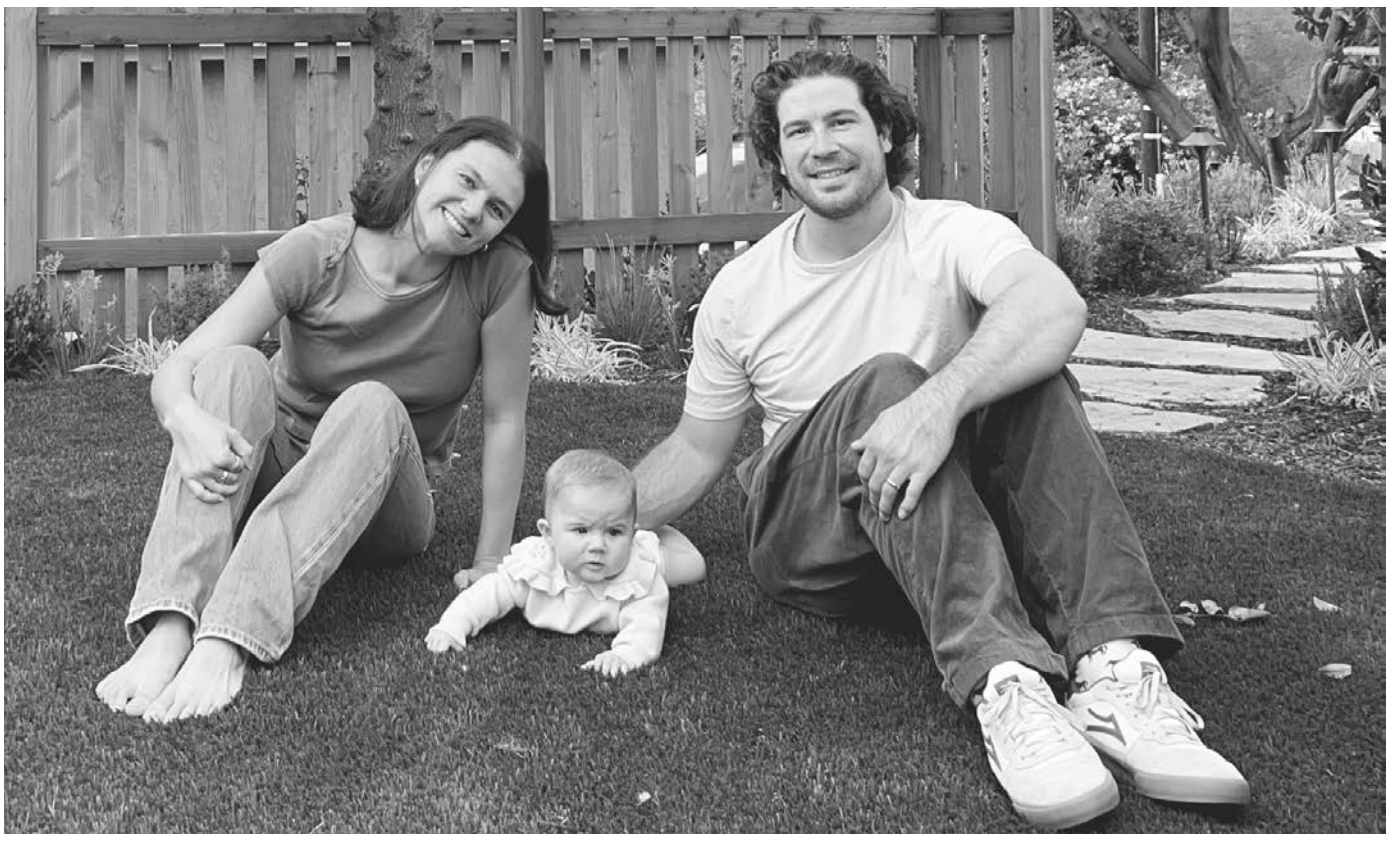
The Next issue will be distributed on November 16. Next deadline for writers & advertisers is November 9.



Fullerton Observer

For $39 you get 21 issues mailed directly to your home.

Autopay online at *www.fullertonobserver.com* or mail check with your name, phone number, & address to:
Fullerton Observer PO Box 7051, Fullerton, CA 92834



Neil Reich Remembered as Community Pillar: Family Committed to Preserving His Legacy

by Madi, Andrew, and Maia Gonzalo

Neil Reich, a beloved and respected member of the Ramona community, lived in this house for over 25 years. When people learned of his passing, they expressed their sadness and often asked about the work we have done in the yard.

Our family is committed to maintaining the house and ensuring the yard is beautifully done.

My dad helped us supply all of the plants. We're really thankful for his creative direction throughout this process.

We appreciated the existing plants and trees but envisioned the space with turf and a patio area where we can spend quality time with our daughter, friends and family.

Attention homeowners: A cautionary experience by Doris Hand

Our home has its original cast-iron main sewer line beneath the house. In late September 2026, one of our bathrooms became clogged. This had happened before, and one plumber had cleared it in a single visit.

Unfortunately, our usual plumber could not come until Monday, and this was a Thursday. Searching online, I found a plumbing company with a high rating and a low promotional price for clearing a clogged drain. I called the company.

While I was giving the usual information, I was asked an unusual question: whether I was the homeowner. I hired the company, and two plumbers arrived in about 45 minutes. This was also unusual, because the job had previously required only one plumber. When I showed them the bathroom with the clogged toilet, the plumbers asked whether the shower was backing up, because there was water in the bottom of it. The water was left from the house cleaners, who had used it to clean the shower, and it had not drained.

The plumbers kept chatting with me instead of getting to work. When one finally started on the toilet, he worked at it vigorously and then said he could not clear it. The other asked whether there was a cleanout. I showed them the one on the same side of the house as the bathroom. When it was opened, water drained out. They then put a camera into the pipe. Looking at the image, one plumber said a lighter area showed a problem. I could not tell what I was looking at.

Next, they asked whether there was a crawl space. I said yes and opened the trapdoor. One plumber went in and, using his phone's light, said the crawl space was very wet. The impression he created was that the main line had holes in it and was unsafe to use. When he came out, he offered to patch the damaged section for $2,200. I replied that because the system was old, patching it would be a waste of money, since it needed to be replaced. The plumbers then said replacing the system would cost $16,000 to $18,000. I told them that for a project that big, I always get three estimates.

They said the owner might offer a discount, then called the owner, who offered 15% off, bringing the price to just under $16,000. I insisted I needed three estimates. They kept pressuring me in various ways. I told them I would give them an answer the next day. I also mentioned that I would stay at a motel, since the main line appeared unsafe to use.

The next morning, I contacted The End Result, a homeowner referral service I always use. They gave me the names of three plumbers, and one of them came out around noon. By then, the toilet had drained. He flushed it and found no problem. I asked him to check around the cleanout for puddles, which the first plumbers had led me to expect. He shone a strong light around the main sewer line and found no wet spots. Then he went into the crawl space and, again using his light, said it was completely dry. The only moisture was some dripping at pipe joints, not enough to form puddles or wet spots. Because there had been a blockage and the main line was old, he suggested cleaning out the entire line to remove some of the buildup on the cast-iron pipes until I was ready to replace it. I agreed.

Later, one of the first two plumbers called to ask whether I would accept their bid. I said I would not hire them because they had misled me. He countered that they had cleared the line and had asked me to flush the toilet before they left, but that I had said I was going to a motel for the night. Because their visit to my home was not recorded, what they said there could be denied or reframed.

The phone call on the company line, however, was recorded. Further conversation was pointless. I had to block several more attempts by the company to contact me and mark its emails as spam.

Watch for these warning signs:

- A low promotional price for a service
- Being asked whether you are the homeowner,
- Two workers showing up for a one-person job,
- Chatting instead of working and
- Pressure to commit to the work immediately.

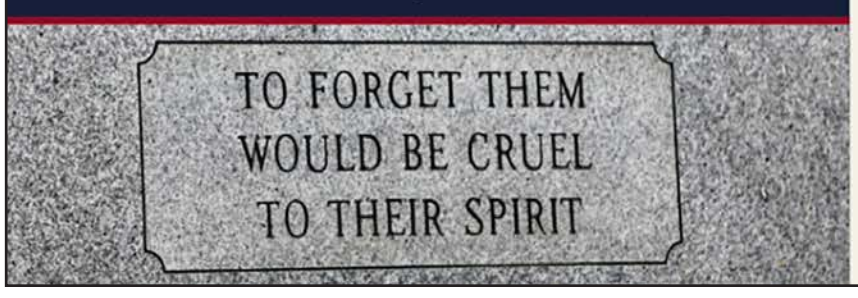
Always get at least a second estimate before hiring someone for a major repair, and never hire under pressure. You can also search online for the typical price range of a specific repair.

CITY OF FULLERTON

VETERANS DAY
PARADE & CEREMONY

WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 11, 2026
PARADE BEGINS 10:00 A.M.

North on Harbor Blvd. from Berkeley Ave. to Hillcrest Park's Great Lawn, followed by a commemorative ceremony.



VETERANS: MARCH WITH US

Check in **8:00–9:00 a.m.** at the staging area on Berkeley Ave., between Harbor Blvd. and Lemon St. Marching participants only — personal vehicles will not be permitted.

CEREMONY AT HILLCREST PARK

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Colonel (Retired) Chris Schaefer
U.S. Army Reserve · City of Fullerton Planning Manager

- ★ Presentation of Colors
- ★ Armed Forces Medley
- ★ Rifle Salute
- ★ National Anthem
- ★ Wreath-Laying
- ★ Taps

Expect temporary road closures and traffic impacts along Harbor Boulevard during the parade.

cityoffullerton.com

Soroptimist International of Fullerton Celebrates 70 Years in City of Fullerton

by Emerson Little

Soroptimist International of Fullerton, a chapter of the nonprofit, global volunteer organization dedicated to providing women and girls access to education, training, and a pathway toward economic empowerment, celebrated its seventieth anniversary on Saturday, October 24 at St. Andrews Church, located at 1231 E. Chapman Avenue.

According to the organization's website, Soroptimist International of Fullerton was chartered in 1956. Since 1970, the group's Live Your Dream Awards program has awarded over $30 million in college grants to help tens of thousands of women achieve their goals.

Since 2011, Soroptimist of Fullerton has been donating underwear to women and their families who experienced domestic violence, substance abuse, human trafficking, or other challenges. The nonprofit has also supported the Mustang Leading Ladies program for girls at Maple Elementary School, making a difference in the lives of young women.

FThe anniversary celebration and annual fundraiser, invited donors to celebrate by dressing up like it was the 1970s. Tie-dyed shirts and Seventies attire were worn by nearly all of the attendees. Raffle baskets lined a table where event guests could place bids for the group's silent auction. Salad, pasta, bread, and other foods were laid out (buffet style) on a table on the opposite side of the room. Hawaiian Punch, iced tea and water, among other beverages, were served. Seventies music bingo was played by attendees at their tables. Listening to 30-second snippets of groovy disco tunes, as well as music from other genres, attendees could mark their bingo cards with stamps or pencils.

Representing the City of Fullerton, Councilmember Ahmad Zahra formally presented Amanda Secola, President of Soroptimist International of Fullerton, with a Certificate of Recognition from the City.

Zahra said, "Through your commitment to empowering women and girls through education and opportunity, Soroptimist International of Fullerton has made a meaningful difference in our community. Your support of local schools, scholarships, and programs serving vulnerable populations has improved the lives of countless individuals and families.



Fullerton City Councilmember Ahmad Zahra presents Amanda Secola, current Chapter Chair for Soroptimist of Fullerton, with a Certificate of Recognition from the City.

On behalf of the City of Fullerton and all its residents, we congratulate you on this remarkable milestone, thank you for your lasting contributions, and extend our best wishes for continued success."

Sponsors and donors for the fundraiser included:

Bagne Foundation, Morningside of Fullerton, American First Credit Union, Summit House, Mulberry Street, Total Wine & More, Starbucks - La Habra, Trader Joe's - Yorba Linda, Mamma Mia, Polar Springs Water, Costco - Fullerton, Twisted Vine, Buddy Lang and David Secola. To learn more about Soroptimist International of Fullerton, visit the website at:

https://fullertonsoroptimist.org



Artist Nihaar Pinninti stands with his father and art teachers displaying with Nihaar's painting.

Troy High School Student Wins First Place in 2026 Artifact Summer Competition

In a remarkable demonstration of talent and dedication, Nihaar Pinninti, a 10th grader from Troy High School in Fullerton, has been awarded first place—and a $1,500 cash prize—in the inaugural 2026 Artifact Summer Competition for his artwork titled "A Stellar Impact — The Legacy of Gene Shoemaker."

The competition, held for the first time this year, exceeded organizers' expectations, drawing many submissions and resulting in the selection of 71 finalists. Pinninti's artwork honors Gene Shoemaker, a renowned planetary scientist whose groundbreaking research advanced the understanding of impact craters and contributed to the Apollo space program.

In an interview after being named a finalist, Nihaar expressed his admiration for Shoemaker's contributions to science.

"He really enjoyed what he did," he noted, emphasizing that Shoemaker's passion for his work set him apart from others who might pursue their careers for fame or money. "He always had a smile on his face," Nihaar added, praising the scientist's unwavering dedication even after retirement.

The judges were particularly impressed with Nihaar's portrayal of Shoemaker, highlighting the expressive quality of the scientist's face in the artwork. Organizers commended Nihaar for skillfully using reference photographs while infusing his own creative interpretation to capture Shoemaker's personality and passion for planetary research.

Nihaar began with thumbnail sketches to explore different compositions. Ultimately, he crafted a three-tiered design with the viewer in the foreground, a crater in the background, and outer space beyond. He used a watercolor base to establish strong colors and wax-based colored pencils for intricate details. Throughout the creation process, Nihaar balanced detail to keep Shoemaker as the focal point. He carefully considered color choices, particularly for the scientist's shirt, ultimately choosing blue to enhance the overall composition.

Upon receiving the award, Nihaar expressed both surprise and gratitude to those who supported him. He thanked his father, Hari Pinninti, for his constant encouragement and for driving him to classes. Nihaar also recognized the significant role his teachers, Mr. and Mrs. Lee, played in guiding him through the process, helping him gather materials, and introducing him to the competition.

In addition to the recognition, the award will be publicized through a press release and shared across social media platforms, reaching an audience of over 15,000 people.

As part of Artifact's collection, Nihaar's artwork will join the works of 43 other students currently on display in Washington, D.C. His piece showcases his artistic skills while embodying the spirit of scientific discovery, inspired by a legendary figure in planetary research.

CALL TO YOUNG ARTISTS
"Mirrors of Your Mind" 2026
Arts Colony of La Mirada · Student Art Show

Grades 6–12: drawing, painting, pastel, mixed media, photography & sculpture. One original entry per student; no AI or copied work.

FREE entry | Cash prizes | $100 1st place

Take-In: Nov. 10 & 12, 9am–5pm
Show: Nov. 16–20, 9am–5pm
Awards Reception: Nov. 21, 3–4:30pm
Pick-Up: Nov. 21, after the reception
La Mirada Activity Center
13810 La Mirada Blvd., La Mirada

Entry form: ArtsColonyLM@gmail.com
Info: Victoria Pflanzer 562-746-6180
or Richard Cano 562-458-3857



November is National Gratitude Month

by Dahlia, 8th Grade

Benedictine monk David Steindl-Rast asks a simple question in his TED Talk: "Want to be happy?" His answer is just as simple: "Be grateful." National Gratitude Month begins in November and was founded by Stacey Grewal in 2015 to coincide with Thanksgiving and encourage gratitude. Practicing gratitude can improve mental and physical health, enhance sleep quality, strengthen focus and motivation, and even increase happiness.

Here are a few ways to practice gratitude:

• Start your day with gratitude. When you wake up, think of someone or something you appreciate to begin your day with a positive attitude.
• Reach out to someone. Send a text or call someone to let them know how much you appreciate their company.
• Appreciate yourself. Write down a few personal traits you are grateful to have.
• Enjoy nature. Take a mindful walk outdoors and notice the flowers, fallen leaves and fluffy clouds around you.
• Write a letter. Express your gratitude to someone, even if you choose not to send it.
• Cook your favorite meal. Take a moment to appreciate the food you have and enjoy making something you love.
• Appreciate the everyday. Recognize the tools you often overlook, such as your phone, laptop, car or favorite pen.
• Get creative. Draw something that makes you smile.
• Compliment a stranger. Give a genuine compliment and brighten someone's day.
• Share gratitude at dinner. Have each family member share the best part of their day.



Who's Watching You? by Tegan, 9th Grade

A camera captures a car driving down the street. You don't spare a second glance. But what happens when that camera records the license plate, location and time of every passing vehicle, and stores that information in a database accessible to law enforcement, and exploited by anyone with the right amount of money? Flock Safety cameras are marketed as public safety tools to help police officers solve stolen cars and other criminal cases, but their ability to track vehicles makes me wonder: just how much privacy should people sacrifice to feel safe in their own city?

There are 19 Flock cameras in Fullerton right now, although the city has voted to suspend their operation for six months. Across the United States, there are at least 120,000 more cameras, according to a Washington Post investigation. Fullerton's system costs approximately $51,000 annually, yet the department has acknowledged that it does not track how often Flock actually helps solve cases.

You Don't Have to Be a Criminal to Get Caught

Flock cameras record drivers regardless of whether they are suspected of wrongdoing. During one 30-day reporting period in 2026, Fullerton's system recorded approximately 885,000 unique vehicle detections. Although data is generally deleted after 30 days unless preserved as evidence, there is still enough time for authorized users to search the footage and investigate or stalk a certain someone. A system intended to identify stolen cars can also reveal where people live, work, attend protests or receive medical care. You don't need facial recognition to track someone when their vehicle does the tracking for you.

Who is Watching Whom?

Flock's network allows participating law enforcement agencies to search vehicle sightings across multiple locations. A Fullerton Observer investigation found searches by outside agencies connected to federal investigations and protests, raising concerns about how locally collected data can be used beyond the community that paid for it. California law restricts certain forms of data sharing, but restrictions are only effective when they are enforced.

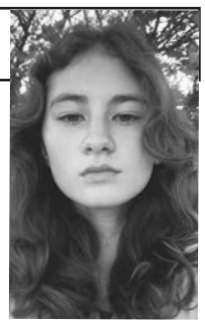
A 2026 Washington Post article documented cases of law enforcement personnel misusing Flock's nationwide network to track people they knew. In one case, a former Georgia investigator allegedly continued searching for his estranged wife's vehicle after leaving his job. In Indianapolis, an unauthorized user searched his estranged wife's license plate more than 1,000 times over a year. These incidents demonstrate how surveillance tools can become instruments of stalking when access controls fail.

The concern is not that every officer will misuse the system. It is that a system capable of tracking millions of people should not depend on everyone with access behaving ethically. Once information is collected, residents have little control over who eventually sees it or how it might be used against them.

Sources:

• Fullerton Observer: Fullerton council to pick trash hauler and revisit Flock license plate cameras on Tuesday, October 6.
• The Washington Post: Cops left the force. They kept tracking people with a powerful camera network.
• Fullerton Observer: Outside Agencies Searched Fullerton Flock Data in Cases Tied to Federal Investigations and Protests

LEGAL INSIGHTS by Kathryn, 10th grade



How Far Does Free Speech Follow Students Into School?

Can a public school punish a student simply because the administrators don't like the message the student is conveying?

More than 50 years ago the Supreme Court faced this question in Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, one of the most significant student rights cases in American law.

The case arose in 1965 during the Vietnam War. A group of students in Des Moines, Iowa were planning to wear black armbands to school as a protest against the war. The school authorities found out about the plan and instituted a policy whereby students would have to take off their armbands or be suspended.

Thirteen year old Mary Beth Tinker, her brother John and her friend Christopher Eckhardt all wore them and were suspended.

Their families took it to court and it eventually got to the Supreme Court. In 1969 the Court decided 7-2 in favour of the students. Justice Abe Fortas wrote that the students "do not 'shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.'"

Schools can limit student speech in certain cases. The Supreme Court has ruled on this issue several times. In 1969, the Court said students do not lose their free speech rights at school. But schools can restrict speech if it disrupts class, is obscene, or promotes illegal actions. The rules are different for speech on school grounds and online. School officials must balance student rights with the need to keep order and safety.

The black armbands were deemed symbolic speech as they were being used to communicate a political message. The school authorities maintained that opposition to the Vietnam War was a sensitive issue and could lead to unrest amongst the students.

The Supreme Court found the concern to be insufficient. Under Tinker schools generally can't restrict student expression unless they can reasonably foresee that it will cause a material and substantial disruption to school activities or interfere with the rights of others.

The armbands didn't stop the classes, didn't block the hallways, didn't in any way disrupt the operation of the school. The Court therefore found that the administrators were reacting to the message and not to a disruption.

That distinction remains relevant, as schools can regulate behavior which



seriously interferes with the education of the students, but controversy in itself is not sufficient.

If students are wearing shirts in support of a political cause and the normal running of the school is not in any way affected then the school will find it very difficult to ban them simply because the message is divisive. If a protest stops classes starting or presents a real safety issue then the school would have a much stronger basis on which to act.

Schools don't have to wait until disruption actually takes place. Courts have permitted schools to act when there is a reasonable, evidence-based expectation that significant disruption is likely.

Tinker v. Des Moines won't permit punishment on the basis of mere apprehension or discomfort.





FEATURING: WOMEN OWNED BUSINESSES IN FULLERTON

Les Amis brings Lebanese home cooking to downtown Fullerton by Breanna Pineda

When passing by W. Wilshire Avenue, one might not spot Les Amis, a restaurant tucked between other storefronts in downtown Fullerton. Yet stepping inside, guests are welcomed by smooth music and a cozy atmosphere. After nearly 17 years in business, the Middle Eastern restaurant continues to serve flavorful, high-quality food intended to evoke the feeling of a home-cooked meal.

Owner Jinan Montecristo said her passion for entrepreneurship and hospitality was never something she discovered or developed. It had always been a part of her.

"Managing a business was just always there. It was a development of sorts," she said. "It seemed so natural."

Montecristo recalled that as a child, she enjoyed making pretend meals out of grass and flowers. Her mother and grandmother also had a history of owning restaurants.

Later in life, she worked at several five-star hotels, including a Four Seasons location. Through these experiences, she learned about hospitality before eventually moving into hotel food and beverage operations.

Beyond her early career, Montecristo said her love of cooking, experimenting with flavors and elevating a meal, helped shape her future in the restaurant industry.

"I am a very artistic person, and I love the art of anything. So when I make meals, I am interested in the outcome, the presentation and flavors," she said.

Despite her passion, Montecristo said the early years of Les Amis were difficult as she learned the challenges of running an independent business. She described experiencing growing pains while adjusting to managing an entire restaurant.



"Financially, it was a huge struggle because it was very new, and the income-to-work ratio was not equal," she said. "We also did not understand the aspects of taxes and bills. We were not interested in that, so it was a struggle trying to learn how to be business people."

Since then, Montecristo has learned from those hardships and developed skills to manage both the logistical and creative aspects of Les Amis.

The restaurant primarily serves Lebanese cuisine inspired by Montecristo's heritage. She grew up eating food from Lebanon, including dishes made from recipes her mother brought from her childhood there. Before opening Les Amis, Montecristo noticed a lack of Middle Eastern restaurants in Fullerton.

"[Lebanese food] was never really as popular as it should be," she said. "[It] is a little corner of the world that nobody has experimented with or introduced [through] food."

Most of the menu is based on dishes Montecristo remembers her mother and grandmother making. Although the recipes have been adapted for a restaurant setting, she said Les Amis aims to preserve the taste of homemade food.



Located on 128 W. Wilshire Avenue, Fullerton,
Les Amis is open 11:30 am to 9:00 pm Tuesday through Thursday,
11:30 am to 10:00 pm Friday and Saturday,
and 11:30 am to 8:00 pm on Sunday. Closed on Monday.

Montecristo is also working to add new options to the menu, including less familiar Lebanese dishes, to broaden customers' understanding of Middle Eastern cuisine.

"For Middle Eastern food, most people are familiar with hummus and shawarma, but there is so much more to this cuisine," she said. "I think a really great window into any culture is through food. The more introduction you have to different types of food, the more it helps you build a well-rounded view of different places in the world."

Although Montecristo is dedicated to serving healthy, flavorful Lebanese food, she said maintaining ingredient quality while managing costs can be challenging.

"Everyone always says, 'Just [buy the cheaper ingredient], nobody can tell the difference,' but it is too hard for me to do that," she said. "I would rather take the smaller profit and deliver the product I want. I do not value profit over product."

Despite the demands of running her own business, Montecristo said she continues to enjoy the freedom that comes with being a restaurant owner.

"I think in general for people to be successful they have to be an artist at what they do," she said. "You have to have that heart and soul into whatever it is you are doing. I personally cannot do anything if my heart is not in it."

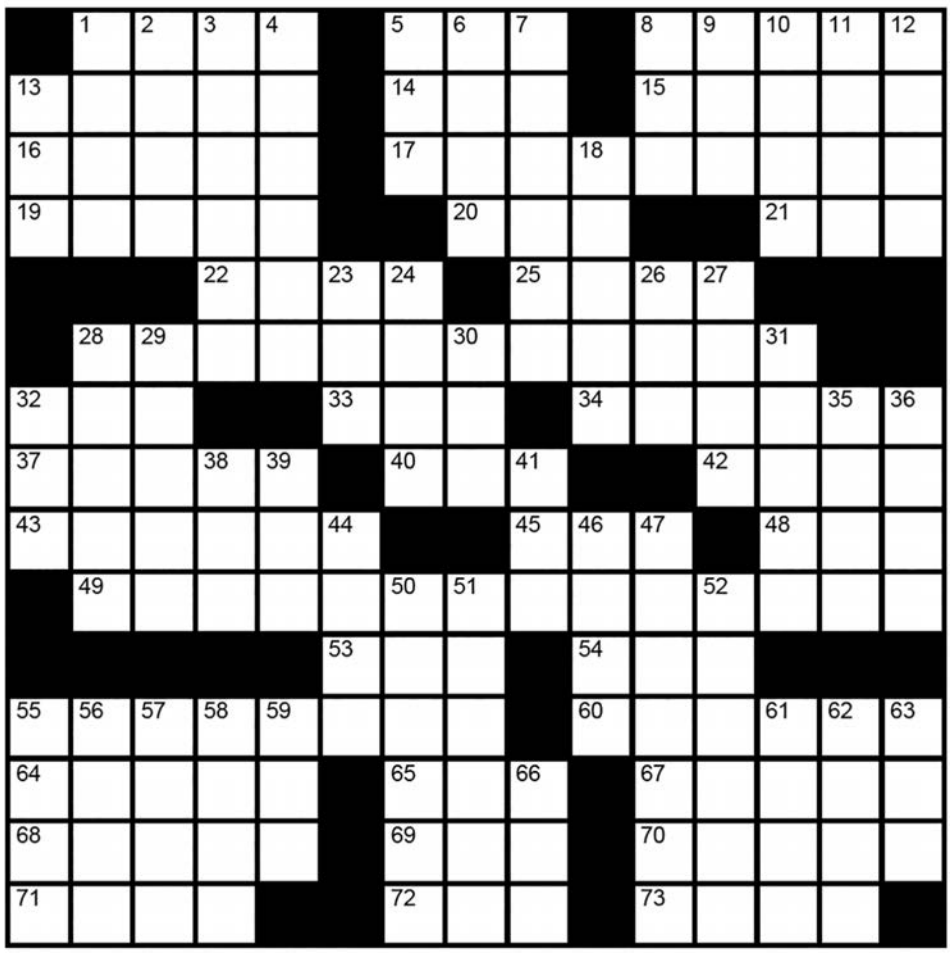






OUR TOWN CROSSWORD © 2026

"TWICE AS NICE" by Valerie Brickey (answer key on page 19)



ACROSS

1. E-bay actions
5. Part of a play
8. Big name in hummus
13. Trig function
14. To and ___
15. Steelers quarterback Rodgers
16. Spanish wine region
17. *Ask how many minutes remain, in a competition
19. Of an arm bone
20. "Hey, ewe!"
21. Melissa Jefferson ___ Lizzo
22. Huge
25. Sporty car roof
28. In 'n' Out order, often, and what can start each word in the starred answers
32. On, in Paris
33. Brit. lexicon
34. Jigsaw puzzle parts
37. Waves of grain color, in song
40. "The Matrix" hero
42. Fed. agency led by Elon Musk
43. Rum cocktail
45. Yellow or chocolate dog
48. J.F.K. alternative
49. *20/20, e.g.
53. N.Y. Mets' division
54. It may need a boost
55. *Dismantle
60. Multiple-___ exam
64. "Haste makes waste," e.g.
65. Long distance inits.
67. Battling
68. 2011 animated film directed by Gore Verbinski
69. NBA great Ming
70. "Fingers crossed!"
71. Heed
72. Foxy
73. Russo of "Tin Cup"

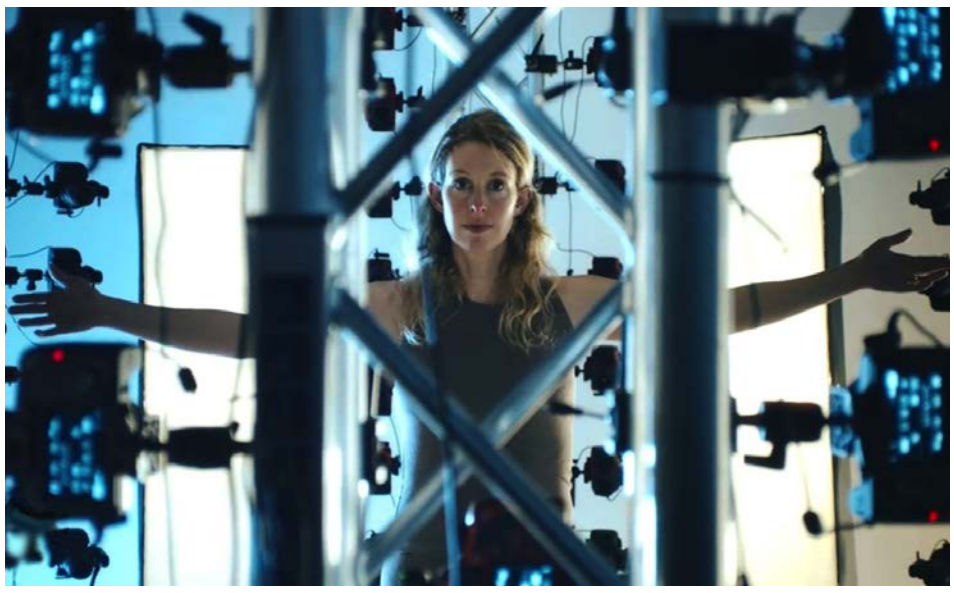
DOWN

1. Reach 212° F, as water
2. "Help ___ the way!"
3. "This seems familiar" feeling
4. Sacred beetle of ancient Egypt
5. Toward the stern
6. Baby's bed
7. First Campbell's Soup flavor, introduced in 1895
8. Cul-de-___
9. "That's the spot!"
10. City next to Fullerton
11. Music genre
12. "Put Your Head on My Shoulder" singer Paul
13. French vineyard
18. Really enjoy
23. ___-mo replay
24. "Tiger Beat" reader
26. Japanese sash
27. Responded in court
28. Author of "The Three Muskateers"
29. Cosmic path
30. J.F.K.'s predecessor
31. Gut grief
32. Ted's character on "Cheers"
35. "Leggo my ___"
36. "Less" Pulitzer winner Andrew ___ Greer
38. J.F.K. info
39. Skedaddled
41. Getting on in years
44. Fig. on a badge
46. With, in Paris
47. Result of teasing?
50. "It's ___ Sunny in Philadelphia" (TV show in its 18th season)
51. Beach house, often
52. Mollify
55. Tropical tuber
56. Just a bit
57. "Citizen ___"
58. Like custard
59. "In excelsis ___"
61. Victor's cry
62. Superhero accessory
63. Before, in verse
66. Cracker Jack bonus

Journalism is vital for democratic health.

HITS & MISSES

by Pamela Mason Wagner © 2026



YOU CAN SEE EVERYTHING: TWO HITS

The invitation to film disgraced Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes' last month of freedom before prison must have seemed too good to be true to filmmakers Nathan Fielding and Lance Oppenheim. Indeed, Fielding asks his subject, "Why me – do you know anything about the kind of films I make?" His previous work for Comedy Central veers toward satire. It's just one of the film's many unanswered questions. The invitation itself raises others: Why does Holmes want to do this project? What does she stand to gain? Who is scamming whom?

The nearly three-hour film is a tour de force that expands the documentary form. Difficult to discuss without spoilers, it's a must-see for anyone who loves documentaries, reality television, and true crime. (If you hate spoilers, skip this review.)

The backstory: Theranos, a health-tech firm that claimed to diagnose myriad diseases from a pinprick of blood, was exposed as fraudulent. Its co-founder and CEO, Holmes, was sentenced to more than 10 years in prison and ordered to pay $452 million in restitution.

The setting: a rented beach house in Del Mar, California.

The players: Holmes, one month after the birth of her second child, and Billy Evans, her partner and the father of her children. We watch her on the beach, nursing her baby, talking on the phone, cooking eggs.

These mundane activities gradually reveal character, much as a screenwriter uses small details to signal narcissism or sincerity. But who is "writing" this film remains an open question.

Convicted of fraud and widely regarded as a master manipulator, Holmes inspires deep skepticism in both the audience and the filmmakers.

Are her tears genuine? Does she really believe herself when she insists, "I've done nothing wrong"?

Gradually, we realize the documentary offers Holmes a chance to relitigate her case. If she can convince the filmmakers of her innocence, perhaps she can restore her reputation and reclaim the possibility of a life after prison.

Meanwhile, Fielding seems increasingly under her spell. Evans initially appears an accommodating partner, inviting the filmmakers to "see everything," including footage of him naked in the shower. But his efforts to control Holmes and the filmmakers become increasingly apparent, rendering him the antagonist in the story. His efforts to create an AI version of Holmes, so Evans can make her avatar say anything he wants, are downright chilling.

Late in the film, Fielding takes on the air of a jilted lover, waiting in a hotel room for Holmes to call from prison so he can warn her about her partner's control of her Twitter account.

The filmmakers deploy the full arsenal of feature filmmaking techniques: humor, cinematic visuals, a dramatic score, even A-list actors. When Amanda Seyfried appears in the second half (she previously portrayed Holmes in Hulu's "The Dropout"), the boundary between documentary and feature film dissolves. She enthusiastically joins Fielding's quest to unravel the mystery of Holmes, ultimately getting the last word.

Early on, Seyfried observes, "People tell me things. Sometimes more than they should." Her assessment of Holmes' effect on Fielding may make her the film's most astute interpreter.

• TWO HITS: Don't Miss it!
• A HIT & A MISS: You Might Like it.
• TWO MISSES: Don't Bother.

Sharon Kennedy ART STUDIO
Originals & prints
sharonkennedyartstudio.com





Fullerton Honors Public Works Inspector Retiring After 49 Years

The Fullerton City Council honored longtime public works employee Pete Acosta at the October 20 meeting. Acosta is retiring after 49 years with the City of Fullerton, all of them spent in the Public Works Department.

Mayor Fred Jung praised the institutional knowledge Acosta built over nearly five decades. He said he has worked alongside most of the city's public works employees at one time or another. Jung joked that Acosta looked too young to have 49 years of service and said the staff who follow him will have big shoes to fill.

Public Works Director Stephen Bise called the day bittersweet and said Acosta's impact on staff, projects and the city's infrastructure is impossible to measure.

"It leaves us with a hole that we will have to fill," Bise said, adding that Acosta knows more than anyone currently working for the city.

Bise compared Acosta's work to the Police Department's earlier recognition for its appearances on "On Patrol: Live," saying Acosta also patrols the streets to make sure contractors follow the rules. He described Acosta as the city's watchdog.

Water Systems Manager Andrew Grajeda, who Acosta mentored, traced Acosta's career from maintenance man to principal inspector. Acosta's career with the city began in 1977 when he was hired as a maintenance man.

Acosta was promoted to maintenance worker in 1978 and senior maintenance worker in 1980. He later served as a skilled maintenance worker, field foreman, lead worker, and locator before leaving the Water Department to work in engineering as a construction inspector. He was promoted to construction inspector for water engineering in 2013 and to his current role, principal inspector, in 2020.

Grajeda noted that Acosta answers his phone with "You've reached Principal Inspector Pete."

Known for knowing the spec book, colleagues rely on Acosta's knowledge, Grajeda said, and many believe he has the city's specification book memorized. When staff has a question, he said, they usually ask Acosta, who can often tell them which page holds the answer.

Grajeda said Acosta's expertise extends to how the city's water system works. During water main breaks and long nights in the field, he said, crews wanted Acosta on site for his experience and judgment under pressure. "Pun intended," Grajeda added.

As principal inspector, Grajeda said, Acosta made sure work was done right so that it could serve the community for years to come. Acosta has worked alongside generations of city employees, Grajeda said, including Grajeda's own grandfather.

"On behalf of Public Works and the entire Water Department, thank you for all your hard work and dedication for your 49 years of service," Grajeda said. He closed by congratulating Acosta and turning to Acosta's wife, Gloria: "He's all yours."



Officers Honored for Department's Appearances on "On Patrol: Live"

The Fullerton City Council recognized dozens of police officers for their work during the department's multiple appearances on the live television program "On Patrol: Live" over the past three years. The Fullerton Police Department recently wrapped up its run on Season 5 of "On Patrol: Live." After a multi-month feature on REELZ, the department went on a break in October 2026, with Chief Radus appearing as a guest in the studio.

Speaking to the council on October 20, Fullerton Police Chief Jon Radus said the department's participation would not have been as successful without the officers' daily work. The chief described the program as a live television show that follows eight police departments across the country on Friday and Saturday nights, comparing it to "NFL Red Zone for police."

"There's definitely nothing more transparent than having live cameras, crews in cars with police officers every Friday and Saturday night," the chief said. The chief called the department's participation "incredibly successful" and said the credit belongs entirely to the officers with whom the camera crews rode.

The chief also thanked the mayor for recognizing the officers' efforts. The officers recognized included Richard Akles, David Alarid, Randall Brayley, Dillan Caines, Dillon Cazares, Jason Coleman, Alexa Elkabbara, Evan Espanto, Bryan Franco, Marcus Futch, Pedram Gharah, Andrew Gomez, Nate Gutierrez, Mike Halverson, Jason Ham, Lawrence Hayes, Ginny Johnson, Brady Jones, Nicole Kaprielian, Matt Levin, John Miller, Adan Munoz, Robert Murray, Michael Orr, Daniel Perez, George Peterson, Brandon Pinder, Max Raj, Brandon Ramek, Jesus Ramirez, Luis Ramirez, Victoria Rangel, Jack Rentfro, Tyler Rodgers, Ashley Soto, Perry Thayer, Rene Valdes, Anthony Valle, Anthony Vega, Greg Velasquez, Josh Walker, Daniel Warner and Gharrett Wiltse.

You can review past dispatch logs and episode dates via Live PD Fullerton Archives.



Fullerton Library Honors Melinda West for Over Four Decades of Service

Melinda West, who has worked at the Fullerton Public Library for more than 40 years, was honored at the October 20 Fullerton City Council meeting ahead of her planned retirement. Library Director Anita O'Keefe Torres presented the recognition and credited West with over 40 years of service. O'Keefe Torres became director on March 23.

"As somebody who's only been here for seven months, that tells me a lot about what I need to know regarding this city and this person," O'Keefe Torres said.

She said West will remain with the library for "a couple more months" and that she has valued their time working together.

"Every interaction I have with you, I'm just soaking in that knowledge and all of the stories," she told West. "It says so much about the city of Fullerton that we have somebody who will commit this amount of time to working for this organization."

Before the presentation, she said West has stayed on the job beyond the point where it pays off for her financially.

"It's not about money to them," Torres said. "It's really about that civic service."

Kyle Samudio, who was recently recognized for his own 25 years with the library and is now West's direct supervisor, described how much has changed during her career. The public service desk where West has helped patrons has moved twice and gone by three names: the reference desk, the information desk and the "Ask Here" desk.

Samudio said West has created many programs over the years, but her signature work is collection development, a term which librarians use to describe choosing and buying books for the library. Her first assignment was the teen collection.

At the time, Samudio said, that section had no chairs. West bought a beanbag chair with her own money so teens would have somewhere to sit. She later took charge of paperbacks and eventually took on most of the collection. For roughly the past eight years, Samudio said, West has selected all of the library's fiction, including mysteries and science fiction.

"Chances are, if you've been to the library over the last four decades and you checked out a book, Melinda bought that book for you," Samudio said, drawing applause.

Samudio also thanked West for the reading experiences she has made possible for library users and for their 25 years working together. West did not speak at the presentation. Samudio told the audience she had declined to, joking that librarians "can be a little reticent." The audience applauded her.

Balance & Change

by Michelle Gottlieb, Psy.D., MFT, LPCC © 2026

Growth Through New Experiences

What new thing have you learned recently?

What new place have you gone to?

What new experiences have you had?

We know that new experiences help to prevent or delay dementia and other brain issues. But there is more to it than that. New experiences make us stretch and grow!

When we go to new places, we learn how different people have been or are living. We learn history. We learn about different cultures.

We have more understanding and compassion as we learn more. This will make our world a more loving place.

When we learn new things, it helps us to challenge our old paradigms. We may learn that what we have always accepted as fact may not be.

Learning new things helps us to make healthier choices. Learning new things may be uncomfortable.

We do not like being challenged. It is difficult to give up long-held beliefs. But what if, by our growth, we become healthier? What if, by our struggle to deal with the discomfort, the world becomes a better place for all? Is it worth it?



Fullerton Police Department hosted its annual Trunk-or-Treat

The Fullerton Police Department happily welcomed families to its annual Trunk-or-Treat at Highland and Amerige! From 5:00 to 8:00 PM, kids in all sorts of cute costumes made their way from trunk to trunk, filling their bags with tasty treats while getting to know the officers who help keep our neighborhoods safe. With decorated police vehicles creating a festive atmosphere, families enjoyed a fun and safe alternative to door-to-door trick-or-treating.



Eric Kim, DMD: *Family Dentistry*



Thoughtful dentistry in a welcoming environment.

501 N Cornell Ave Ste. 1, Fullerton
(714) 992-0092

NOVEMBER

2 Monday

—FAMILY TIME—

10:0 to 11:0am: My Little & Me Craft Time: $65 per 4 week session (includes 1 child and 1 adult).
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Hunt Library
201 S Basque Ave, Fullerton
Call 714-738-6575 for more info.

3 Tuesday

——ART——

10:00am to 4:00pm: Bound Together: The Craft of Bookmaking: Organized by the Fullerton Museum Center. Tracing the evolution of bookmaking, from pre-industrial hand-binding techniques to modern mechanized production and today's DIY zine culture, the exhibition highlights the processes that transform ideas into physical objects.
Hunt Library
201 S Basque Ave, Fullerton
714-738-6365



4 Wednesday

———MARKET———

8:30 am to 12:30 pm: Certified Farmers Market: Fresh local produce. Support farmers live close by.
Fullerton Downtown Plaza
125 E. Wilshire Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6575

5 Thursday

–ENGLISH CLUB–

5:30 to 6:30pm: FREE English Conversation Club: Practice speaking English with adult learners of all levels in a friendly, relaxed learning environment.
Adults 18+. No registration required.
Hunt Library
201 S Basque Ave, Fullerton
714-738-6365

6 Friday

——ART——

12:00 to 6:00pm: Small Wonders: The Art of Japanese Kokeshi: Kokeshi are handmade wooden dolls originating from hot springs villages in the Tōhoku region of Northeastern Japan. Today, kokeshi are sought after by collectors and those who seek to preserve folk traditions.
Fullerton Museum Center
James F. Ranii Gallery
301 N Pomona Ave Fullerton
fullertonmuseum.com

7 Saturday

——GAMES——

10:00am to 4:30pm: North Orange County Boardgamers Game Day: FREE Join us on the first Saturday of every month in the FPL Conference Center from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for North Orange County Boardgamers Game Day, presented by So Cal Game Connection and the Fullerton Public Library. This is a free event for both experienced and new players, with a raffle for a free game at 12:00 noon.
Fullerton Public Library
Coference Center
353 W Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6326



8 Sunday

——PLANT SALE——

10:00am to 2:00pm: Native Plant Sale: The Arboretum will post the complete list of plants available for purchase on its website before the sale. Quantities of each plant are limited and available while supplies last.
CSUF Arboretum
1900 Associated Rd, Fullerton

9 Monday

–PICKLEBALL–

$10/hr Reservation only: Pickleball courts: Monday through Friday from 7am to 9pm and Saturday and Sunday from 7am to 1pm.
Fullerton Tennis Center
110 E Valencia Mesa Dr, Fullerton
(714) 773-5776
tenniscenter@cityoffullerton.com

10 Tuesday

—CRAFTY—

10:00 to 11:00am: Seasonal Craft Night: Get creative! Bring a friend! Craft your heart out! For Teens 13 to Adults.
Fullerton Public Library
Coference Center
353 W Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6326

11 Wednesday

———MARKET———

8:30 am to 12:30 pm: Certified Farmers Market: Fresh local produce. Support farmers live close by.
Fullerton Downtown Plaza
125 E. Wilshire Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6575



12 Thursday

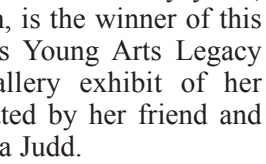
SCAVENGER ——HUNT—–

Go Anytime: Fullerton Scavenger Hunt: Duration 1.5-2 Hours: This scavenger hunt will help you explore Fullerton. This hunt is 1.54 miles and has 7 stops.
https://www.letsroam.com/scavenger-hunt/fullerton-ca/product-2617

13 Friday

—LIVE MUSIC—

3:00pm: Sergio Snow: Pop Artist currently based in Los Angeles. He just released his debut Album, available on all streaming platforms.
The Twisted Vine
127 W Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton
(714) 871-1200



14 Saturday

——HISTORY——

9:150am to 11:45pm & 1:00 to 3:00pm: Textiles in the Victorian Era: $20 Clothing and domestic textiles, dating from 1884 to the early 1900s, will be on display. Visit the house to see the display of textiles is the first part of this event. The second part follows in Oak Hall classroom where each participant will have the opportunity to create a slow-stitching project. An array of calico fabrics, ribbons, vintage buttons and embroidery thread will be provided. No sewing skills are necessary.
CSUF Arboretum Heritage House
1900 Associated Rd. Fullerton
(657) 278-3407
arboretum.fullerton.edu/sales-events/

15 Sunday

———ART--———

5:30pm: A Celebration of Young Shin Kim Pottery: $18 Muck Teaching Artist of over twenty years, Young Shin Kim, is the winner of this year's Dr. James Young Arts Legacy Award. This gallery exhibit of her ceramics is curated by her friend and colleague Marsha Judd.
IThe Muckenthaler Cultural Center | 714-738-6595 | info@themuck.org
1201 W. Malvern Ave, Fullerton

16 Monday

—FAMILY TIME—

10:0 to 11:0am: My Little & Me Craft Time: $65 per 4 week session (includes 1 child and 1 adult).
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Hunt Library
201 S Basque Ave, Fullerton
Call 714-738-6575 for more info.

17 Tuesday

—BOOK CLUB—

10:00 to 11:00am: Tuesday Night Book Club: A lively book club discussion featuring a variety of genres and authors! Copies of titles are limited. Please register early due to limited space. Adults 18+
Fullerton Public Library
353 W Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6326
fullertonlibrary.libcal.com

18 Wednesday

———MOVIE———

4:00 pm: The Sting (1973): Staring Paul Newman, Robert Redford, and Robert Shaw Two grifters team up to pull off the ultimate con.
Fullerton Public Library
Conference Center
353 W Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6326

19 Thursday

——ART——

12:00 to 6:00pm: Final Rites: Death, Mourning, & Beyond: Blending science, history, folklore, and the supernatural, this exhibition explores not only how we confront death, but why humanity has always sought to understand what may lie beyond.
Fullerton Museum Center
Main Gallery
301 N Pomona Ave Fullerton
fullertonmuseum.com

20 Friday

—FAMILY TIME—

10:30 to 11:30am: Sign Baby Sign: Join us for an informal weekly workshop that introduces you and your baby to American Sign Language! Learn basic signs to increase communication and reduce frustration for both you and your child! Designed for infants and babies and their caregivers!
NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Fullerton Public Library
Osborne Auditorium
353 W Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6326

21 Saturday

——THEATER——

8:00pm: Santa Claus kidnapped by Martians!: Will the children on Earth have no toys on Christmas day? This holiday season join Santa on a madcap adventure in outer space! Performed with a light hearted style that is suitable for children and even cranky adults. For ages 5 and up.
Maverick Theater
110 E. Walnut Ave, Unit B, Fullerton
(714) 526-7070
mavericktheater.com

—FREE MOVIE—

3:00 pm: Moana: Live-action adaptation of the 2016 Disney animated film 'Moana.'
Fullerton Public Library
Conference Center
353 W Commonwealth Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6326



22 Sunday

–PERFORMANCE–

1:30 to 3:30pm: Haneul Samulnori and Dance Group: Korean Traditional Dance Performance: FREE Visitors can also enjoy Korean-inspired arts and crafts activities on the museum patio, offering an opportunity to engage with Korean culture beyond the performance.
Fullerton Museum Center
301 N Pomona Ave Fullerton
fullertonmuseum.com

23 Monday

–KIDS CAMP–

9:00 to 12:00pm: CRAFTY KIDS CAMP: Fun and interactive craft camp. For those between 6-12 years old. Camp Session: November 23 to 25 9am drop off and 12pm pickup. $75. Registration required.
Hunt Library
201 S Basque Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6575

24 Tuesday

—FAMILY TIME—

10:00 to 11:00am: Family Storytime: Who knew learning could be so much fun? Come for an interactive storytime that will have you clapping, moving, and reading silly stories and rhymes! All ages welcome.
Hunt Library
201 S Basque Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6365

25 Wednesday

—FREE MOVIE—

1:00 to 5:00pm: Box Car Drive-In Matinee: Decorate your very own cardboard box car! We provide the supplies. After the car is built, time to enjoy the drivein movie with provided snacks. This event is for all ages and their caregivers.
Hunt Library
201 S Basque Ave, Fullerton
(714) 738-6365

26 Thursday

BRAIN CANCER AWARENESS

——-WALK——-

8:00 to 10:00am: $22.20: 2026 Kindness Matters Walk: 10th Annual Kindness Matters Walk (KM Walk) - a milestone year for a community tradition built on hope, gratitude, and action. In 2026, participants can join us in person on Thanksgiving morning in Fullerton, CA, or participate virtually from wherever you are. However you choose to take part, every step helps carry Katie's legacy forward. All participants are encouraged to register online in advance of the walk.
Juanita Cooke Greenbelt & Trail (2.79 mi): 1275 N. Berkeley Avenue, Fullerton

27 Friday

–TAKE A HIKE–

Go Any Time: FREE:
Juanita Cooke Greenbelt & Trail (2.79 mi): 1275 N. Berkeley Avenue, Fullerton
Brea Dam Trail (1.59 mi): 1700 N Harbor Boulevard, Fullerton
East Coyote Hills Trail (1.79 mi): 3300 State College Boulevard, Fullerton
Hiltscher Park Trail (1.39 mi): 1002 N. Euclid Street, Fullerton
BUY NOTHING DAY, an international counter-movement advocating for mindful consumption

28 Saturday

——VOLUNTEER——

9:00am to 2:00pm: Operation Christmas Child Processing Center: Please complete the OCC processing-center signup to reserve your spot. *https://occvolunteersignup.com/VolunteerSignUp/IndexGroup?rg=e9afe66f4ecd438f80dfd1fa1a2e1af3*
Southern California processing center
4200 Bonita Place, Fullerton

29 Sunday

———PSYCHIC--———

3:00 to 5:00pm: Oracle Readings by Psychic Auntie Pan Pan: $27 Capacity limited. Curious about the supernatural and divination? Here is your chance.
IPSO FACTO
517 N. Harbor Blvd. Fullerton

30 Monday

——--ART———

11:00am to 4:00pm: TOM LA DUKE: slowly, the song goes: Free and open to the public. A solo exhibition by artist Tom LaDuke.
Bringing together new drawings, recent paintings, and earlier sculptures, the exhibition traces recurring ideas that have shaped LaDuke's practice for more than three decades, offering a rare opportunity to experience the evolution of one of Southern California's most influential contemporary artists.

The College of the Arts Galleries are located at the western edge of the CSUF campus facing Clayes Performing Arts Center (Visual Arts, Bldg. G). The nearest crossstreets are St. College Blvd. and Arts Dr.
CSUF
1900 State College Boulevard

Fullerton Friends of Music presents

Butter Quartet

Saturday, November 14, 2026 at 3:30 pm

Admission without charge

Scintilla



Gaetano Pugnani · String Quartet no. 2 in E-Flat Major
Luigi Boccherini · String Quartet in C minor op. 2 no. 1
Felice Giardini · String Quartet in C Major op. 25 no. 1

Fullerton First United Methodist Church · 114 N. Pomona Ave.

There is limited parking behind the church, entered from Amerige or Commonwealth. There is also street parking on Pomona and Amerige, and a free parking structure one block south of the church at Pomona Santa Fe. The Fullerton Transportation Center, served by Metrolink and Amtrak train lines as well as OCTA buses, is about two blocks south.

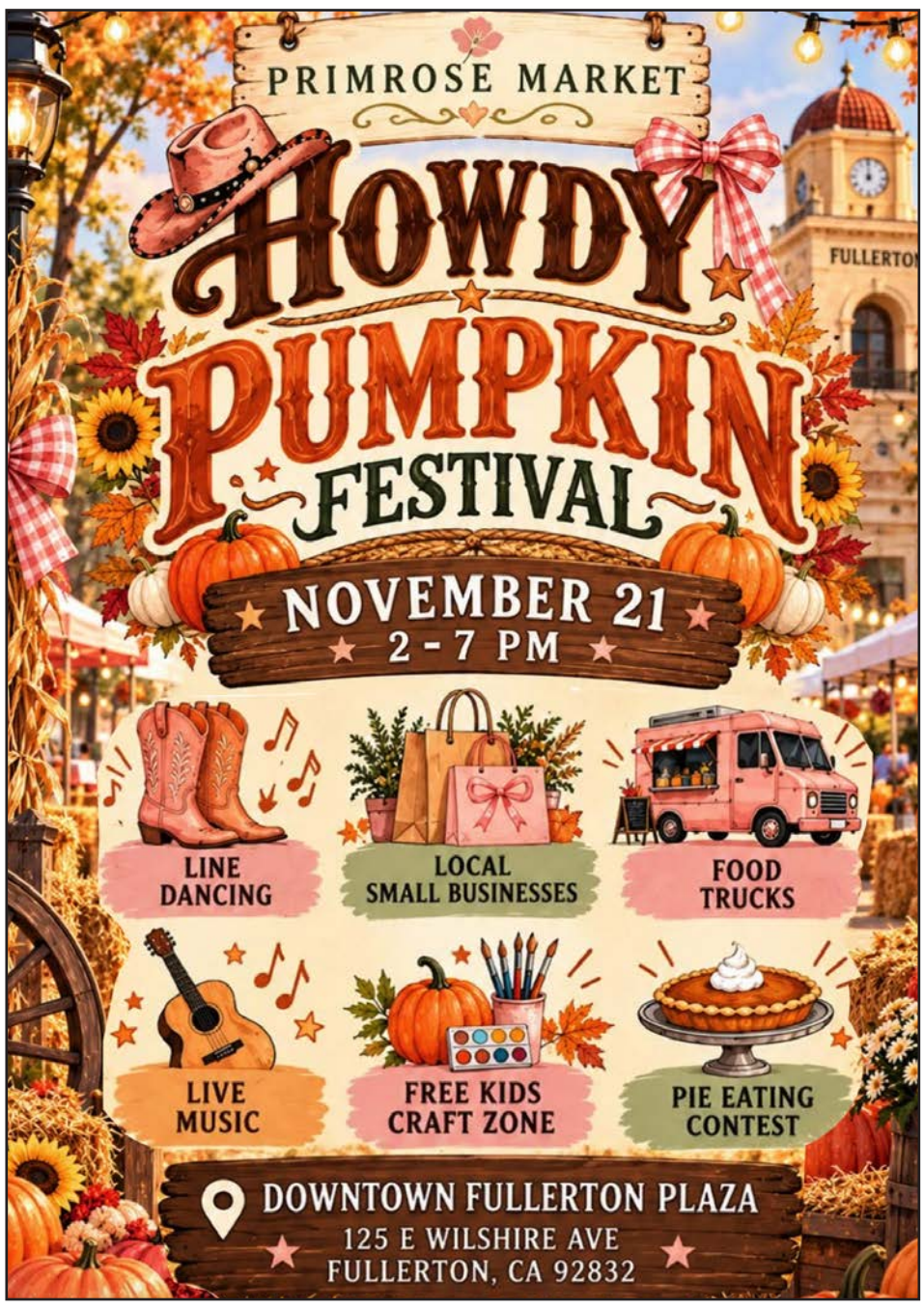
fullertonfriendsofmusic.org **(562) 691-7437**

Art Exhibit Fullerton Museum Center

Hours: Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday 12:00 to 4:00 PM
Thursday 12:00 to 8:30 PM Friday 12:00 to 6:00 PM



301 N. Pomona Ave Fullerton
(714) 519-4461



Know Your Rights: Protecting Yourself From ICE in OC *continued from front page*

What we know about ICE and state data

California has laws meant to keep residents' records away from immigration enforcement, but there is documented evidence that those protections have gaps. Some concerns are proven; others are still suspicions.

DMV license and vehicle records. California Vehicle Code 1808.48 bars using noncriminal DMV records for immigration enforcement. A University of Washington study found that DHS ran more than 1 million searches of Washington state's driver and vehicle records in early 2026, partly through interstate police networks like NLETS. Researchers could not get the records needed to test whether California's protections hold.

License plate reader data. California's SB 34 bars sharing plate data with federal or out-of-state agencies. Even so, CalMatters found more than 100 cases in about a month of Southern California agencies sharing plate data with ICE in 2025, and the OC Sheriff's Department was named.

Medi-Cal records. A federal court order blocks sharing the data of citizens, green card holders and other lawful residents. In March 2026, California and 21 other states asked the court to enforce the order, saying a large data set went to ICE anyway. In September 2026, the judge told both sides to agree on the order's scope.

What this means for you: assume information already in a government system could reach ICE, and focus on what you control now.

The OC Social Services Agency warns that dropping Medi-Cal does not erase records already in the state database. Leaving benefits you need may cost you care without protecting you, so ask a legal provider before making that choice.

Make a family plan now

- Memorize at least two emergency phone numbers, including a lawyer or the OC Rapid Response hotline.
- Choose a trusted adult to pick up your children, and tell the school and daycare in writing.
- Fill out a California Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit so that adult can enroll your children in school and consent to their medical care. Ask a lawyer about longer-term guardianship options.
- Write down medications, doses and doctors for everyone in the family and give a copy to your emergency contact.
- Make sure family members know your full name, date of birth and A-number, so they can find you with ICE's online detainee locator (locator.ice.gov).
- Decide who can access your money, pay rent and handle your car or business. Consider a power of attorney.
- Use the Immigrant Legal Resource Center's family preparedness plan as a checklist.
- Talk with your children, calmly and in age-appropriate terms, about what would happen and who would care for them.

Protect your data and paperwork

You can't pull records back out of government systems, but you can limit what new information is exposed and keep your important papers safe.

- Keep copies of key documents somewhere safe. Copy your birth certificates, passports, immigration papers, court notices and A-number, and leave the copies with a trusted person instead of keeping them only at home.
- Lock your phone with a passcode, not your face or fingerprint. It is harder to force someone to say a passcode than to hold a phone up to their face. Turn off any location sharing you don't need.
- Be careful what you post. Photos, check-ins and posts can reveal where you live, work and drive.
- Don't drop benefits out of fear without advice. Records already filed stay in the system, and leaving Medi-Cal or other programs can cost your family care. A legal provider can tell you what applies to you.
- Avoid notario fraud. Only licensed attorneys and DOJ-accredited representatives can give immigration legal advice. A "notario" or consultant who promises papers can put your case at risk.
- Go to your check-ins and court dates prepared. Advocates report arrests at the Santa Ana federal building and immigration court. Missing a hearing can lead to a deportation order. Talk to a lawyer before you go, and bring someone who can call for help.



Recording and identification

You have the right to film agents in public as long as you don't interfere. California's SB 805 requires officers to display their agency and a name or badge number. A February 2026 ruling let that rule stand while blocking the state's mask ban for federal agents, and the case is ongoing.

If ICE comes to your home

You do not have to open the door unless agents have a warrant signed by a judge. According to the ACLU of Northern California, an ICE administrative warrant (Form I-200 or I-205, signed by an immigration officer) does not let them enter without your consent.

- Keep the door closed and talk through it or a window. Opening the door can be treated as consent.
- Ask who they are and whether they have a warrant signed by a judge.
- Ask them to slide the warrant under the door or hold it up to a window. Check for a court name, a judge's signature, your correct name and your address.
- If there is no judicial warrant, say clearly: "I do not consent to your entry."
- If they come in anyway, do not resist physically. Repeat that you do not consent, stay silent, and note badge numbers and what they search.
- Do not sign anything, and do not answer questions about where you were born or your status without a lawyer.
- Afterward, write down everything and call the OC Rapid Response hotline: 714-881-1558.

Agents sometimes wear plain clothes or vests that just say "Police." The ACLU of Southern California suggests asking which department they are from and their names before saying anything else.

The same core rights go with you everywhere: stay silent, refuse searches, don't run, don't lie, and ask for a lawyer.

On the street

- Ask, "Am I free to go?" If the answer is yes, walk away calmly.
- You can stay silent about where you were born, your status and how you entered the country. Say, "I want to remain silent."
- Say, "I do not consent to a search." Officers may still pat you down for weapons.
- Never carry or show false documents. If you have valid immigration papers, keep copies with you.
- Carry a know-your-rights "red card" from the National Immigration Law Center and hand it over instead of talking.

At work

Under California's AB 450, employers may not let ICE into private areas of a workplace without a judicial warrant. Agents can enter public areas like a lobby or parking lot.

Since February 1, 2026, California's SB 294 has required employers to give workers a yearly know-your-rights notice. Employers must also let you name an emergency contact to be told if you are detained at work, so make sure yours is on file.

If agents arrive, stay calm, don't run, and use your right to stay silent.

In the car

- Pull over safely, turn off the engine and keep your hands visible.
- When lawfully stopped, the driver must show a license, registration and proof of insurance. Passengers can stay silent.
- You can refuse a search of the car. Say so clearly, but don't physically block it.
- If you are detained, ask that your car be released to a licensed driver you trust, and ask where you are being taken.
- Memorize your family's emergency number instead of keeping it only in your phone.

Where to get help in Orange County

If you see ICE activity or someone is detained, call the OC Rapid Response Network first: 714-881-1558. Confirm these numbers before you need them.

- OC Rapid Response Network (ocrapidresponse.org): Reports ICE activity, verifies raids and connects families to lawyers. 714-881-1558
- Immigrant Defenders Law Center: Rapid-response legal line for people detained in Southern California. 213-833-8283
- Public Law Center: Free immigration legal clinics. 714-347-9610
- Community Legal Aid SoCal: Help with immigration, housing and public benefits. 714-571-5200
- CHIRLA: Deportation defense, DACA and other legal services. 888-624-4752
- Camino Immigration Services: DOJ-accredited legal services. 657-217-2365
- CAIR Los Angeles: Immigration and civil rights legal help. 714-340-5469
- 211 Orange County: Referrals to immigration and other services. Dial 2-1-1
- Mexican Consulate in Santa Ana: Help for Mexican nationals, including those in detention. 714-253-3906

If you believe your rights were violated, write down names, badge numbers, vehicle plates and witnesses. Report it to the Rapid Response Network or the ACLU of Southern California.



2026 Propositions 101 with Jodi Balma Professor of Political Science at Fullerton College

by Saskia Kennedy

With a lengthy ballot and millions of dollars being spent to influence voters, understanding California's 2026 ballot propositions requires more than reading the short descriptions on the ballot, Fullerton College political science professor Jodi Balma told students and community members during a presentation at the college on October 26.

Balma walked attendees through the state propositions, explaining how ballot measures become law, how to research the organizations supporting and opposing them, and how to recognize provisions that may be overlooked in campaign advertisements.

Her central message was that voters are deciding whether to approve entire pieces of legislation, not simply endorsing an idea or slogan.

"You do not get to vote for an idea that you like," Balma said. "You have to vote for the actual legislation."

She cautioned that a measure may contain provisions voters do not support, even when its title or central purpose sounds appealing. She encouraged voters to examine the details, consider the financial consequences and investigate who is funding the campaign.

Finding reliable election information

Balma recommended several resources for voters who want to understand the measures before casting their ballots.

Ballotpedia provides information about what a yes or no vote means, the legislation behind a measure, supporting and opposing organizations, campaign contributions, media editorials and polling. The California Legislative Analyst's Office also publishes analyses of ballot propositions, including their potential fiscal effects.

She recommended the League of Women Voters' Easy Voter Guide, which presents ballot information in accessible language and is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese. Balma also highlighted CalMatters' election coverage and its interactive quiz, which helps voters consider how their views relate to individual propositions.

She encouraged students to look beyond campaign advertisements and investigate the actual laws. Propositions can change existing statutes, establish new laws or amend the California Constitution.

Balma also explained the difference between measures placed on the ballot by the Legislature and citizen initiatives. Legislative measures, she said, generally involve questions lawmakers must submit to voters, such as certain bond proposals and constitutional amendments. Citizen initiatives can be placed on the ballot through the signature-gathering process, often with substantial financial backing from interest groups.

Because initiatives can be difficult to change once approved, Balma urged voters to consider possible unintended consequences. She cited California's three-strikes law as a cautionary example. The law's original wording resulted in some people receiving life sentences for offenses that voters might not have expected to carry that penalty. Changing an initiative requires another initiative, she said, making corrections difficult and time-consuming.

Balma also discussed competing initiatives, in which two measures address the same subject but offer different approaches. Under California's rules, if competing measures both pass, the measure receiving more votes generally takes effect, subject to the applicable legal provisions. Voters therefore need to understand how measures may interact rather than evaluating each one in isolation.

Bonds and the cost of borrowing

Balma began her review of the ballot measures with bond proposals. Bonds allow governments to borrow money for projects and repay the debt over time, generally using public funds.

The Legislative Analyst's Office estimates discussed in her presentation showed that interest can substantially increase the eventual cost of a bond. A $20 billion bond, for example, could cost taxpayers about $40 billion over the life of the loan, depending on the terms.

Balma said voters should consider both what a bond would finance and how the government would repay it. She also noted that the state already has outstanding bonds and generally issues them over time rather than selling all approved bonds at once.

Proposition 1, a $10 billion bond intended to build, preserve and improve affordable housing, including housing for veterans. Supporters argue that increasing the supply of affordable homes could help address housing costs over time. Balma emphasized that such a measure would fund housing construction and preservation rather than immediately reduce an individual renter's housing costs.

Proposition 2 would allow California to increase the amount it could save in its rainy-day fund from 10% to 20% of general fund tax revenue. Balma explained that the measure would permit additional savings during strong economic periods, providing a larger cushion when tax revenues fall during a recession. It would not require the state to save the maximum amount.

Proposition 3 would make permanent a tax increase on higher-income Californians that voters previously approved as a temporary measure. Balma explained that the revenue supports education and affects the broader state budget because money dedicated to schools is not available for other general fund uses.

Proposition 4 would remove a state restriction on public financing of election campaigns, allowing local governments to consider such programs in the future. The measure would not itself establish a public-financing program.

Proposition 5 would change California's recall-election rules to align the replacement process more closely with what happens when an officeholder leaves office through resignation or death.

Balma said the change is intended to reduce incentives for politically motivated recalls and prevent a replacement from taking office with substantially less support than the original officeholder received.

SOURCES RECOMMENDED BY PROFESSOR JODI BALMA

- Ballotpedia
- California Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO)
- League of Women Voters' Easy Voter Guide
- CalMatters 2026 Voter Guide
- California Secretary of State
- California Voter Foundation

Professor Balma also directed voters to the California Secretary of State's website to track whether their ballots have been received.

Track your Ballot at CA Secretary of State or at *vote.org*

Billionaire tax and competing measures

Proposition 40 would impose a one-time tax on the worldwide net worth of billionaires who met the measure's residency requirements. Balma said the proposal would tax 5% of qualifying wealth, with most of the revenue directed to health care. She explained that the measure was intended to raise money amid anticipated federal health care funding cuts.

Supporters argue the revenue could help maintain health care coverage and services.

Opponents warn that wealthy residents could leave California, reducing future state income-tax revenue. Balma noted that the proposal has drawn opposition from some Democrats as well as other groups, illustrating that the debate does not fall neatly along party lines.

Propositions 41 and 42 would change state tax rules in ways Balma said could interfere with the proposed billionaire tax. Proposition 41 would require audits and reviews of programs funded by certain new or increased taxes. Proposition 42 would limit the state's ability to impose new taxes on personal property, including financial assets.

Balma urged voters to consider the relationship among the three measures. If competing initiatives all pass, their interaction could lead to legal disputes, she said. She also cautioned voters to read the actual provisions rather than rely on advertisements suggesting that the measures would broadly tax ordinary retirement savings.

School bonds, health clinics and environmental review

Proposition 43 would restore a two-thirds vote requirement for certain local special taxes, including school bonds, instead of the current 55% threshold for qualifying school bonds. Balma explained how the higher threshold could affect school districts and community colleges seeking money for construction and improvements.

She used North Orange County Community College District's Measure J bond as a local example. The measure passed by just 15 votes, she said, and helped fund improvements at Fullerton College, including campus buildings and infrastructure. Balma argued that raising the approval threshold could make future school and community college bonds more difficult to pass.

Proposition 44 would require private nonprofit safety-net clinics to spend at least 90% of their annual revenue on health care services. Balma said supporters want to limit wasteful spending and excessive executive compensation.

Opponents warn that the requirements could restrict staffing and services or force some clinics to close. She encouraged voters to examine whether the proposed statewide rule addresses a demonstrated problem and what its consequences could be for patients.

Proposition 45 would change the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA, to speed up approvals for certain projects.

Supporters argue that environmental reviews, delays and lawsuits increase construction costs.

Opponents say the measure could weaken environmental review and public participation while increasing risks to air, water and public health. Balma encouraged voters to look carefully at which projects would qualify and which would be excluded.

Housing, research and voter identification

Balma also reviewed citizen initiatives addressing housing, research funding and election procedures.

Proposition 37 would create a bond-funded program to help middle-income Californians with down payments on homes. Under the proposal she described, participating homebuyers would repay the loans, generally when they sell their homes.

Supporters argue that the assistance could help renters who struggle to save enough for a down payment. Balma also raised the question of whether the state could address the same problem through other housing policies.

Proposition 38 would provide funding for medical and scientific research. Balma said she supports the general concept of public investment in research but questioned whether the measure would direct too much of the funding to a particular organization. She urged voters to examine how research priorities would be determined and how public money would be allocated.

Proposition 39 would require voters to provide additional identifying information when voting. Under the proposal described in the presentation, in-person voters would show government identification, while mail voters would provide identifying information on their ballots. The state would also offer free voter identification cards.

Supporters say the measure would increase confidence in elections. Opponents argue that California's election system is secure and that the added requirements would create unnecessary barriers and costs. Balma questioned how the free identification cards would be distributed and how the new requirements would work in practice.

"If you don't know who to vote for for, spend some time researching, but also skip it," she said. "Vote for what you know and return it."

Voters can leave individual contests blank, she explained. Voting on some races or measures still counts as participating in the election, and she urged people not to let an unfamiliar contest prevent them from returning their ballots. Make informed choices rather than rely solely on campaign slogans.



Zone 1 Area Commander
Lieutenant Joshua Earnest
jearnest@fullertonpd.org



Zone 2 Area Commander
Lieutenant Matt Martinez
mmartinez@fullertonpd.org



Zone 3 Area Commander
Lieutenant Joseph Zuniga
jzuniga@fullertonpd.org



Traffic Bureau
Commander
Lieutenant Tim Petropulos
timothy.petropulos@fullertonpd.org



Investigations Bureau
Commander
Lieutenant Perry Thayer
pthayer@fullertonpd.org

Meet Area Fullerton Police Department Commanders

The Fullerton Police Department is taking steps to foster stronger community relations through its Area Commander Program. This initiative aims to enhance communication, address local concerns, and effectively coordinate police and city resources, ultimately working towards a better quality of life for all residents.

The city of Fullerton is divided into three distinct geographic zones, each overseen by a designated Police Lieutenant. These officers serve as primary points of contact for community members—whether they live, work, play, learn, or shop in their respective areas—ensuring that the police department is responsive to the diverse needs of the neighborhoods they serve.

Through this strategic program, the Fullerton Police Department is committed to building robust partnerships within the community, laying the groundwork for safer and more engaged neighborhoods. Not sure which zone you're in? Visit *www.fullertonpd.org*

Fullerton Police Recognized for Contribution to Countywide Gun Buyback Program by Saskia Kennedy

Orange County Supervisor Doug Chaffee recently honored the Fullerton Police Department for its significant role in the county's gun buyback initiative during the city council meeting on October 20.

The recognition follows the county's latest buyback event, held on September 27, and hosted by the Buena Park Police Department.

As chair of the Orange County Board of Supervisors representing the 4th District, which includes Fullerton, Chaffee detailed that the program has removed 1,294 firearms from Orange County streets over four buyback events, including 99 assault weapons. "These have now been safely removed from our communities and are no longer out there threatening people," he stated.

The gun buyback events, which have involved seven different police departments, are designed to safely collect and destroy unwanted firearms. Chaffee emphasized the need for trained personnel to handle and secure the weapons, saying, "We need people who know how to handle guns."

Fullerton police have participated in all four buybacks, demonstrating effective coordination among police agencies that bodes well for future mutual aid situations. Alongside firearm collection, the events also provide free gun locks to residents, promoting firearm safety even for those who do not turn in weapons. Chaffee recounted a tragic incident from the past year in which a child found a loaded gun left unsecured, underscoring the critical need for responsible firearm storage.

The program serves as a resource for residents looking to dispose of unwanted firearms safely, particularly benefiting individuals such as widows who inherit firearms. Chaffee noted a poignant example from a previous event, where a widow surrendered nine weapons.

At the meeting, Chaffee recognized the Fullerton Police Department and specifically acknowledged four officers—Christian Koenig, Cpl. Joshua Maynes, Cpl. Anthony Vega, and Sgt. Jeffrey Mayden—who contributed to the success of the September event. While not all officers were present, Chaffee expressed confidence that the police chief would ensure each received a plaque.

"Thank you for participating in this gun buyback," Chaffee concluded. "It's made the city safer."

Fullerton Council Votes to Rename Administrative Services Department "Finance"

The Fullerton City Council voted 5-0 on October 20 to rename the city's Administrative Services Department as the Finance Department, to create new director and deputy director of finance positions, and to raise the pay range for the department's top job. The council also approved Ordinance No. 3361, which amends Section 1.12.217 of the Fullerton Municipal Code to formally change the department's name. Under the ordinance, references to the Administrative Services Department and its director in the city code and other official documents will be read as referring to the Finance Department and the director of finance.

The ordinance states that the name change does not by itself alter the department's powers, duties, staff or organizational structure. Before the presentation, the council thanked the accounting firm Grant Thornton for its recommendation. Council Member Dr. Ahmad Zahra was noted as having advocated for the change for some time.

According to the city staff report, the city hired Grant Thornton Advisors to review selected accounting transactions and budget items for consistency with generally accepted accounting principles and city policies. The firm identified opportunities to improve the city's financial governance, accounting practices and financial reporting. The report said these findings reinforced the need for specialized government accounting expertise and experienced financial leadership.

Laura Giannetti-Mercer, the city's Human Resources Manager, said the department was called Finance until 1995. It was then renamed Administrative Services because it took on risk management and information technology. Giannetti-Mercer said both functions have since moved elsewhere. Risk management now falls under Human Resources, and IT is part of the City Manager's Office.

According to the staff report, the department's responsibilities now center on traditional municipal finance functions: budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, treasury management and financial planning. Restoring the Finance name, Giannetti-Mercer said, would more accurately reflect the department's core job and make its role in the organization clearer.

Along with the name change, the council created a Director of Finance classification.

Along with the name change, the council created a Director of Finance classification. The city is preparing to recruit its next finance director, and staff said the changes are intended to attract a candidate with the technical accounting expertise and executive experience the city needs.

A recent staff salary study of finance directors across Orange County found that Fullerton's pay fell below the median, which Giannetti-Mercer said would make recruitment difficult. The council placed the position in salary range 1070, which tops out at just over $245,000 a year. The range's salary control point is $204,464, compared with $194,066 under the current range, an increase of about 5.4%.

The change puts the finance director on the same salary range as the city's director of community and economic development. Giannetti-Mercer said no additional funding is needed this fiscal year. The higher salary has been, or will be, offset by savings from the current interim appointment and existing vacancies in the department.

The action also creates a Deputy Director of Finance position, at salary range 1,010, to replace the current Deputy Director of Administrative Services. That position is vacant and unfunded, Giannetti-Mercer said, but establishing it now aligns it with the renamed department if funding becomes available in the future.

According to the job descriptions approved with the item, the Director of Finance will report to the City Manager and serve as the city's chief financial officer, overseeing budgeting, accounting, debt financing, investments, payroll, purchasing, internal controls and auditing functions. The position requires a bachelor's degree and eight years of municipal finance experience, including three at the mid-management level; a graduate degree and a California CPA license are preferred. The director must also file a $100,000 bond with the City Clerk before taking office.

The deputy director, who would report to the finance director, would oversee preparation of the city's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and coordinate audits conducted by independent outside auditors. The position requires six years of public-sector finance experience, with a CPA license and a master's degree preferred. Staff also corrected an error in the executive salary schedule that took effect July 4, 2026. Staff entered the wrong salary control point for range 1010, causing that range to be calculated incorrectly. Because all positions in that range are vacant, no employees were affected.

The city will update its compensation resolution for executive employees to reflect the new titles. Council discussion: During discussion, the council heard that the title Director of Finance is common in California cities. The director will have ultimate responsibility for all of the city's financial functions, including overseeing the audit process.

Council member Dr. Ahmad Zahra, who moved the item, said the change is an important step in reorganizing how the city handles its finances so that "we don't have any more errors or mishaps." He added that the city's audits should still be conducted by independent third parties, saying that this change is a step in the right direction to a transparent city.

Fullerton Court Retail Center Sold for $12.7 Million

Hanley Investment Group and Summit RE have announced the successful sale of Fullerton Court, a fully leased multi-tenant retail center in Fullerton, California, for $12.7 million. The 20,309-square-foot property, located at Harbor Boulevard and Commonwealth Avenue, was acquired by a private buyer from Los Angeles as part of a 1031 exchange.

Sean Cox, Senior Vice President, and Kevin Fryman, Executive Vice President, at Hanley Investment Group, spearheaded the deal alongside Scott Hook from Summit RE, who represented the Newport Beach-based seller. Despite rising interest rates during the escrow period, the team maintained pricing and secured a lease for a previously vacant space just before closing, ensuring 100% occupancy for the property.

Located at 444 North Harbor Boulevard, Fullerton Court is home to a diverse range of tenants, including FedEx Office, a staple of the center for over 25 years, and Pixiu Mala Hongtang, which recently signed a 10-year lease. The center has a rent-weighted average remaining lease term of about 5.8 years, and nine of its ten tenants receive annual rent increases.



Fullerton Court benefits from its strategic location in a densely populated area home to over 606,000 residents, with an average household income of $126,000 within a five-mile radius.

The center is also close to California State University, Fullerton, and its tenant roster focuses on essential services, providing resilience amid growing e-commerce competition. The property also boasts an impressive Walk Score of 97, reflecting its accessibility and pedestrian-friendly environment.

Police Fundraising Calls Raise Questions About Fullerton Police Groups by Saskia Kennedy

Fullerton residents who receive calls or messages asking for donations in the name of local police organizations should verify the requests before giving money, according to warnings from the Fullerton Police Department and records involving police associations.

The Fullerton Police Officers' Association (FPOA) is the union representing the city's police officers. A related organization, the Fullerton Police Benefit Association, also appears in federal tax records. The benefit association is classified as a local employee association, and donations to it are not tax-deductible, according to ProPublica's nonprofit database. The distinction matters because the existence of a legitimate organization does not establish that every call or message using its name is authentic. The Fullerton Police Department warns that scammers may impersonate officers, manipulate caller ID and use the names of real officers to make fraudulent requests appear legitimate. The department says it does not solicit donations by phone.

Police associations in other California cities have also warned residents about fundraising impersonators. In Manhattan Beach, the Police Officers' Association said it raised money through brochures mailed to residents and did not solicit donations by phone, according to a report by Easy Reader News. Martinez and Oakland have issued similar warnings. Some police associations also use professional fundraising companies. Such solicitations may be legitimate, but donors should ask how much of their contribution will go to the organization and whether the donation is tax-deductible.

Residents who receive an unexpected fundraising call should not provide credit card numbers or other personal information. Instead, they can independently contact the Fullerton Police Department at 714-738-6700 to ask about a solicitation or report a suspected scam. Those wishing to support local officers can ask the department or the association for verified information about how to contribute directly.

Benefit association's financial records

Federal tax filings provide a separate look at the Fullerton Police Benefit Association's finances. The association may not be the same legal entity as the FPOA, the officers' union. According to the available filings, the benefit association reported approximately $395,000 in revenue and $304,000 in expenses in 2025. It ended the year with about $464,000 in assets and no reported debt. The filing listed no compensation for officers, including the president and benefits coordinator, and reported no salaries or wages.

From 2015 through 2024, more than 80% of the association's annual revenue was generally categorized as "program services" income. For an employee benefit association, that category can include payments for services or benefits provided to members. Outside donations generally accounted for a smaller share.

The 2025 filing categorized nearly all revenue as contributions. The available summary does not establish whether this reflects a change in the organization's income or simply a change in how it was reported.

The records also show that the association paid approximately $36,000 in professional fundraising fees in 2022, about 13% of its expenses that year. The corresponding expense was reported as zero in most other years reviewed. The filing indicates that the association used a paid fundraiser at least once. It does not, by itself, establish whether a particular solicitation residents receive is authorized by the association.

Political activity and endorsements

The FPOA also participates in local politics through endorsements and public advocacy.

In August 2026, the Fullerton Observer reported that the police union sent mass text messages urging residents to oppose a recall effort, citing costs that the union would not document. The union has also endorsed Fullerton candidates.

Mayor Fred Jung's 2024 ballot statement said he had the full endorsement of the city's police officers and firefighters.

In the 2024 District 4 race, an Observer opinion column identified the public safety unions' endorsement of Jamie Valencia over Kitty Jaramillo. The column also reported that Valencia received the maximum contribution from the police union two weeks after speaking at a City Council meeting in favor of a pilot program involving a "lasso" restraint device. Two years later she voted to make severe cuts to police and fire departments.

A 2006 ballot statement for Fullerton City Council candidate Leland Wilson also listed the FPOA among his endorsers.

The union has weighed in on other public safety issues. In 2018, when the City Council considered appointing Bob Dunn permanently as police chief, the FPOA president praised Dunn's work as acting chief.

The union has also supported retaining a city-run police department, placing it at odds with local activist Tony Bushala, who has advocated considering a contract with the Orange County Sheriff's Department. Broader claims linking the union to particular council coalitions or proposed tax measures should be distinguished from independently documented actions and attributed to their original sources.

For residents, the central question remains whether a particular fundraising request is legitimate. The names of established police organizations, their tax filings and their political activities do not, on their own, verify an unsolicited call or message.

Sources: Fullerton Police Department, Phone Scams; ProPublica, Fullerton Police Benefit Association nonprofit records.

Fullerton Council Advances Ban on Watering "Nonfunctional" Grass *continued from front page*

What counts as nonfunctional turf?

Under the regulation, functional turf is grass in recreational or community areas that people actually use for activities such as sports, play or picnics. Nonfunctional turf is grass that is not used for recreation, such as grass in rights-of-way or parking lots. Staff summed up the difference this way: nonfunctional turf is grass that, in practice, only a landscaper walks on to mow. Exemptions include grass around trees that must be watered to keep the trees healthy, cemeteries, and areas needed for public health and safety.

According to staff, the requirements take effect in three stages:

– Jan. 1, 2027: Properties owned by local government agencies

– Jan. 1, 2028: Commercial, industrial and institutional customers

– Jan. 1, 2029: Common areas in homeowners association communities

Staff noted that the rules apply to potable water and that the situation would be different if the city had recycled water available.

Why a local ordinance?

State law requires the city to incorporate the regulation into its ordinances or policies. It also requires the city to notify affected customers before each phase begins and to include enforcement provisions. Staff said adding the rules to the municipal code gives Fullerton control over how the law is enforced locally. Staff said the city intends to work with customers to address their concerns, help them comply as soon as possible, and point them to resources for replacing nonfunctional turf with drought-tolerant or other landscaping. The ordinance amends Section 12.06.060 of the municipal code, which contains the city's permanent water conservation requirements and existing enforcement language. It also amends Section 12.06.020 to update definitions.

Council member Dr. Shana Charles asked staff to clarify how the law would affect homeowners. Staff said the 2029 phase applies only to HOA common areas, such as a grassy corner that is not part of any home's lot; it does not to the lawns in front of individual homes. Staff confirmed that single-family homes without an HOA would not be affected. Item passed unanimously.



Out of My Mind

by Jon Dobrer © 2026 *Jonathandobrer.substack.com*

Sell Pay Per View Tickets to Our Firing Squad

Secretary of War Crimes Pete Hegseth and convicted felon and self-confessed sexual assaulter President Donald Trump are dragging us to new lows of vulgarity and classlessness. Clothed in hyper-macho drag, the poster child for homoerotic obsession, "Short-barrel Pete" wants to livestream a snuff production, while Trump basks in the stolen valor that only a draft-dodging grifter could believe he could pull off.

The United States has achieved in two years under President Trump what the Soviet Union failed to accomplish in more than four decades: A Truly Classless Society.

Yes, the word "Class" has two different meanings, yet with both definitions the ironies stand out. The USSR promised that class, meaning social and economic class, would disappear under communism. It didn't. Seemingly upper-class billionaire Trump tries to mark his territory, like an old dog with a bad prostate, by applying a thin veneer of fool's gold to all he surveys. Classless and a failure.

I was struck by the iconic failure of Russia's attempt at eliminating class when I visited in 1966. When taking the train from Vienna to Kyiv, then on to Moscow and ending in Leningrad, I was amused by the fact that American trains had two classes and the Soviet Union featured four official classes. Not a promising achievement in fifty years of communism. Soviet trains were quite comfortable for 1st class passengers with four beds per compartment; 2nd class had 6, 3rd class 8 and 4th class featured only naked wooden benches—not great for the 4,500-mile distance from Kyiv to Vladivostok. There was also an unlisted super first class for government officials only.

Under Trump, we are now attempting to replicate the old saying: 'There is no Pravda (truth) in the news and no Izvestia (news) in the truth.'

They demonstrated their true classlessness with public intoxication, misogyny and vulgarity at all levels of society. Their political lies and transparently false propaganda did them a great disservice. Many people retained their cynical sense of humor. There was a famous joke that "There is no Pravda (truth) in the news and no Izvestia (news) in the truth."

We, under Trump, are now attempting to replicate this old saying, as Trump strives to discredit truthful reporting, censor unfriendly media and criminalize dissent. In Trump's dystopian vision of America, protest equals terrorism, resistance means assault, and opposition is treason. These perverse policies indicate societal failure and the appropriate fear that the government is losing the consent of the governed.

We are offered bread and circuses to distract us from our eroding freedoms and the vast theft of our public wealth—where the elite friends of the regime get corrupt contracts, you can openly pay for information that leads to the now-former crime of insider trading, and we can sell our parks and public lands to developers who don't kick back, but actually pay in advance for the corrupt acts they desire. You have to pay the bribe upfront since there is no longer honor even among thieves.

In Roman times, they entertained and distracted the people by producing public spectacles like gladiatorial games and public political gore, with Christians being thrown to lions. I called this bread and circuses, but it was really blood and circuses.

Does it seem merely coincidental that Trump staged cage matches on the White House grounds and Secretary of War Crimes Hegseth has scheduled the public execution of Dr. Nidal Malik Hasan by firing squad? By "public execution," he wants to livestream death. Talk about classless. Talk about tasteless. Talk about a bloody circus and our government promoting a snuff production. Maybe they should charge pay-per-view, and if it turns a profit, public executions can become a bloody revenue stream. Talk about blood money.

AT HOME WITH THE HOMELESS

by Andrew Williams © 2026

WWW.PATREON.COM/C/THEEOPINIONATOR

An interview with Brittany Page: Part One

Brittany Page is an amazing and exceptional young woman. Not only is she the host of her own podcast, "The Page Perspective," with nearly one million followers, but she also has an extensive background in social work, particularly in housing assistance and addiction rehabilitation. Her local connection is that she attended Cal State University, Fullerton, and earned a Bachelor's in psychology and a Master's in clinical psychology. What makes that even more impressive is that she was born in rural Idaho to parents who were white supremacists, and transcended that unpromising beginning to become a truly compassionate and empathetic person.

When we conducted this interview, the story about seven male students at Cornell University raping a young woman had just broken, so that seemed like a logical place to start our conversation.

ANDREW WILLIAMS:

The Cornell 7 incident is in the news, two years after it actually happened. And it seems like nothing ever changes in that regard when a woman is raped. You know, boys will be boys. I could imagine that in 1954, but this happened in 2024. This is ridiculous, and I don't know why this persists. Is it just simply the whole frat culture is just so embedded in college culture that it just takes a long, long time for the culture to shift?

BRITTANY PAGE:

I think there's a lot of pervasive issues with that one. I read that the district attorney's office just took the Cornell campus police department's information and just went with what they said and didn't even do their own investigation, and that seems to be a strange protocol. You would think that the District Attorney's Office would actually take the step of going out and not just taking the information secondhand, but going and actually talking to the source. And that suggests a lack of care and concern, or justice, and brushing things under the rug, or brushing it aside.

WILLIAMS:

You mention that you were brought up in a household in Idaho which was, to be blunt, racist. Can you talk a little bit about how you go from that to being in California and becoming a psychologist, and what people kind of helped you along the way, or was it kind of a DIY thing?

PAGE:

(Laughs) Oh, no. Nothing in my life has been DIY. I've had people over the years say that I should write a book, and I'm always a little hesitant about it because I don't like self-help genre-type stuff, and I think when people tell me, "you should write a book," in the vein of people need to hear this story, it would be inspirational, it would be this. One of the things I like to talk about on the show is how much we need other people to help us, and how we don't get anywhere by ourselves. And that has been so central to my entire existence, but I think if people are honest with themselves, it's the truth that is universal for all of us. I was raised by white supremacists, and my parents moved me from California to Idaho to be closer to Aryan nations. I literally didn't know the Holocaust happened until I was in 10th grade.

It was really just kind of a slow process. When I was younger, my parents would demand that I sit outside of class during certain lessons in history, so that I would be able to be more easily indoctrinated into their worldview. And after a while, things were so chaotic in my childhood home that they kind of lost their grip on my education and prevented me from learning. And so it was, like, two things happening at once, right? Where I was able to learn the things that I wasn't able to learn before, but then, also, I started kind of seeing my parents for who they were, who were these very broken, troubled people who had significant problems. And those two things happening at once allowed the curtain to drop, or open, or whatever it would be.

And I had teachers who really intervened and helped me a lot. I had people from the church that I went to at the time that I really credit with a lot of my awakening and progress. And, you know, just many, many people that helped me along the way. So education was absolutely pivotal.

WILLIAMS:

Internment camps are not a new idea in America. We know about them from when Japanese Americans were forced into them during World War II. But it seems like what Stephen Miller's proposing is so much more serious, literally rounding up immigrants and the unhoused and stuffing them into internment camps, but I'm just wondering, logistically, is this even doable, and then further, what can be done to stop it?

PAGE:

I think a lot of what you're seeing right now is that it's up to us still. You know, one thing that I've heard a lot over the years is how demoralized people feel. As things continue to get worse, when Donald Trump was reelected, right, there were so many people who almost just wanted to check out and not pay attention to the news at all or just completely disengage.

And I sympathize with that, but at the same time, we're really seeing that they're only going to get away with what we allow them to get away with. And if we tell ourselves that we have no power, we really won't have any power. And it becomes kind of this self-defeating circle. So I think we look around, and we see what happened in Minneapolis, the way that that community came together, the way that they rallied for one another.

And there's so many examples where that is happening, where people out in front of these ICE facilities set up tents so that they can offer resources to the people that come out of the concentration camps and connect them with resources as soon as they walk out the door. I was recently reading a book on courage, how to be a dissident in the age of fear or something like that. And they were talking about a lot of these activist communities where, you know, similar to being out in front of ICE facilities, people will. They just show up, and they will be there all day, and they will pretend to be family members of someone who's inside of these facilities to help get their family inside just for a visit, right? People are volunteering in ways that we don't really even hear about.

And I think one crucial piece of it is the awareness. Staying aware of it and then having an organizing structure where people and the communities are coming together to fight back against the injustices.



Fullerton Observer

For $39 you get 21 issues mailed directly to your home.

Autopay online at *www.fullertonobserver.com* or mail check with your name, phone number, & address to:

Fullerton Observer PO Box 7051, Fullerton, CA 92834



The Science Behind It

by Yuvika Salman © 2026

A Single Drop of Blood

I recently watched one of the most bizarre documentaries I have ever seen: "You Can See Everything," a film following Elizabeth Holmes, the infamous founder of Theranos.

Having followed her story for a while, I was fascinated by the film's portrayal of a woman whose promises once captivated Silicon Valley and whose company ultimately became synonymous with scientific deception. But somewhere between the unsettling interviews and the unraveling of her billion-dollar company, I found myself thinking more about the technology she claimed to have invented.

Theranos promised to revolutionize medicine by performing hundreds of laboratory tests using just a few drops of blood from a finger prick. No large needles, no multiple vials, and potentially no lengthy waits for results. It sounded almost too good to be true, and as the world eventually discovered, it was.

The underlying question remains: Could a single drop of blood tell us everything we need to know about our health?

For centuries, physicians understood that blood was essential to life without fully understanding what it contained.

Ancient medical practices such as bloodletting were based on the mistaken belief that removing blood could restore balance within the body.

The development of microscopy in the seventeenth century fundamentally changed this understanding. Scientists could finally observe structures invisible to the naked eye, including red blood cells.

Over subsequent centuries, advances in chemistry and laboratory medicine transformed blood from a mysterious bodily fluid into a source of measurable biological information.

By the twentieth century, laboratories could routinely analyze blood cell counts, glucose concentrations, cholesterol levels, and numerous other indicators of health. Increasing automation allowed physicians to diagnose diseases, monitor treatments, and identify abnormalities before symptoms appeared.

Today, blood testing is among the most widely used diagnostic tools in medicine. Blood contains red and white blood cells, platelets, proteins, hormones, electrolytes, nutrients, and countless other molecules that reflect processes occurring throughout the body.

Different tests examine different components. A complete blood count measures blood cells and can help identify anemia or signs of infection. A metabolic panel evaluates glucose, electrolytes, and markers of kidney function. Other tests measure hormones, detect infectious agents, or search for molecular signals associated with cancer. Some tests use chemical reactions that produce measurable color changes. Others rely on antibodies that bind to specific molecules or sophisticated instruments that detect extremely small concentrations of substances.

This is where Theranos encountered a major scientific obstacle. A finger prick typically produces capillary blood, which can differ from blood collected directly from a vein. Small samples can also be affected by contamination, tissue fluid, clotting, or damage to blood cells. Furthermore, different tests require different sample volumes, preparation methods, and analytical instruments.

Simply shrinking a conventional laboratory into a small box does not eliminate these requirements. And diluting a tiny sample to stretch it across numerous tests can make already scarce biomarkers even harder to detect accurately.

Legitimate medical innovation must be supported by reproducible results, independent evaluation, and evidence that a device performs accurately for its intended purpose.

The problem with Theranos was not just with its machine but also that its central promises had never been reliably demonstrated. The company's inaccurate testing raised serious concerns about patient safety.

Interestingly, the failure of Theranos did not bring an end to efforts to miniaturize blood testing.

Researchers continue developing technologies known as microfluidics, which manipulate extremely small quantities of liquid through microscopic channels. These devices, sometimes called laboratories on a chip, combine elements of sample preparation and analysis within compact systems.

In 2026, King's College London highlighted a portable blood-testing device developed by its spinout company, Algocyte. Designed to analyze small blood samples collected through methods such as finger pricking, the technology uses sensors and artificial intelligence to monitor changes in blood measurements. Potential applications include patients requiring frequent monitoring, although its performance and clinical uses still require appropriate validation.

Other innovations are changing blood collection itself. In August 2026, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized Aletta, a robotic device capable of drawing blood from a patient's arm without hands-on operator intervention during the draw.

Neither innovation fulfills Theranos's original promise. However, they do demonstrate that scientists are approaching blood testing from multiple directions including reducing sample requirements, improving portability, and making collection more accessible.

The distinction is that legitimate medical innovation must be supported by reproducible results, independent evaluation, and evidence that a device performs accurately for its intended purpose.

The most interesting lesson from Theranos is that an appealing scientific idea is not the same as a functioning scientific discovery.

Holmes's vision was compelling because it addressed a genuine problem. Blood testing can be uncomfortable, expensive, and inconvenient, particularly for patients who require frequent monitoring or have limited access to healthcare.

Making diagnostics faster, less invasive, and more accessible could transform preventive medicine. But technological progress cannot come at the expense of accuracy, especially when medical decisions depend on the results.

Healthy Awareness

by Jo Ann Brannock, Ph.D. © 2026



Kindness in Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood

Kindness is being friendly, generous, and considerate toward others through helpful and intentional actions. It is closely related to altruism because both involve helping others without necessarily expecting an external reward.

Mark Twain is often credited with saying, "Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." Whether through a simple smile, a helping hand, or a thoughtful word, kindness has the ability to cross barriers and connect us with one another. World Kindness Day is observed internationally on November 13. In the United States, National Random Acts of Kindness Day is celebrated on February 17. These observances remind us of the importance of good deeds, compassion, and the positive power of caring for others.

One person who made kindness a central part of his life's work was Fred Rogers, the beloved creator and host of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood." The television program began in 1968 and became a powerful influence on generations of children and adults.

Mr. Rogers modeled kindness through his interactions with real people. Whether he was talking with a postman, visiting a neighbor, meeting a child, or discussing difficult emotions, he treated each person with respect and genuine interest.

Mr. Rogers once said, "It's through relationships that we learn best and grow best." His television neighborhood demonstrated that relationships are built through listening, understanding, patience, and caring.

The 2019 film "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," starring Tom Hanks as Mr. Rogers, provides another look at the man behind the television character. Hanks does an excellent job portraying Rogers' quiet, patient, and compassionate nature.

What did kindness mean to Mr. Rogers?

First, kindness requires action rather than simply being nice. Saying polite words is important, but kindness becomes meaningful when it is put into practice.

Second, kindness goes beyond empathy. Empathy allows us to understand or feel another person's emotions, but kindness asks us to take the next step—to do something helpful.

Third, kindness includes being kind to ourselves. We should give ourselves the same patience, understanding, and care that we try to give to other people.

Kindness also has important benefits. It can strengthen friendships by building trust, deepening social connections, and creating lasting relationships. Kindness can inspire others to behave kindly, creating a positive cycle that spreads from one person to another. There can also be benefits to our own well-being.

Acts of kindness and positive social interactions are associated with changes in brain chemistry and can contribute to improved mood and reduced stress.

So, how can we become better neighbors? We can:

- Do kind things, even when they seem small.
- Talk and listen intentionally, giving others our full attention.
- Help others—and be willing to ask for help when we need it.
- Work together to solve problems in our families and communities.

Mr. Rogers reminded us that although each of us is unique, we have much more in common than we sometimes realize. That may be one of the most important lessons we can teach our children as we help them grow into caring, compassionate, and generous adults.

Kindness does not have to be complicated or expensive. We can use kind words and give sincere compliments. We can help a neighbor, donate to a local charity, nonprofit organization, or food bank, or send someone a note of appreciation.

We can pay for someone else's meal, serve coffee to people experiencing homelessness on a cold night, or pick up trash in our neighborhood. We can even make the extraordinary decision to become an organ donor and potentially save someone's life. The possibilities are endless.

Mr. Rogers taught us that kindness is more than an idea. It is something we do. Perhaps his greatest lesson was that we do not have to change the entire world to make a difference. We can begin with the person standing next to us—with a kind word, a listening ear, a helping hand, or simply the willingness to care.

In Mr. Rogers' neighborhood, kindness was not just something hetalked about. It was a way of life.

INDIVIDUAL & COUPLES THERAPY



Resolving issues from your past that block your future.

MICHELLE GOTTLIEB *Psy.D., MFT, LPCC*

305 N. Harbor Blvd. Ste 202, Fullerton

714-879-5868 ext 5

www.michellegottlieb.com

Robert "Bob' Linnell *1945 - 2026*

Long-time Fullerton resident and neighborhood preservation advocate, Robert "Bob" Linnell, passed away on October 15 at his historic Malvern Avenue home while in hospice care. He was 81 years old.

Bob grew up in Long Beach, where he attended Long Beach Polytechnic High School and Long Beach City College (now Long Beach Community College). He later ventured to USC in the 1960s to earn a Bachelors' of Architecture, where he formed many lifelong friendships. He eventually returned to USC to earn a Masters of Urban Design. In the 1970s, Bob joined the Peace Corps and served in Tunisia for three years.

Upon returning home, Bob landed a job as a planner for the City of Fullerton. He quickly bought his historic home and began cultivating his gardens. After working for over 30 years, he retired but continued to work part-time in the private sector to earn Medicare credits. He joined the large sign company Outdoor Dimensions, where he worked in the Codes and Permitting department. Recognized as their code expert, he was known for much more and kept working long after earning the necessary credits. The people at Outdoor Dimensions became a significant part of Bob's expanding circle of friends.



Beyond his love of the beach, USC football, and winter sports, Bob developed a passion for historic preservation and gardening. He volunteered for many years with Fullerton Beautiful, the Arboretum, and Fullerton Heritage. While with Fullerton Beautiful, he served as Membership Chair and helped select gardens for the popular annual garden tours. He was always prepared for Arbor Day plantings, gloves and shovel in hand. Recently, he collaborated with city staff on plant selection for the Hunt Branch Library and collected signatures from residents who wanted Jacarandas planted in their parkways along Jacaranda Avenue.

Bob devoted countless volunteer hours to the Arboretum, working in the gift shop. If you wanted to join him for lunch at Wahoo's, it had to fit around his Arboretum volunteer schedule. He was a tremendous asset to Fullerton Heritage, serving as Secretary and on the Board of Directors for decades. With his expertise in City planning, Bob educated new City planning staff on the nuances of neighborhood preservation zones.

For decades, Bob compiled nominations for Fullerton properties to be designated as Fullerton Local Landmarks or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Just as he was slipping away, the City Council approved his most recent collaboration—the Lower Golden Hill Historic District designation.

As friends and neighbors gathered in Bob's final days to share stories, we realized none of us knew the whole Bob. Still, the pieces we shared reminded us how fortunate we were to be part of his family.

Bob is preceded in death by his parents, Hugh and Joan Linnell, and his brother, Richard, all of Long Beach. A lifelong bachelor, he had no living relatives, but he had a large family of friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

Bob requested no formal services, and McAulay Wallace is handling arrangements. Share memories on their website: *dignitymemorial.com*.

In memory of Bob, you can donate to the Prostate Cancer Foundation (Santa Monica), the USC School of Architecture, Providence St. Jude Memorial Foundation, CSUF Philanthropic Foundation for The Fullerton Arboretum, and Fullerton Heritage.

Mary Frances "Franki" Capps Berry

1940 - 2026

Mary Frances Capps Berry, known to her friends as Franki Berry, passed away on October 16, one day after her 86th birthday, following a battle with stomach cancer. She lived a full, accomplished life marked by determination, creativity, generosity, and a genuine interest in the people around her.

Born to Erma and Samuel Capps on October 15, 1940, in Holdenville, Oklahoma, she was named Frances after her paternal grandmother. Over the years, Frances became Franki, a name that suited her spirited personality. Franki spent her early years on a horse ranch in Sasakwa, Oklahoma, where her father trained and sold quarter horses. He also owned a strip mall that housed a boxing gym, pool hall, barber shop, and beauty shop, where her mother worked. As a young girl, Franki wore overalls and explored the trails, developing the independent spirit that would serve her throughout her life.

Around 1952, her family moved permanently to Long Beach. After her parents divorced, her mother settled in Southgate with Franki and her sister, Julia, where they worked as hairdressers. Many of Franki's aunts, uncles, and cousins already lived in Southgate. Franki was a competitive basketball player in junior high school and was advanced a grade level. She also developed a lifelong love of reading.

Franki met the handsome Elton Berry when she was 12. Elton was her cousin Jim's best friend. Their young romance led to marriage when Franki was 15 and Elton was 17. Franki did not finish high school, while Elton worked as a carpenter. Their partnership became the foundation for a life filled with family, hard work, and shared adventures.



By the time Franki was 17 and Elton was 19, the couple had purchased their first home in Norwalk. In 1963, they bought a home in Buena Park's "Flower Tract," where they lived for 15 years. Franki became deeply involved in the community, volunteering with the Parent Teacher Association and hand-drawing posters for every classroom at Dysinger Elementary School. She also enjoyed playing volleyball and tennis and participating in a bowling league.

With a mother who was a hair stylist, Franki had learned the art of cutting and styling hair. Eager to refine her skills, she and her friend Trisha attended Marinello School of Beauty at Buena Park Mall in 1969. Throughout her life, many of her close friends enjoyed having Franki cut and style their hair.

Franki's next adventure was real estate, a profession that proved to be a perfect fit. She knew the neighbors through her community activities, her children's schools, and her church. Cheerful, intelligent, hardworking, and generous, she also possessed a natural eye for style and design. She especially enjoyed helping people find and purchase their first homes.

Franki built an impressive 50-year career as a real estate agent and broker. With her business partner, Solon Shaw, she owned what became Anaheim's second-largest, award-winning real estate office, which they ran for 20 years. In 1974, she was the top award winner among all Century 21 offices. After moving to Fullerton, she opened two additional real estate offices.

Never one to limit herself to a single area of expertise, Franki earned her general contractor's license, complementing her husband's career as a general contractor. Around 1979, she and Elton worked together on blueprints and reconstructed their next home in Buena Park's Los Coyotes neighborhood. Buena Park House Improvement Magazine featured their finished home on the cover, a fitting tribute to their shared vision and creativity.

Franki's commitment to her community extended well beyond her professional accomplishments. She served for many years on the Buena Park Planning Commission, was a board member of the Buena Park Boys and Girls Club, and was a beloved member of the Fullerton Rotary Club. She also served on the Board of Directors at Martin Luther Hospital. Her real estate expertise was so widely respected that she qualified as an expert witness in real estate court cases.

Away from work and community service, Franki enjoyed her beautiful home, gardening, cooking, shopping, painting, reading, and going to movies. She was also a devoted Elvis Presley fan and proudly held the distinction of having been kissed by the King himself!

Above all, Franki was proud of her family and loved talking about them. Her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren were central to her life, and she took great joy in their accomplishments and the relationships they shared.

Franki is survived by her three children, Susan (Carl) Baldini, Steven (Rinda) Berry, and Diane Berry; eight grandchildren, Laura, Lisa, Cara, Ryan, Caitlin, Chris, April, and Kimberly; and 17 great-grandchildren. She is also survived by her sister, Julia Capps Kemp; her nephew, Stephen (Nicki) Kemp, and his twin sons; and her niece, Kari (Nells) Dahlgard.

Franki will be remembered for her determination, entrepreneurial spirit, creativity, generosity, and devotion to her family and community. She had a special gift for making people feel valued and appreciated. As one friend beautifully put it, "She made you feel like the most important person in the room." That was Franki's gift, and it will live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved her.

A memorial service will be held on Monday, November 23 at 10 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2225 North Euclid Street, Fullerton.

Two Choice Single Gravesites at Loma Vista Memorial Park
For Sale $6,000 each OBO, Contact AL or ALICE at 714-985-9440

Rene Perez
Senior Fitness Specialist
One-on-One In-Home Personal Training
Exercises to improve activities of daily living (ADL)
Trusted and recommended by families for over 15 years.
Call me to schedule an assessment.
951.384.1137 | 714.395.2002

"He that doeth good is of God:" *III John 1*
"God creates and governs the universe, including man."
Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 295:5
Sunday Service & Sunday school at 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Testimony Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
Reading Room: Wed, Fri and Sat from 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
First Church of Christ, Scientist
1300 N. Raymond Avenue, Fullerton 92831
Office (714) 525-4062 Reading Room (714) 525-2649
christiansciencefullerton.com csfullerton@sbcglobal.net

Sharon A. Saltzman *1940 - 2026*



Fullerton resident Sharon Anne (Beckham) Saltzman passed away on October 4. She was 86.

She was born in Redding, on September 20, 1940 to Welby Beckham and Ruby Elder. Sharon grew up in Fullerton in a blended family and shared her childhood with seven siblings, her twin sister Lynne, sisters Sidney, Sandy and Phyllis and brothers Michael, Charles and Fred. Sharon graduated from Fullerton Union High School in 1958 and went on to receive an Associate of Arts degree from Fullerton College. She was the valedictorian of her graduating class at Fullerton College and also received the "Woman of the Year" award.

After college, Sharon's impeccable studiousness led to a career as a Human Resource Specialist in the aerospace industry. She retired after working an incredible 52 years for the same company, Shur-Lok Corporation, which later became Precision Cast Parts. Sharon married Bruce Roy Saltzman in 1962 and together they had two sons, Stephen and John. They divorced in 1969 and Sharon was incredibly proud of raising two boys as a single mom. Her son John went on to have two sons and Sharon cherished being a grandmother to her grandsons, Parker and Ryan. She loved attending their school and sporting events and was well known for bringing delicious baked goods to their games.

Sharon was an extraordinary woman. She was a triple cancer survivor, who survived lung, breast and skin cancer. Sharon persevered through those trials with grace and was an unwavering force of love and support for her family. Sharon and her legendary desserts will be greatly missed by her friends and family. She loved baking, especially brownies and pies for birthdays and holidays. She enjoyed knitting and crocheting, playing Sudoku and jigsaw puzzles and watching professional tennis and golf. Sharon loved spending time with her family and enjoyed traveling, especially to the Colorado River and Hawaii.

Sharon is survived by her sons Stephen and John Saltzman, her daughter-in-law Becky Armendariz-Saltzman, and her grandchildren Parker and Ryan. She is also survived by her siblings, Lynne (Beckham) Young (her twin sister) Sidney (Beckham) Frew, Sandy March and Michael March.

Sharon's Celebration of Life will be held at 4pm on November 7 at her son John Saltzman's home.

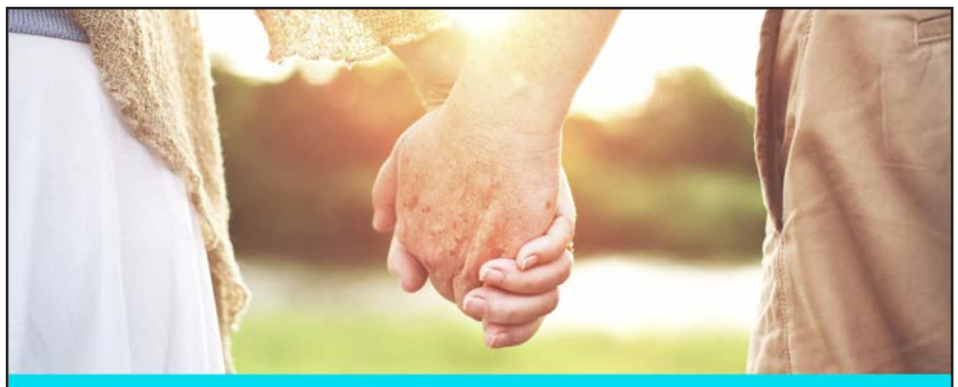
OUR TOWN CROSSWORD

ANSWER KEY TO "TWICE AS NICE" © 2026 from page 7

■	B	I	D	S	■	A	C	T	■	S	A	B	R	A
C	O	S	E	C	■	F	R	O	■	A	A	R	O	N
R	I	O	J	A	■	T	I	M	E	C	H	E	C	K
U	L	N	A	R	■	■	B	A	A	■	■	A	K	A
■	■	■	V	A	S	T	■	T	T	O	P	■	■	■
■	D	O	U	B	L	E	D	O	U	B	L	E	■	■
S	U	R	■	■	O	E	D	■	P	I	E	C	E	S
A	M	B	E	R	■	N	E	O	■	■	D	O	G	E
M	A	I	T	A	I	■	■	L	A	B	■	L	G	A
■	S	T	A	N	D	A	R	D	V	I	S	I	O	N
■	■	■	■	■	N	L	E	■	E	G	O	■	■	■
T	A	K	E	D	O	W	N	■	C	H	O	I	C	E
A	D	A	G	E	■	A	T	T	■	A	T	W	A	R
R	A	N	G	O	■	Y	A	O	■	I	H	O	P	E
O	B	E	Y	■	■	S	L	Y	■	R	E	N	E	■



PUZZLE MASTER
Valerie Brickey
was born in Fullerton and returned to raise her family here. She has contributed puzzles since 2014.



MCAULAY & WALLACE MORTUARIES

FUNERALS • LIFE CELEBRATIONS • CREMATIONS

LIVE STREAMING • PRE-NEED PLANNING

We help create remembrances that reflect the unique values, character and traditions of the families we serve. That is our passion, that is our purpose, that is our promise. Guaranteed.

MCAULAY & WALLACE MORTUARY, FULLERTON
714-525-4721 FD 190

MCAULAY—WALLACE MORTUARY, YORBA LINDA
714-777-2692 FD 1304

https://www.dignitymemorial.com/funeral-homes/mcaulay-wallace

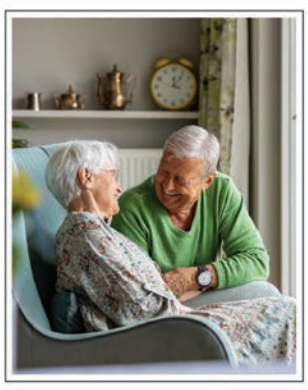
Every Detail Remembered® | Dignity® MEMORIAL

LOMA VISTA MEMORIAL PARK

CEMETERY • MORTUARY • CREMATORY

Family owned, operated, and cared for since 1914.

Choosing a final resting place is a very personal decision. At Loma Vista, your family becomes our family as we help you through the process of insuring a lasting legacy.



NEW lawns and family estates available now. Call for an appointment today.

701 E. Bastanchury Road, Fullerton, CA 92835
(714) 525-1575 • lomavistamemorialpark.com

City of Fullerton Employment

303 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, CA 92832 • Contact: (714) 738-6300 • Hours: Monday - Thursday 7:30 am – 5:30 pm • Closed every other Friday
https://www.cityoffullerton.com/government/departments/human-resources/city-employment
Applications are only accepted for current City of Fullerton vacancies.

Library Technology Assistant

Salary: $25 - $32 Hourly
Location: Fullerton Public Library
Job Type: Non-Regular (At Will/Non-Benefited)
Job Number: 2026 - Lib Tech Asst
Department: Library

Associate Engineer

Salary: $105,100 - $134,132 Annually
Location: 303 W. Commonwealth Ave
Job Type: Regular Full-Time
Job Number: 2026- Associate Eng
Department: Public Works

Police Officer - Lateral/Academy Trained

Salary: $92,803 - $142,987 Annually
Location: City of Fullerton, CA
Job Type: Regular Full-Time
Job Number: 2026-PO-Lateral
Department: Police

Police Officer Trainee

Salary: $92,803 - $102,315 Annually
Location: Fullerton Police Department
Job Type: Regular Full-Time
Job Number: 2026 - Police Off Trainee
Department: Police

Fire Cadet

Salary: $0.00
Location: Fullerton Fire Department
Job Type: Volunteer
Job Number: 2026- FR CADET
Department: Fire

Senior Maintenance Worker I

Salary: $47,860 - $61,110 Annually
Location: City of Fullerton
Job Type: Regular Full-Time
Job Number: 2026- Sr Maint Worker
Department: Public Work

Community Services Leader

Salary: $16 - $17 Hourly
Department: Parks and Recreation
Location: 303 W Commonwealth Ave
Job Type: Non-Regular (At Will/Non-Benefited)
Job Number: 2026- CSLEAD

Community Services Specialist

Salary: $17.90 - $18.90 Hourly
Location: 303 W Commonwealth Ave
Job Type: Non-Regular
Job Number: 2026- CSSPEC
Department: Parks and Recreation
Closing Date: Continuous



View of section of Union Pacific Trail between S. Richman Ave and Highland Ave



View from Union Pacific trailhead entrance at Independence Park



Video *Observer*

by Emerson Little © 2026

See videos on YouTube @emersonlittle1901

Traversing Union Pacific Trail from Park to Park

Much has been written about the city's extended Union Pacific Trail in South Fullerton over the last year. The city's expensive Phase Two project transformed the formerly neglected Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way into the paved pathway and bike path people can walk on today. I decided to hike on it and see it for myself, so on a Sunday morning in late October, my parents and I took a walk along the UP Trail from Independence Park to Union Pacific Park.

It begins at Independence Park, located off Valencia Avenue near the Fullerton DMV. Turning off Valencia Avenue and driving to the lot at the park's northeast corner (close to the skate park), we parked in front of a brown sign with yellow lettering for the Union Pacific Trail and walked toward the asphalt pathway.

According to a rectangular gray-green sign at the start of the trail, the Union Pacific Trail – Phase II was "another project funded by California Climate Investments through the California Natural Resources Agency's Urban Greening Program" and was "awarded in 2022."

What's interesting is that this Union Pacific Trail even has its own logo, which depicts a paved roadway-like path running aside railroad tracks, surrounded by trees. In real life, a fence separates the paved path from the train tracks. Some newly planted drought-resistant vegetation and fledgling sycamore trees grow in wood chips between the trail and the fence.

From the Independence Park parking lot, the paved trail runs next to a narrow dirt pathway designed for bike riders and people walking their dogs. The two pathways in unison wind around a corner, where it is hard not to notice a very colorful "Welcome to Fullerton" mural painted on the side of a parking structure for apartments on the north side of the train tracks. The mural seems to reflect the industrial and agricultural beginnings that made Fullerton the city it is today.

On the Sunday morning I visited, parked freight trains with large shipping containers piled on top of one another blocked sections of this mural from certain angles of the trail. Behind the word "Welcome" in the "Welcome to Fullerton" mural, sunlight rays and oversized oranges are depicted in a similar style to what one might find on an orange packing crate label.

On the right side of the mural, following the word "Fullerton," trailgoers will see an image of an old-fashioned steam engine. This painted train is drawn with a sense of perspective that makes it appear as though the engine is on course to plow straight into the actual railroad tracks located directly beneath it.

Walking forward, this first segment of the Union Pacific Trail winds around a few small curves before continuing in a straight line between the nearby neighborhoods, auto body shops, and industrial yards lined with barbed wire fences. Behind one barbed wire fence was a small industrial yard, where the smell of oil was very prominent. The good news is that there are plenty of light posts along this trail, meaning that there are greater areas of visibility when it is dark outside.

In many ways, this trail reminded me of the Tracks at Brea, not only because it's a safer route along what used to be a historic Union Pacific railroad corridor, but also because what walkers see along this trail is very similar. There's a stretch of trail where my family could peer into an auto body repair yard or look at the backside of some industrial buildings leading up to a crosswalk that stretches over South Richman Avenue. This crosswalk was relatively safe because you could push a button to turn on warning lights.

There was an even longer stretch of trail between South Richman Avenue and Highland Avenue, where the trail once again was facing the backsides of buildings or fences where neighbors had put up plants to try and block passersby from looking into their yards. Sage and some other low-maintenance drought-resistant plants had been planted off to the right of the dirt part of the path, and in time, these will probably grow larger. I did spot two palm trees around a packing house type of building where two gray cell towers were positioned.

Leading up to the Highland Avenue trailhead, there were at least two signs placed by the city that read, "Turn left at the sidewalk and cross at traffic signal to continue along Union Pacific Trail." However, for the most part, the eight to ten people who I saw on the trail that Sunday morning weren't crossing Highland to continue on the Union Pacific Trail. There were also signs placed as you reach Highland Avenue warning you to yield to oncoming bikes and pedestrians. One of the few benches found along this trail was also close to this trailhead.

My parents and I did turn left and cross Highland, although it was a bit of a wait for the signal to change. This intersection between Highland and Walnut happens to be very busy with traffic, so it is best to wait a moment after the signal changes to make sure it's safe to cross the street.

Once we reached the opposite side of Highland, we walked uphill, following a white fence that turned a corner and brought us to a long stretch of parking lot that eventually led to Union Pacific Park. On the left side of the parking lot, there was a person sleeping, so we crossed to the walkway on the opposite side of the lot and continued straight until we reached the park. The park's playground was well used by children and families.

Overall, for people living in the nearby neighborhoods, this extension of the Union Pacific Trail has helped clean up the space between the industrial yards and railroad tracks. Most people I encountered were going about their morning jogs as the sounds of trains passing by carried over the industrial yards and into the neighborhoods.



