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Mountain View School District Welcomes State Treasurer Fiona Ma

The Mountain View School District (MVSD) in El Monte was proud to welcome California State Treasurer, Fiona Ma, CPA, to the District on January 11, 2024 for a presentation on the fiscal challenges facing school districts, as well as a tour of two of the District's eight schools, providing a glimpse of the dynamic teaching and learning that takes place each day for Mountain View's 4,590 students.

Dr. Andry, District Superintendent, addressed the crowd and welcomed everyone to the Mountain View School District.

"Thank you for joining us to learn a little about our school district and some areas of priority or challenges we face as we work to inspire our students and community. We are proud to welcome Fiona Ma, California State Treasurer and thank her for giving us her gift of time and continuing to demonstrate her passion for education and the wellbeing of Californians overall," said Dr. Andry.

Dr. Andry and District Administrators, with the support of



Board of Education President, Christian Diaz, and Board Members, Veronica Sifuentes and Cindy Wu, delivered a presentation on Robust and Stable Funding for Schools - Fiscal Challenges Amid Declining Enrollment and a Daily Attendance Funding Model and showcased the priority areas regarding school funding/budgets that provide extreme challenges to MVSD and school districts across the state. Among the priority areas shared were declining enrollment, absenteeism, restricted funding, increased pension liability, deferred funding and equity for students.

According to Darin De Knikker,

MVSD's Associate Superintendent of Business Services and Strategic Planning, the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which is the plan that determines school funding, does not support the basic operational needs of district's with declining enrollment like Mountain View.

"With LCFF, school districts are funded based on enrollment so district's like ours which have been experiencing several years of declining enrollment face many fiscal challenges. Along with the decline in enrollment, absenteeism

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Baldwin Park Seeks Resident Input on Measure BP Investment



Baldwin Park residents are encouraged to participate in a community engagement meeting organized by the City of Baldwin Park Stakeholders Oversight Committee (SOC). The meeting aims to gather input and ideas on how to best allocate the revenues generated by Measure BP, a 3/4 cent sales tax approved by voters in November 2022.

The community engagement meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, January 18, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Foster Elementary School cafeteria. The SOC, responsible for overseeing Measure BP funds, will be present to listen to residents' suggestions and proposals regarding

the allocation of the tax revenues. Betsy Lara, Chair of the SOC, expressed her excitement about the upcoming meeting, stating, "We welcome all Baldwin Park residents to this meeting and look forward to the ideas and proposals they bring to the table. We value our community's input and view it as essential to determining the best and most impactful plan for Measure BP funds."

The SOC's final recommendations, which will be based on the public input collected during this engagement meeting and prior meetings, will be presented to the Baldwin Park City Council. Measure BP is expected to generate approximately \$6 million per

BALDWIN PARK >> PAGE 7

Foothill Gold Line Leadership Stays in Place as 2024 Begins



At their January meeting today, Claremont Council Member Ed Reece and Glendora Mayor Mendell Thompson began the new year by assuming their roles as Chair and Vice Chair (respectively) of the Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority Board of Directors. Their unanimous reelection last month by their peers signifies the confidence placed in their leadership as the agency navigates a critical phase.

The ongoing construction of the westernmost 9.1-mile, four-station project segment from Glendora to Pomona has surpassed 80 percent completion. The Construction Authority is now initiating the process to hire a design-build contractor for the final 3.2-mile, two-station project

segment, which includes the Claremont and Montclair stations.

Chair Reece expressed optimism for the year ahead, stating, "I believe this year will be an historic year for the Foothill Gold Line, and I am incredibly proud of the progress we are making. We will complete construction on the four-station segment from Glendora to Pomona and be ready to turn it over to Metro in the first week of 2025. By the end of this year, the Construction Authority will also be close to hiring the contractor to build the final two-station segment, bringing us one major step closer to fulfilling the agency's legislative mandate."

Both Chair Reece and Vice Chair GOLD LINE >> PAGE 7



El Monte Union Honors Adult Transition Graduates at Winter Commencement



Seven graduates from El Monte Union High School District's (EMUHSD) Adult Transition Program were celebrated with joy and applause for their academic accomplishments and successes during a winter commencement ceremony held on December 21.

In the presence of families, friends, the Board of Trustees, and District administrators and staff, the ceremony showcased heartfelt moments as graduates Jolin Duong, Gabriel Escobar, Edgar Valdez, Edwin Huaracha-Campos, Andrea Montano, Dominiak Morrow and Fatima Santellan walked across the stage to receive their certificates of completion.

"During their time in our program, these graduates have overcome challenges with determination, positivity and have exhibited remarkable growth," EMUHSD Adult Transition Program Department Chair Tiffany Walters said during the ceremony. "As I watched each of you transition into the adults that are now leaving us today, it has filled me with so much pride and excites me for what is to come in the next step of your lives. Congratulations to all our graduates, we wish you all the best of luck in

your future endeavors and you will surely be missed."

The District's Adult Transition Program provides students ages 18 to 22 with mild to severe disabilities an opportunity to transition from high school to adulthood. The coursework focuses on developing skills that foster independence, covering personal care, bill payment, shopping, socializing, transportation and home maintenance.

Additionally, the District's WorkAbility I Program helps students receive comprehensive pre-employment training and employment placement. The program aims to provide valuable work experience and opportunities for employment.

"On behalf of the District, I'd like to extend our warmest congratulations to Jolin, Gabriel, Edgar, Edwin, Andrea, Dominiak and Fatima on their well-earned achievements. May you always remember that you are loved and cared for throughout the El Monte Union community," Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. "The success of our graduates reflects the dedication and collaborative efforts made by our parents, families, staff and administration of the Adult Transition Program. Thank you for your continued support!"

Graduate Organizes Toy Drive for Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Leslie Maldonado, a Class of 2019 graduate of South El Monte High School (SEMHS), teamed up with her former educators from SEMHS, foreign language teacher Ramon Lopez and social science teacher and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) coordinator Erick Escamilla, to launch a toy drive to benefit cancer patients at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. As a two-time Osteosarcoma survivor, Maldonado said she felt it was her turn to give back to a cause close to her heart during the holiday season.

"There were times when I was extremely tired and had to spend the holidays in the hospital. I would like to thank my family, Mr. Lopez and Mr. Escamilla for always being there for me, allowing me the grace to take it easy while also pushing me to succeed and make it to my senior year,"

Maldonado said. "It feels amazing to say I am four years cancer free now and I believe it is my duty to spread the holiday cheer and share the joy with others."

SEMHS Associated Student Body members, AVID students and the school community quickly rallied behind Maldonado, collecting more than 300 toys for the Children's Hospital.

"I am so grateful and proud to be a part of this amazing effort," Escamilla said. "Leslie deserves all the credit. She knows first-hand how lonely patients might feel [during the holidays] and she did not want the kids to go without having at least one present to open. Thank you to everyone who donated and made a difference in the lives of these children."



EMUHSD: There's an App For That

El Monte Union High School District (EMUHSD) reminds our readers about the release of their new mobile app, designed to provide students, parents, and staff with easy access to important school information and updates.

With this integrated app, users can connect to the El Monte Union High School District and its schools all in one place.

The app offers personalized features for students, parents, and staff. By logging in, users can access customized content and notifications that are specifically tailored to their needs.

This personalized approach allows for a more efficient and effective communication experience.

Users can easily indicate their preferred language, and all content, including notifications, will be provided in the chosen language.

To take advantage of this valuable

resource, simply visit the App Store on your mobile device and search for "EMUHSD Mobile App."

Download and install the app today to stay informed, connected, and engaged with the El Monte Union High School District.

Don't miss out on important school news and updates. Stay connected by downloading the EMUHSD Mobile App and access all the features and information you need, right at your fingertips.



FREE Metro Rides for EMUHSD Students!

Get your GoPass TAP card today!
More information at your school office.

Health & Fitness

Rethinking Screen Time for Kids

(StatePoint) As families try to establish a new normal, balancing screen time for kids has become not only especially challenging, but more important than ever.

“It’s only natural that children will be spending more time on digital devices than usual these days in order complete school work, attend remote classes and communicate with friends and loved ones,” says Michele Havner, director of marketing at Eturi Corp., a company with a mission to empower parents to guide their children through a balanced use of technology. “Restrictions about screen may need to be rethought in many cases, but they should not be completely

eliminated.”

Rethink Leisure Time

According to ReelGood.com data, the month of March saw a whopping 70 percent jump in weekday streaming of kids’ movies and television shows.

While there may be more time on kids hands and fewer options of what to do with it, it’s important to emphasize alternative ways to relax and have fun so that kids are not spending all their waking hours looking at screens.

All that extra down time around the house may also present some good opportunities to teach kids some practical life skills, like cooking, cleaning and budgeting.

habits, even as they begin to use their digital devices for more tasks throughout the day.

Striking the Balance

Many parents are struggling to balance their own work with homeschooling and online safety. Luckily, there's an app for that.

There are many apps available to monitor and manage what kids are doing online, create daily screen time allowances, set filters on browsers and block certain applications at certain times of day.

Check in

During your own free hours, spend some time checking in with your kids to see how they are coping with the current situation, how they are spending their free time and whether they are facing any struggles with remote learning.

Life has changed rapidly and significantly for families. And while this new normal includes a greater reliance on digital devices, parents can take steps to continue to ensure kids are striking a healthy balance.

8 Wonderful Things About the Human Body



Some people think they’re not all that special and believe their lives don’t have much meaning. But that’s not true. You and your children are wonderfully made.

The human body is a fascinating and intricate machine. A delicate balance that allows us to walk upright, run fast, climb high, and take an enormous amount of punishment and stress before breaking down.

This article is one of a series that will help you be a leader by shining a spotlight on the wonder of life. Here are eight wonderful things about to know about the human body that you probably didn’t know.

The average heart pumps 300 quarts of blood every hour. That’s one gallon of milk a day for seventy-five days.

Tongue prints are as unique as fingerprints.

Underwater swimming is the only time you should hold your breath while exercising.

Your body has approximately 60,000 miles of blood vessels – that’s enough to wrap around the equator twice plus continue half way home.

Muscle is 3x more efficient at burning calories than fat.

There are around 640 muscles in the human body. Almost every muscle is one part of a pair of identical bilateral muscles, found on both sides.

Your tongue is the only muscle in your body that is attached at only one end.

If you didn’t have valves in your veins, all the blood in your body would fall down, filling up your feet and legs like a bucket.

How your body moves, connects, and acts with others is part of what makes you wonderfully and fearfully made.

Love your body and improve your life.



Prioritize Online Safety

Unsupervised access to the internet and social media sites can put children at risk for a number of online threats. Parents should continue to ensure kids practice safe online

CANCER SCREENING SAVES LIVES

There is never a bad time to remind you that cancer screening saves lives.

To help you advocate for your health and that of your friends and family members, here’s a timeline of when various types of cancer should first be screened for.

Cervical cancer: age 21

Cervical cancer is highly treatable when caught early, making screening for it extremely important. Starting when they turn 30, women should get an HPV test every five years.

Breast cancer: age 50

Breast cancer is by far the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women. While

survival rates are improving for all stages, the earlier it’s caught, the easier it is to treat.

According to the American College of Physicians, women with no increased risk for breast cancer should get a screening mammogram every two years starting at age 50 until age 75.

Colorectal cancer: age 50

For people with average risk, a first colonoscopy at 50 years old is recommended, with follow-up exams depending on the results.

Earlier screening is recommended for people with increased risk, such as those who are of African-American descent, those with a family history.

Prostate cancer: age 50

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among American men.

Skin cancer

People of all ages can develop skin cancer. Talk to your doctor to determine your risk factors and to schedule regular skin exams.

Detected early, the survival rate is nearly 100 percent.

For this reason, it’s recommended that men who are about to turn 50 have a discussion about prostate cancer screening with their doctor to determine whether they’re at high risk and whether screening would be beneficial.

Lung cancer: age 55

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States. Contrary to popular belief, it’s very treatable if caught early. The problem is that over 80 percent of lung cancers are diagnosed at an advanced stage.

Current smokers, as well as former heavy smokers, aged 55 to 80 should be screened with a low-dose computed tomography (CT) scan.

Cancer screening saves lives, so don’t hesitate to remind friends and relatives to get tested.

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Real estate REPORT



5 Things to Consider When Refinancing

(StatePoint) Mortgage rates have recently hit near-record lows and Freddie Mac predicts rates will remain low for the foreseeable future.

If you haven't already taken advantage of the low-rate environment to refinance your home, experts say it's worth considering.

"There are lots of reasons to refinance your home mortgage when rates go down," says Liz Bryant, national sales manager for Wells Fargo Home Lending. "Lower rates can reduce your payment, shorten the overall length of your loan or provide you access to cash that you can use for home improvements or other expenses."

It may make sense to refinance if



your goal is to reduce your monthly payment as well as the interest you will pay over the life of the loan. Reducing your payment will free up money for saving, investing or spending in other ways.

Refinancing can shorten the length of your loan, for example, by reducing your loan from a 30-year repayment period to 15 or even 10. That can allow you to pay the loan off faster and reduce the amount of interest you pay.

Some homeowners refinance to tap into available equity. This can be useful if you're paying for a large project like a home renovation or are making another large purchase.

If you have built up equity in your home, you may want to consider refinancing to remove mortgage insurance. However, if you have a government-backed mortgage, you will need to refinance to a conventional loan to remove your mortgage insurance.

Finally, if you want to move out of an adjustable-rate mortgage and into a fixed-rate one, refinancing may make sense. Depending on rates, your payment could be higher, but doing so will protect you against rising rates in the future.

To DIY or Not DIY: Questions for Your Next Renovation



Do I have the tools?

If the job requires special gear, think twice. Purchasing equipment is expensive and certain power tools and machines may not be easy to use for a novice.

Do I have the time?

You may be capable of completing the renovation, but if it takes too much of your personal time, it may not be worth it.

While a number of home projects can be completed by the average DIYer, others should be left to the professionals.

When deciding whether you should do it yourself or delegate, ask yourself these three questions:

Do I have the skills?

If you can't confidently say that you know what you're doing, hire a professional.

In general, cosmetic upgrades can be successfully completed by those without much experience. However, any renovation that involves plumbing, electrical work or the structure of your home, should be left to the professionals.

Bad Habits That Increase Your Electricity Bill



Many homeowners are surprised to learn how much energy their electronic devices use. If you're looking for

ways to conserve energy and spend less on your utility bills, here are three habits that you should break immediately.

Watching television and movies on gaming consoles. Video game consoles use 30 to 45 percent more power than televisions. In addition, running one high-definition gaming console requires the equivalent amount of energy as running 10 Blu-Ray devices. You're better off using your console for nothing but gaming.

Leaving your electronics plugged in all the time. This is a common habit, but did you know that many electronic devices use up to 40 percent of the energy required for their functioning, even when they're turned off?

Unplugging your toaster and coffee maker after breakfast and removing chargers from outlets once devices are charged will help you conserve energy.

Not thinking through purchases. Laser printers use nearly twice as much power as inkjet versions.

Before buying one, ask yourself if the increase in energy consumption over traditional models is worth it.

Similarly, a 55-inch flat-screen TV uses twice as much energy as a 32-inch model. Consider whether the upgrade in size is worth it.

The bottom line is that you should evaluate your needs and make purchasing decisions accordingly.

In sum, to save energy at home you should evaluate what electronics you use and how you use them. Doing so will allow you to save on your utility bills and may even extend the lifespan of your devices.

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Helpful Settings...

Televisions, computers, printers and other devices may come equipped with a "sleep," "power saving" or "standby" feature.

You can reduce power usage in your home by engaging this function when the item isn't in use.

In addition, you can change some settings, such as screen brightness, to improve energy efficiency of the device.

DIY vs. Professional PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Being a landlord isn't easy, especially for someone with a day job, but this is sometimes a hard lesson to learn. In an effort to save money, many landlords attempt to manage their properties on their own. Unfortunately, this could result in far more expense and time than anticipated, leaving the landlord with large bills and unhappy tenants. As a DIY landlord, the tools list can be extensive.

TO DO LIST:

- WORK WITH PM TO FINALIZE TENANT CHOICE
- PAY FOR ANY NEEDED REPAIRS, to the property management company or the tenant
- UNDERSTAND BASIC LANDLORD AND TENANT RIGHTS
- GET THE RIGHT INSURANCE

FACT: As of March 2023, home prices are down more than 30% from their peak.

Leasing

- SET THE RENT: Identify similar units in the neighborhood and determine a rate that is competitive.
- ADVERTISE: Advertise online and in the paper. Depending on the market, responses can easily be prepared to update your advertisements weekly to keep them at the top of search results.
- PHONE SCREEN APPLICANTS: Before meeting in person, it's important to vet the applicants during 10-15 minute calls to make sure they are suitable.
- SHOW THE PROPERTY: Whether it be through screenshots or private showings, be sure to make your property accessible.
- SCREEN TENANTS: Background and credit checks are a must to ensure tenants take care of your property and are on time. Check a tenant that you can trust and verify the others that they have not been evicted.
- SET LEASING POLICIES: Make sure you have a lease agreement, and tenant should be made aware of these policies or set up right.

Maintenance

- MAINTAIN BUILDING'S MAJOR SYSTEMS ON REGULAR SCHEDULE: From changing furnace filters to cleaning gutters, something always needs attention.
- MAINTAIN LANDSCAPING: Be prepared to step in on weekends to mow the lawn.
- MAKE MINOR REPAIRS: Whether it be replacing a light or fixing a broken window, these "minor" repairs can add up.
- CONTRACT WITH SERVICE PROFESSIONALS AS NEEDED: If there is a plumbing leak? Be ready with a trusted plumber for larger tasks.

Legal Knowledge

- Familiarize yourself with Fair Housing laws.
- Learn how to craft a leasehold-free lease.
- Answer Important Questions Properly:
 - What constitutes a safe, sanitary, "habitable" environment?
 - Who is responsible for what repairs?
 - Landlord's right of entry.
 - How to legally evict a tenant or conduct an eviction.

Administrative

- COLLECT RENT: Hopefully this won't be a headache, but sometimes chasing down late payment is required.
- Keep records for accounting and tax purposes.
- Parse the right tax strategy.
- Getting the right insurance.

Tenant Management

- Be available (if) to handle emergencies.
- Return your emergency phone calls quickly.
- Deal with lease violations.
- Hold on good tenants through incentives.

FACT: More than 1.3 million landlords are currently using a property management company.

FACT: With an average ROI of 8+% rental properties are attracting many investors, including Warren Buffet.

FACT: The average rent in America for a 1-bedroom apartment is \$846/month. In a 10-year period, it has increased by \$1020 (or a 21% increase).



Ramona Property Managers, Inc.



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EYE ON FINANCE / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Learning at Home: 5 Tips for Teaching Children Financial Literacy



(StatePoint) If you have school-age children, you are probably one of the many parents facing the challenge of educating your kids at home. While there are countless learning options available—from virtual music classes to videos about zoo animals—financial literacy is one important subject that should not be overlooked.

Teaching your children financial literacy gives them the knowledge, skills and motivation to responsibly manage their money and achieve their future goals. Learning fundamental financial concepts is not always easy, so experts recommend that you start with the basics. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Explain that there are three things you can do with money: spend it, save it or give it away. To illustrate the point and introduce them to budgeting, have your child divide up money they receive from gifts or an allowance. Have them pay themselves first by putting a certain amount into savings. Then teach them the importance of giving by having them donate a portion of their funds to a charity of their choosing. Allow them to spend the rest.
- Help them distinguish between needs and wants. With older children, you can do this by giving them shopping practice. You could give them a list of things they need, like new clothes, and a budget to shop for these items online. They will have to decide how best to use their limited

resources. Should they buy the designer jeans they really want or a lower-priced option that lets them get everything on their list? With younger children, you might instead have them compare the costs of preparing meals at home (food being a need) to ordering from a restaurant (a want).

- Give them firsthand experience with saving money. Many banks let you open savings accounts online. Set one up in your child’s name and have them monitor it. By the time they become teenagers, the benefit of saving regularly will be apparent because they will have some money to spend on clothes, food and experiences with friends—and still save for college.

- Involve them in creating a financial mission statement for your family. Ask them what they think is important: Is it planning for a future vacation, saving for college or other goals? Having an open conversation with your children encourages them to think about the meaning of money, the challenge of earning it and the importance of saving for what they truly value.

- Underscore the importance of giving. Explaining to children that other people have less than they do and teaching them to give and volunteer helps develop financial discipline as well as empathy toward others. This will help them stay focused on what is truly important, which can have a profound impact on their finances and every other aspect of their lives.

For more tips like these, visit letsmakeaplan.org. Your Certified Financial Planner professional can also suggest educational resources for teaching your children financial literacy.

To make the most of your time with your children while they are at home, reinforce the practical life skill of good money management.

How to Spot a Tax Scam

It’s an unfortunate truth that thousands of Americans fall for tax scams every year. As online activities and technology in general become an increasingly complex and significant part of our daily lives, fraud becomes more complex and sophisticated.

As tax season approaches, attempts to trick the public increase, but there are easy ways to identify potential tax fraud before it happens.

Over the past few years, people claiming to be from the IRS have tricked taxpayers into giving money or information over the phone.

People trapped in these scams have reported calls during which the caller claims more money is owed to the IRS that must be paid immediately.

No one from the IRS is ever



allowed to threaten a taxpayer. If this happens to you, it’s cause for suspicion to say the least.

Another popular tax scam involves sending fake emails or websites that attempt to trick the recipient into giving up their personal or financial information, which can then be used to steal their identity.

It is important to know that the IRS will never initiate contact with a taxpayer through email with a request for personal or financial information.

The Ripple Effect When You Shop Local

We know that shopping on Amazon can be convenient, but this holiday season, don't forget that local businesses deliver even more for your dollar.

Here's what happens when you shop with a locally owned business — starting with you.

YOU BENEFIT FROM EXPERTISE.
The perfect running shoe. The new toy that's certain to delight. The fantastic novel you hadn't heard of. The best tool for the job. Get the right thing and save time by relying on the expertise of local retailers.

At a local store, you're as much as 3x more likely to discover something new.¹

YOU CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY.
Shopping locally means bumping into friends, enjoying lively streets, playing in the toy store, and trading neighborhood news with the people behind the counter. Local businesses make communities work.

In places with more local businesses, people have stronger social ties² and participate more in civic affairs.³

YOU STRENGTHEN YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY.
Local retailers hire local people, pay local taxes, and source goods locally. When you shop local, you expand opportunity where you live.

Compared to Amazon, independent retailers create 2x as many jobs for the same amount of revenue.⁴

YOU CAST A VOTE FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM.
Starting a small business has long been a pathway to the middle class. By supporting local entrepreneurs, you invest in a future that works for all of us.

Places with more small businesses have less income inequality.⁵

Join the conversation on social media: #LocalEffect #ShopLocal #ShopSmall

1. Cohen Group Inc. "Why Online Book Discovery is Broken (and How to Fix It)." *Openm*, Jan. 17, 2013.
2. "The Health and Wealth of US Counties," Troy C. Blanchard et al., *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy, and Society*, 2011.
3. "The Configuration of Local Economic Power and Civic Participation in the Global Economy," Troy Blanchard and Todd L. Matheson, *Social Forces*, June 2006.
4. "Amazon's Stranglehold," Institute for Local Self-Reliance, Nov. 2014.
5. "Wage Inequality and Firm Growth," Heider M. Mueller et al., *US Working Paper 632*, March 2015.

AIB Advocates for Independent Business @AIBCoalition | **ILSR** INSTITUTE FOR Local Self-Reliance @ILSR

A Simple Recipe to Digitize Your Business

(NAPSI)—Technology can accelerate business outcomes virtually overnight. But today, with so many options available, choosing what to buy can be overwhelming.

So, how do resource-strapped small businesses find the best technology for their operation, fast?

Consider it like baking a cake – just follow a few steps in the right order, and bake – with care.

Step 1: Pinpoint your flavor profile. Start by outlining the exact issues you want to solve. If customer engagement is low, why and when? If inventory is high, what is not selling and why?

Step 2: Pull together your ingredients. Once you’ve identified your challenges, you’re ready to see which software can help.

Start by prioritizing functionality - not price. There can be big price differences between solutions, so shopping with a clear understanding of must-have features is important. Don’t buy more than you need—just as with adding sugar, sometimes less is more.

Next, look at reviews, screenshots and videos to get a sense for the product’s user friendliness.

All investments—products, people, technologies—must add value. Make sure you have a way to measure your return-on-investment once the software is in use.

Finally, bring pricing into the mix. Digitizing your business involves folding technology into existing operations so think about more than just the sticker price. Your total cost of ownership might include extra staffing or training costs so the technology runs smoothly.

Step 3: Just like baking, it’s important to bring all the things you need together in one place before you begin.

There are many resources you can use to identify options, from social media and online forums, to asking your own business networks. Capterra provides businesses with access to all this information in a single platform.

Regardless of how you conduct your research, make sure to use validated sources and dig into the differences. You should identify three to five potentially viable options.

Step 4: Bake-with care. Contact vendors whose products are on your shortlist. Schedule to get demonstrations and get an “all in” cost based on your “ingredient list.”

Remember, the most important part is in the prep: Work with colleagues to confirm your problem can be solved by technology; take advantage of resources (such as Capterra) to help identify, compare and contrast options all in one place; and structure your conversations with multiple vendors to make sure you negotiate a great deal.

Easy as pie-or should I say cake.



Three Dot Lounge...

Cracker Barrel

by Mike McClure



...so the other day marked the anniversary of the death of one of the more colorful characters of the old west. Wyatt Earp died on January 13, 1929.

Best known, now, for his participation in the gunfight at OK Corral in Tombstone where he along with two of his brothers and Doc Holiday killed three men.

According to all of the movies, Wyatt was the central figure in the conflict but actually his brother Virgil was a Deputy US Marshal and the Tombstone City Marshal at the time.

It was Virgil that initiated the action, Wyatt Earp was there to back up his brother. But books and movies over the years have made him the hero.

But, that's more recent. Almost forgotten is he was widely believed to have been the key to throwing the heavyweight championship fight between Fitzsimmons and Sharkey years later.

Earp was the referee, he had officiated several small time fights

but nothing as big as Fitzsimmons vs Sharkey in San Francisco (where fighting was illegal at the time).

Wyatt Earp entered the ring with a pistol under his coat but was asked to give it up by the Chief of Police (who, along with thousands of others, happened to be at this illegal fight).

Fitzsimmons was clearly the better fighter that day, with his speed and skills he was all over the heavier, slower Sharkey, until he landed a shot to Sharkey's body which Sharkey's corner immediately called low.

At first Fitzsimmons was amused by Sharkey's antics, as was much of the crowd. Amusement quickly changed to anger when Wyatt Earp declared it a foul and disqualified him giving the championship to Sharkey.

The stink of that call followed Wyatt Earp to his grave. It was widely believed that he had been paid to throw the fight to Sharky.

So you decide, good guy or not, it doesn't really matter. Wyatt Earp is certainly one of the more colorful men of the old west.

Working OverTime

by Cynthia Huizar



So much to do, January is already half over. Profe and I started the Year nice, we had my little brother Charlie and beautiful girlfriend Melanie over.

Profe cooked a prime rib with the fixings. My best friend Flora came by and we all had a great day, it was an amazing way to start the New Year.

Now it is time to settle down and start planning our next adventure. We go to Yuma each year in February for a conference and I like to go the annual Date Festival in Indio which is also in February.

Last year Profe took me out to dinner and a show for Valentine Day so this year I suggested we stay home and he could cook something (I love to see a man cook) and he agreed. Don't know what it will be but it will be good.

Yuma is interesting, Profe has friends there and so the conference will be fun and I am glad the Date Festival is back. It was shut down for a couple of years like so many other

events due to COVID.

This year as part of my Valentine present Profe is taking me to the Demolition Derby at the Festival, isn't he romantic? He's also taking me to a Roaring Twenty's dance at the center here in Rancho Cucamonga.

So January is half over, February is booked, pretty soon we have Easter and then I need to start planning our wedding! It's not until August of 2025 but time has a way of catching up to you.

Oh, before I forget, did you see my homie CJ Stroud play the other day? The greatest performance by a rookie in a playoff game.

Yes, my homie, before being the quarterback for the Houston Texans, and before Ohio State, he was the quarterback at Rancho Cucamonga High School.

I may not follow sports but I do follow anyone from here in Rancho! Happy rest of the year.

CROSSWORD

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74. Lean, past tense
- DOWN**
- *Atlas page
 - Speedy steed
 - First Nation nation
 - Squirrel away
 - Possessing
 - Full of excitement
 - *Opposite of NNE
 - Saintly rings
 - Guilty, e.g.
 - Last word on walkie-talkie
 - Ghana money
 - Guesstimate phrase (2 words)
 - Catch in a snare
 - Nigerian money
 - A Bobbsey twin
 - Steel on boots, pl.
 - *Inlet in Norway
 - Abalone seeker
 - Olden day calculators
 - *Compass _____
 - TV personality Aiken
 - Ancient Scandinavian characters
 - What actors do
 - *Iberian Peninsula country
 - Serb or Croat
 - Comme ci, comme ça
 - Past or present
 - Group of five
 - Actor DiCaprio
 - Like floss
 - "That's all she _____"
 - Tequila source
 - Work units
 - Wisecrack
 - Rounded protuberance
 - Aid in crime
 - Show pleasure
 - Cantatrice's offering
 - Student aid
 - *Tierra _____ Fuego
 - Big bang maker, acr.

- THEME:** GEOGRAPHY 101
- ACROSS**
- Village People's "_____ Man"
 - Certain tray content
 - Little bit, in Mexico
 - Ammo in a quiver, sing.
 - Geological Society of America
 - Young eel
 - Song of praise
 - Snowy _____ or great horned _____
 - Must-haves
 - *Strait between Russia and Alaska
 - *Smallest of the Great Lakes
 - Crime scene
 - evidence
 - Peter the Great, e.g.
 - Consumer-protecting org.
 - Skiing helmet manufacturer
 - Mother-of-pearl, pl.
 - Type of sail, pl.
 - #29 Down anagram
 - Like Raphael's cherubs
 - Face shape
 - Tie with a morning coat
 - Dwarf buffalo
 - Short version
 - "At _____, soldier"
 - Supposed giant Himalayan
 - Drool
 - Swimming hole
 - D.C. V.I.P.
 - Jim Acosta's announcement
 - *Baltic _____
 - *0° latitude
 - *Bay east of India
 - Cuban dance
 - John Keats' "To Autumn," e.g.
 - Fortune teller's card
 - Jeered
 - China's drinkable export
 - Bird-related
 - Dick and Jane's dog
 - "Slippery" tree

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- LOVE
- TOGETHER
- HAPPINESS
- TRUST
- MEMORIES
- SUPPORT
- UNITY
- LAUGHTER
- CARING
- JOYFUL

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**Gold Line
From Page 1**

Thompson have served on the board for several years, witnessing the project's advancement from final design to significant construction progress between Glendora and Pomona. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the construction segment remains on schedule and within budget, with an expected completion date in early January 2025. In 2023, the Pomona to Montclair project segment was identified as LA County's top priority for state funding. It was subsequently included in LA Metro's SB125 funding request, securing full funding in late December 2023. In 2024, the Construction Authority will launch a 15-month process to hire a design-build contractor for the final project segment, ultimately enhancing transportation options for commuters in the San Gabriel Valley and the Inland Empire. Chair Reece emphasized the significance of completing the

project, stating, "It will expand mobility opportunities by providing a reliable and sustainable transit option that connects people to their daily destinations, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the quality of life for our residents, workers, students, and visitors. On behalf of Vice Chair Thompson, I would like to express our gratitude to our colleagues for their continued confidence in us and their unwavering dedication to realizing the vision of this important project."

The Foothill Gold Line board comprises elected and appointed representatives from various areas along the project corridor. In addition to Chair Reece and Vice Chair Thompson, the board includes Pomona Mayor and Metro Board Member Tim Sandoval, La Verne Mayor Tim Hepburn, Ontario Council Member Alan Wapner (non-voting), Pasadena Council Member Gene Masuda (non-voting), and South Pasadena representative Dan Evans (non-voting). Currently, the City of Los Angeles and Governor appointees remain vacant.

**Baldwin Park
From Page 1**

year in local tax revenue, providing new opportunities for community investment and addressing crucial needs.

City Councilmember Daniel Damian emphasized the importance of citizen participation, stating, "We strongly encourage citizens of Baldwin Park to take advantage of

this opportunity to share their priorities for this vital resource. Measure BP will provide new opportunities to invest in the community and address our most important needs."

The meeting will include refreshments, and residents are encouraged to attend and voice their opinions. For additional information or any questions, residents can contact the SOC at (626) 813-5245, Ext. 317.

**Fiona Ma
From Page 1**

and the significant rise in pension costs have really strained school districts."

MVSD administrators shared a few of the mitigation efforts the District has taken to address the fiscal challenges including the closure of four schools in 2021 and the implementation of positive attendance outreach, chronic attendance programs, increased student supports with mental health and social emotional services, the Community Schools Planning Grant, as well as enrichment and extended learning opportunities.

El Monte Mayor, Jessica Ancona, and South El Monte Mayor, Gloria Olmos, joined other guests for a post-presentation tour of Miramonte Elementary. They boarded one of the District's electric school buses to witness the various sports and recreation programs offered after school.

The group then traveled to Parkview School where they observed the After School Mandarin Enrichment Program, the City of El Monte's Parks and Recreation basketball and cheerleading programs, as well as Think Together's after school offerings. Students and staff from both schools welcomed the distinguished visitors with enthusiastic cheers and were proud to highlight their programs.

"I like to go out to the community to see and hear what the folks are excited about and what the challenges are," said Ma. "Today was a great opportunity for me to hear about some of the issues facing the Mountain View School District and I really enjoyed touring the schools. Education is the great equalizer and gives more opportunities and we all know that our next generation - it is up to them. We depend on them to make sure they are educated, they can get good jobs, they can pay taxes, and they can own a

home, everything is all connected. We need to get back to prioritizing our youth and as State Treasurer I do a lot with public education whether its funding directly or indirectly."

State Treasurer Ma thanked MVSD's team, the city officials, school board members and legislative representatives for their service and stated she looks forward to partnering with El Monte and South El Monte to bring back families and slow the decline in enrollment in order to reinvigorate the schools.

"At the state level we need to provide more additional funding because of the per pupil spending criteria and the local control formulas I know need to be tweaked," said Ma. "The more that you advocate and lobby the more that will get done to benefit your school district and our kids and families."

Concluding the event, Dr. Andry and Board Member, Cindy Wu presented Fiona Ma with a certificate of appreciation, thanking her for her time and support which enables MVSD to continue its mission of inspiring each student to succeed every day.

MVSD appreciates those who joined in the special event with State Treasurer, Fiona Ma including El Monte Mayor, Jessica Ancona, Mayor Pro Tem, Dr. Julia Ruedas and Councilmember, Marisol Cortez, South El Monte Mayor, Gloria Olmos, District Representative for Senator Susan Rubio, Karla Cardenas, as well as El Monte Union High School District Board Members, Qui Nguyen and Estela Torres de Siegrist, El Monte City School District Board Member, David Siegrist, Rosaelva Lomeli, Rio Hondo College Trustee and Theresa Dryfuss, former President of Rio Hondo College.

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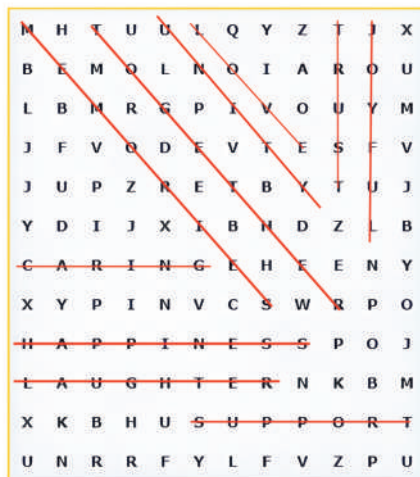
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City of Baldwin Park 

BLACK HISTORY

COMMUNITY CULTURAL CELEBRATION
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2024 • 11AM

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