By Chairman Armando Arenas

Wining and dining in Montebello! On Friday, October 12, the Montebello Chamber of Commerce hosted its 10th Annual Taste of the Town at the beautiful Bagruman Hall. It was a fantastic event with 23 participants and attended by our membership, city officials and the community at large.

Our most well known restaurants were present with a terrific variety of flavors and favorite entrees. Local bakeries filled the air with sweet aromas and a spectacular array of mouth-watering desserts! My favorite.

The evening was complete with a fine selection of wines, tequilas and our best local craft beer! All this plus great music to dance to. It was a real community night out where friends brought friends and made some new ones.

On Thursday, October 18, the chamber hosted the Montebello City Council candidate forum at the Quiet Cannon Event and Conference Center. It was a standing-room-only event with over 200 attendees.

The event moderator asked each candidate several questions regarding issues that the city faces, community concerns and the opportunity to state their vision and plan for Montebello. It was a real pleasure to see all the candidates not only give thoughtful responses, but also participate with excellent decorum and respect the public and our democratic process.

On November 6, Montebello residents voted to make a change in leadership. Congratulations to all the winners (final election results were not available at time of printing). We look forward to your good stewardship of the city. To our outgoing council members, we thank you greatly for your dedication and service to Montebello. As we look forward to the holidays, the Montebello Chamber of Commerce would like to thank our entire membership and the community for all the support and loyalty you have afforded us throughout the year. On behalf of our staff, Board of Directors and Ambassadors, I wish you and your loved ones a very joyous holiday season.
The fall season picked up with more opportunities for networking across city lines by bringing together multiple neighboring chambers of commerce at Beverly Hospital in Montebello and Bicycle Hotel and Casino in Bell Gardens. Our networking breakfasts are free to our members who pre-register, and $25.00 for prospective members. For additional information on our upcoming events, please visit our website at www.montebellochamber.org.

**October: Beverly Hospital**

Chamber members from Montebello, Pico Rivera, Bell Gardens, and Rosemead came together for the October Networking Breakfast at Beverly Hospital on October 3. Among the attendees were the City of Montebello’s Assistant City Manager Danilo Batson and Interim Finance Director Robert Mescher. Beverly Hospital’s President/CEO Alice Cheng greeted attendees and answered questions about the hospital. Mae-Fae Koenig, Vice President of Planning and Development, gave a slideshow presentation about the hospital’s history, and its new Emergency Care Center, and an update on the ongoing construction. Chef William Alfaro of the Beverly Café provided a delicious breakfast for the event, and some lucky attendees went home with raffle prizes as well as floral centerpieces donated by Beverly Hospital. Beverly Hospital is located at 309 W. Beverly Blvd. in Montebello, (323) 726-1222, www.beverly.org.

**November: Bicycle Hotel and Casino**

On Wednesday November 14, Laura Lovato of the Bicycle Hotel and Casino welcomed the members, staff and guests of four chambers of commerce—Commerce Industrial Council, Pico Rivera, Bell Gardens, and Montebello Chambers of Commerce—for the sold-out November Networking Breakfast. Following networking and breakfast, an engaging presentation was given by inspirational speaker Leisa Reid, on “Setting Goals for the New Year” and fortune smiled on a lucky few who received raffle prizes including an empowering workshop by Reid, gift bags and floral table centerpieces.
Guerra Gutierrez Mortuaries Help to Reunite Immigrant Families

Last month, Guerra Gutierrez Mortuaries sponsored the bus that transported over three dozen parents and grandparents from the Zacatecas region of Mexico to Los Angeles to be reunited with their children and grandchildren who had immigrated to the United States. The reunion of multiple generations of families turned very emotional as some had been separated for decades because relatives lacked the funds or documents to travel over the border.

The reunion is part of an initiative of the Federacion Zacatecana called Corazon de Plata which arranges tourist visas for family members left behind in Mexico to visit their relatives here in the United States. The national organization has clubs throughout the United States, including one in Los Angeles. Reunions occur multiple times a year and Guerra Gutierrez has become a regular sponsor of transportation for the heartwarming event in Los Angeles.

The nationwide initiative reunites families throughout the United States and, in 2017 alone, Federacion Zacatecana was responsible for bringing together 1,095 parents with their immigrant children through the Corazon de Plata program.

Guerra Gutierrez Mortuaries’ sponsorship of the local Corazon de Plata initiative began three years ago when Martha Alvarez, who had been involved with Federacion Zacatecana’s local club for over 10 years, joined the mortuaries’ staff as a funeral counselor. Martha Alvarez is currently serving as the co-chair of the Montebello Chamber’s Ambassador Committee and Corazon de Plata is only one of Martha’s many charitable activities which include the foundation and support of an orphanage in Mexico.


Ribbon Cutting at Kathleen Anderson Agency Farmers Insurance

Farmers Insurance Agency owner Kathleen Anderson, along with her family and staff, welcomed Montebello Chamber members, Farmers Insurance district officers and her friends into her new office at a ribbon cutting event on November 8. Upon arriving, all guests were handed tickets for a raffle to be held later.

Montebello Mayor Pro Tem Jack Hadjinian presented Kathleen with a proclamation from the City of Montebello. She also received certificates from Rida Hamida representing Assemblymember Cristina Garcia, and Montebello Chamber Board Chairman Armando Arenas on behalf of the entire chamber membership. Visibly moved by the attention, Kathleen emotionally and graciously thanked her family, friends, staff, Farmers Insurance district officers and the Montebello Chamber for their support in launching her new business, “a dream come true.”

After cutting the symbolic red ribbon, guests celebrated the agency’s opening as well as Kathleen’s birthday with lunch and a cake decorated with the Farmers Insurance logo. Kathleen then presented a few lucky winners with fun raffle gifts.

Chamber Hosts Montebello City Council Candidate Forum

On October 18, the Montebello Chamber hosted the 2018 Montebello City Council Candidate Forum at the Quiet Cannon Event and Conference Center to give Montebello residents the opportunity to get better acquainted with the multiple candidates running for three seats on the city council.

The chamber’s executive director, Ani Minasian, opened up the evening by thanking the nine out of 10 candidates for participating: Art Barajas, Kimberly Ann Cobos-Cawthorne, Angie M. Jimenez, Delia Lopez, Salvador Melendez, William Molinari, Ashod Mooradian, Vivian Romero, and David Torres. Candidate Rosie Vasquez was unable to attend due to a family emergency.

Minasian also thanked event sponsor Sentinel Peak Resources, as well as the Governmental Affairs Committee, chamber Ambassadors, and Quiet Cannon for all their help with the event.

Board Chairman Armando Arenas also greeted the audience, stating, “Our city is currently facing some significant challenges and our five councilmembers, three of which will be elected to the post on November 6th, will have a great task ahead of them.” Arenas then introduced the facilitator of the forum, Scott Smith, executive director of the Cerritos Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Each of the candidates responded to prepared questions as well as questions from the audience relating to topics ranging from the cannabis ordinance to their plans to address the city’s fiscal challenges.

The free public event was so well-attended that despite setting out as many chairs as the room would hold, some attendees were required to stand along the back of the room. To provide the public full access to the event, the forum in its entirety was broadcast live on the Montebello Chamber’s Facebook page and the recorded video was then loaded onto the page so people who missed the live feed could still view afterwards.
The Friends of the Montebello Unified School District Foundation, a non-profit organization that works independently from the school district, celebrated the 2018 “Service to Education” Awards on Sunday evening October 28 at the Bagramian Hall in Montebello.

Honored were Darrell Heacock, former Board of Education trustee, life-long Montebello resident and owner of Homer R. Heacock Realty Inc. and Dr. Darline Robles, former Superintendent for the Montebello Unified School District, Salt Lake City School District, and Superintendent of the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

Both Darline and Darrell were joined by family and friends and the Friends of the Montebello Unified School District Foundation who helped them to celebrate and recognized them for their service to the education of students.

The theme of the awards dinner was Mi Tierra (My Homeland). With approximately 230 people in attendance, entertainment was provided by B & G Music and Mariachi Estrellas de Eastmont ICES, a group of Eastmont Intermediate School student Mariachi performers, provided through the support of Eastmont Intermediate Principal Cecilia Ramirez.

Also featured was a silent auction. All proceeds from the dinner will be used to support the students and instructional programs of the district. Two $2000 Scholarships honoring Darrell Heacock and Darline Robles were awarded by the Foundation President Barbara Chavira, and Master of Ceremonies Norm Kirschenbaum, former Montebello Unified School District Superintendent. The 2018 graduates of Montebello High School recipients were Jerome Regala and Leslie Luis.

Perpetual Scholarships in the names of Edward James Olmos and Leonard Narumi, past FMUSDF Service to Education Award recipients, were presented respectively to Montebello High School 2018 graduate Christopher Lopez and Bell Gardens High School 2018 graduate Heidi Lara. The Rotary Club of Montebello provided a scholarship for Smyrna Caraveo, 2018 Schurr High graduate.

The Foundation greatly appreciated the excellent Mexican dinner provided by Catering by Herach & Ara, the logistical support provided by the Montebello Unified School District, the centerpieces by M’s Flowers, and the use of the Bagramian Hall. The Foundation is grateful to Scholarships for Scholars of Montebello in the scholarship selection process and the Service to Education planning committee for their commitment of time and energy that made this event a success.

The Friends of the Montebello Unified School District Foundation was founded in 2012 by community leaders and former educators of the school district to support student achievement and is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Those interested in more information, joining the Foundation and/or making a donation are encouraged to do so at friendsofmusd.org.
Urgent Care Center
Montebello is Now Open!

Visit a PIH Health Urgent Care Center when you can’t get in to see your Primary Care doctor or have an urgent need that just can’t wait for an appointment such as cold and flu symptoms, minor injuries, sprains and strains, earaches, back pain and more. Sports physicals are also available.

To check current wait times or for more information, visit PIHHealth.org/UCC.

PIH Health Urgent Care Center Montebello
2205 W. Beverly Blvd., Montebello
On November 1, PIH Health and the Montebello Chamber of Commerce celebrated the addition of urgent care services to the PIH Health Montebello medical office housed within the historic Home Savings building on the corner of Whittier Boulevard and Wilcox Avenue. The event was well-attended by regional staff from PIH Health, city officials and Montebello Chamber members.

PIH Health Physicians President Brian Smolskis welcomed the guests and spoke about the impact that PIH Health is making in local communities, taking the quality of health care and network of physicians the hospital is known for and making it available in satellite offices throughout the southland.

Montebello Mayor Pro Tem Jack Hadjinian presented Mr. Smolskis with a proclamation from the City of Montebello, as did Montebello Chamber Board Chairman Armando Arenas on behalf of the chamber membership.

Also in attendance were Acting City Manager Andrew Pasmant, Assistant City Manager Danilo Batson, Interim Director of Community Development, and Montebello Police Chief Brad Keller. After a ribbon cutting ceremony, attendees were treated to lunch provided by Catering by Herach & Ara and tours of the new urgent care center.

Urgent care services are available every day of the year from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. including holidays, and a physician is always on-site. In addition to bilingual staff, translator services are available for various languages, and patient wait times can be viewed on the website. The center is capable of conducting x-rays, blood analysis and urinalysis to diagnose conditions, and to provide injectable medications, suture lacerations, remove stints and administer IV liquids for hydration.

PIH Health Urgent Care Center is located at 2205 W. Beverly Blvd. in Montebello, (562) 967-2780, pihhealth.org. The Montebello facility is one of five PIH Health Urgent Care Centers, including Santa Fe Springs, Hacienda Heights, Whittier and the newest center in La Habra, which opened just recently at 1400 S. Harbor Blvd.

PIH Health Urgent Care Center Celebrates with Ribbon Cutting

Santa Comes to The Shops at Montebello

The center court of The Shops at Montebello has been transformed into a winter wonderland for the holiday season and the star of the show is Santa who is available to take photographs with shoppers through Christmas Eve, December 24th. Children and families can visit and take photos with Santa during mall hours which will be extended for the holidays starting on December 9th. For those on a tight schedule, a FastPass can be reserved on the mall’s website to skip the line to see Santa (see website address below).

The festivities began last month and continue through December with Breakfast with Santa, Pet Photos with Santa, Countdown to Christmas special holiday events, holiday shopping pop-ups and more.

As of December 9th, the mall’s extended holiday hours are as follows: Sunday, 12/9 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Monday, 12/10 to Thursday, 12/13: 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Friday, 12/14 and Saturday, 12/15: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Sunday, 12/16 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Monday, 12/17 to Thursday, 12/20: 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Friday, 12/21 and Saturday, 12/22: 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Sunday, 12/23: 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Christmas Eve, 12/24: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Shops at Montebello is located at 2134 Montebello Town Center Dr. in Montebello, (323) 722-1776, simon.com/mall/the-shops-at-montebello.
The Montebello-Commerce YMCA held its 33rd Annual Gala and Silent Auction on November 8 at the Quiet Cannon Event and Conference Center in Montebello. The event was emceed by entertainment correspondent Marlene Alvarez, who is currently a host and correspondent for Freeform (formerly ABC Family).

The evening opened with a lighthearted introduction by the YMCA Board Chair Lucik Gabriel and her fellow Board Member Gina Hernandez of Hilton Garden Inn – Montebello followed by a video presentation and remarks by Executive Director Paul Parzik. This year’s honoree was The Commerce Casino & Hotel which has a long history as a strong supporter of the Montebello-Commerce YMCA. Director of Business Development John Griffio and Board Member Michael Tumanjan from The Commerce Casino & Hotel accepted certificates and acknowledgements from Senator Vanessa Delgado, the County of Los Angeles, City of Montebello, and City of Commerce.

In addition to bidding on an expansive selection of silent auction items, guests were also engaged in a vibrant live auction for prizes ranging from tickets to Elton John’s farewell concert to VIP sports event packages. Local dance band Bumptown entertained attendees with upbeat dance music after the close of the program.

The Montebello-Commerce YMCA was founded in 1911, and has been in its current location since 1958. Among its multi-faceted programs are swim classes for all ages, character-building summer camp, leadership-fostering Youth & Government model legislature programs, preschool and day care, fitness center and classes, Simonian Family Community Garden, Beverly Hospital Cardiovascular Conditioning Center, and newly added this year: adaptive needs physical education and special needs aquatic classes.

The Montebello-Commerce YMCA is located at 2000 W. Beverly Blvd. in Montebello, (323) 887-9622, ymcala.org.
HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

When you really want to give something special... These specialty shops can help you give the gifts that will be remembered and cherished!

Goldex
Fine Jewelry
2445 W. Whittier Blvd., Suite 201
Montebello, CA 90640
(323) 726-7181
goldexjewelry.com

Make this Christmas Holiday sparkle! Shop Goldex’s holiday sale to find great gift ideas for everyone on your list. Their inventory includes fine jewelry and fashion jewelry including jewelry collections from Italy and Austria, timepieces, collectibles, and more!

Always Special
Perfumes & Gifts
1611 W. Whittier Blvd.
Montebello, CA 90640
(323) 530-0499
alwayspecialgifts.com

This new boutique is filled with unique finds for even those hard-to-buy-for folks on your shopping list! In addition to a full wall of designer fragrances, you’ll find both fun and distinctive personal accessories, toys, home fragrances and accessories, fashion jewelry, eyewear, and a special corner dedicated to Frida Kahlo-inspired gifts!

Kuwaye Dental Celebrates Ribbon Cutting

Chamber member Dr. Dennis Kuwaye, Jr. and his friendly staff welcomed chamber members, family and local dignitaries at his charming dental office for a ribbon cutting ceremony on November 20. Mayor Pro Tem Jack Hadjinian presented a proclamation to Dr. Kuwaye and thanked him for opening his business in Montebello.

Montebello Chamber Executive Director Ani Minasian also presented Dr. Kuwaye a certificate on behalf of the chamber, as well as a certificate from the Office of 38th District Congresswoman Linda Sanchez.

After the presentations and ribbon cutting, Kuwaye Dental provided lunch and a cake for the guests, and some coveted raffle prizes.

Senator-elect Bob Archuleta stopped by to express his congratulations. Dr. Kuwaye Jr. then shared his vision for a practice where people feel like friends and family first and not just patients.

Kuwaye Dental offers all general dentistry services as well as root canals, oral surgery, and guided implant surgery in the peaceful atmosphere of his office.

Kuwaye Dental is located at 2533 Via Campo in Montebello, (323) 721-7401, kuwayedental.com.

Happy Holidays!
Shop Montebello
Award-Winning Cardiologist
Dr. Mir B. Ali Returns to Montebello

In January 2019, award-winning cardiologist and phlebologist Dr. Mir B. Ali will move his practice back to Montebello where he will offer the full spectrum of cardiovascular care as well as complete treatment for chronic venous disease including leg swelling and varicose veins.

Dr. Mir B. Ali started in Montebello in 2003 by filling a void created by a departing cardiologist. Dr. Ali’s credentials include Diplomate American Board of Cardiovascular Diseases and Interventional Cardiology, Diplomate American Board of Venous and Lymphatic Medicine.

During his over 10 years of service in Montebello, he provided the majority of the interventional cardiology services for the community and Beverly Hospital. By the end of that period, the hospital had reached a pinnacle with their cardiac services and Dr. Ali was sought after to build a cardiac department at another location.

Dr. Ali feels his greatest accomplishments were the revival of the cardiac care program at Beverly Hospital along with the award bestowed by America’s 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care and Coronary Intervention (2015). Above all, he is proud of the many successes his patients experienced. He looks forward to reconnecting with his colleagues, patients and serving the community.

Among the treatments and procedures offered by Dr. Ali are:
- Angioplasty
- Cardiac stress tests
- Enhanced External Counter Pulsation (EECP)
- Pacemaker and defibrillator implantation
- Advanced DVT treatment
- Cardiac catheterization and coronary stenting
- Management of arrhythmia, cholesterol, hypertension and congestive heart failure

Dr. Mir B. Ali is located at 101 E. Beverly Blvd., Suite 408, Montebello, CA 90640, (323) 726-9606.

Goldex Fine Jewelry Celebrates 40th Anniversary with Mixer

On November 15, Goldex Fine Jewelry celebrated their 40th Anniversary with an after-hours chamber mixer in their beautiful showroom, decorated in their signature colors of black and gold. Arriving guests were greeted by valet parking attendants as well as champagne flutes and an abundant buffet featuring food from Salvatore Italian Restaurant as well as miniature desserts.

Founder and owner Lydia Minasian encouraged guest to enter the free raffle for a diamond ring and presented each of them with a goody bag filled with a 2019 Planner, portable ring sizer, candy and chocolate pretzels.

A large selection of jewelry was marked at 50% off regular prices and Minasian’s daughter, Vart Perumean, helped excited guests try on their favorite pieces. Goldex’s complimentary giftwrapping service ensured that guests’ purchases were beautifully wrapped and ready to put directly under the tree.

Guests were also able to preview the special offers to be featured for Black Friday. A special sales event is also planned for Christmas and for immediately after Christmas. Goldex’s personal shopper service can help shoppers find gifts for everyone on their shopping list and to fit any budget.

Goldex Fine Jewelry is located at 2445 W. Whittier Blvd., Suite 201, in Montebello, (323) 726-7181, goldexjewelry.com.
City of Montebello News

City-Sponsored Maze Delights Trick-or-Treaters

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

Over 700 trick-or-treaters made the Montebello City Park ballpark their first stop for some fun this past Halloween. Trick-or-Treaters enjoyed live music by the Swinging Eight Balls, bounce houses, food, games, and of course, candy. Recreation and Community Services staff dressed as monsters, ghosts and clowns, gave those brave enough to enter the haunted maze they had erected an array of fun frights as they navigated their way through its twists and turns.

“Our maze was by far the most popular attraction here tonight,” said Community Services Coordinator Jacob Castillo. “Everyone seemed to have fun walking through it.”

“At first I was afraid to go inside,” said one child. “But I’m so glad that I did because it was more fun than scary.”

For those under two years of age through age 14, gift cards were awarded for the funniest, scariest, and most creative costumes.

“We were glad to host tonight’s family-friendly Halloween event,” said David Sosnowski, Director of Recreation & Community Services. “Thank you to sponsors El Pescador and Heart of Compassion for helping us bring some Halloween fun to the kids, as well as the adults, in our community.”

Barron Retires Following 35-Year Police Career

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

Congratulations to Montebello Police Officer Ernie Barron on his retirement following over 35 years of dedicated service to the Montebello community.

Barron grew up in the community and began his career with the Montebello Police Department in 1977 as a Police Explorer, volunteering hundreds of hours to the organization over the next three years.

“I always wanted to be a police officer,” said Barron. “When my older brother Daniel became a police officer, I wanted to pursue the same path.”

In 1980, he was hired as a park ranger and remained in that capacity until 1983. After graduating from the Rio Hondo Police Reserve Academy that same year, Barron was hired as a police reserve officer and served until 2002 achieving the rank of sergeant.

In 2001, Barron enrolled in the Rio Hondo Police Academy.

“I still wanted to pursue my dream of becoming a full-time police officer, and upon graduating the following year, I was hired by the Montebello Police Department,” he said. “Over the course of my career, I have worked in the Patrol Bureau and Traffic Unit.”

According to Police Chief Brad Keller, one of Barron’s greatest contributions has been his commitment and dedication to Montebello Police Explorer Post 1034.

“Officer Barron gave countless hours to developing young men and women into responsible and motivated young adults, many of whom went on to become police officers,” said Keller.

One of the Explorers Barron mentored, Officer Luis Martinez, will now take over the reins of Explorer advisor.

Barron has received with numerous commendations from local, state, and federal agencies throughout his career, including Montebello Reserve Officer of the Year and the Montebello Police Medal of Merit in 1997. He was honorably discharged from the United States Marine Corps Reserves where he served from 1980 to 1986.

“The most memorable aspects of my career were receiving a leadership award from the Riverside Police Department Explorers advisors during their 2017 Explorer competition and a Shining Star award from the Montebello Chamber of Commerce in 2016 for public service,” said Barron.

“Officer Barron gave countless hours to developing young men and women into responsible and motivated young adults, many of whom went on to become police officers,” said Keller.

“The toughest aspect of his career was being unable to spend holidays with his family, something he will now be able to do. He and wife Patty also plan to spend some time traveling.”

“We cannot begin to properly capture the amount of sacrifice and dedication that Officer Barron has made in providing safety to the residents of Montebello, as well as the contributions he has made to the law enforcement community in general,” said Keller. “A team player with a positive attitude, he will certainly be missed. We wish him the best in his future endeavors.”

City Public Safety Agencies Support Breast Cancer Awareness

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

Again this year, Montebello Police and Fire personnel supported breast cancer awareness and research through the sale of t-shirts and patches designed specifically for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Both departments brought attention to this worthy cause throughout the month of October as fire personnel wore pink t-shirts and police personnel donned pink shoulder patches on their uniforms.

“The Montebello Police Department (MPD) participated in the Pink Patch Project, a collaborative effort between the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs’ Association and law enforcement agencies throughout Los Angeles County, in an effort to bring attention to the fight against breast cancer. During September’s Los Angeles County Fair, members of the MPD Community Relations Unit joined law enforcement personnel from other agencies in manning the Pink Patch Project booth raising funds and bringing awareness to the Project’s mission.”

“The Pink Patch Project is a great endeavor that brings awareness for breast cancer awareness and early detection,” said Captain Luis Lopez. “All of us have been touched in one way or another by this devastating disease.”

“The Montebello Police Department is proud to have been one of the first agencies in Southern California to participate in the Pink Patch Project,” added Police Chief Brad Keller.

“Firefighters exposed to carcinogens and other chemicals while on the job are disproportionately diagnosed with breast cancer, just one of many cancers linked to the work firefighters do,” said Fire Chief Fernando Pelaez. “The members of the Montebello Fire Department were proud to do our share to raise awareness and funds for cancer research.”

Contact the Montebello Police and Fire Departments for information on the purchase of t-shirts and patches with proceeds to be donated to the City of Hope for cancer research, treatment and education.
**City of Montebello News**

**MFD Serves Up Pancakes for a Good Cause**

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

Montebello Firefighters served up pancakes for a good cause November 3rd as they kicked off the annual Spark of Love toy drive for needy children. For $5.00 or a new toy donation, visitors enjoyed breakfast with firefighters and their families, went on a tour of the station, took photos, had a close up view of firefighting equipment, and witnessed an auto extraction demonstration.

“We made over 300 pancakes and collected over four dozen toys for needy children in Montebello,” said Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Ortiz, who spearheaded the event. According to Ortiz, the toys collected will be distributed during the annual Christmas at the Cannon program and also given to local community organizations and churches to be distributed to needy children during the holiday season.

“Spark of Love is a wonderful opportunity for fire personnel to give back to the community and bring a bit of joy to some special children,” said Fire Chief Fernando Pelaez. “Thank you to everyone here today for their donations.”

Toys can be dropped off at any of Montebello’s three fire stations through December. Firefighters are also raising money for cancer research through the sale of special department t-shirts while supplies last.

“Today’s event gave firefighters a chance to thank the Montebello residents for all the support we receive and to show them some of the ins and outs of the fire service,” said Ortiz. “It gave residents a chance to interact with our firefighters in a non-emergency setting.”

“We appreciate all our firefighters do for us,” said one resident. “This was a nice opportunity to thank them.”

**Parade Kicks Off City’s 98th Anniversary Celebration**

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

The community turned out to celebrate Montebello’s 98th anniversary October 20th with a parade followed by even more fun at City Park. Grand Marshal El Chino and Gisselle from Que Buena radio, and Sports Grand Marshal boxer Jesus Soto Karass joined the more than 100 entries representing Montebello and surrounding cities.

The marching bands, color guards, drill and dance teams, equestrian groups, classic cars, along with entries from the City, service clubs, youth sports and local businesses were a big hit with the crowd as they proceeded down Whittier Boulevard towards City Park led by the Montebello Police Explorers, followed by the Montebello Fire Department, Mayor Pro Tem Jack Hadjinian, and the Schurr High School Marching Band.

“Events such as this bring our community together,” said one man along the parade route. “It’s nice sharing the City’s anniversary with everyone here today.”

Bell Gardens High School was awarded the highest scoring marching band in the parade and Dana Middle School was named the highest scoring drill team. North Valley Military-Saber was awarded the highest scoring JROTC with the Mayor’s Award for best local entry going to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish. Lions Club of Montebello won the float sweepstakes and brought a bit of joy to some special children,” said Fire Chief Fernando Pelaez. “Thank you to everyone here today for their donations.”

“Today’s event gave firefighters a chance to thank the Montebello residents for all the support we receive and to show them some of the ins and outs of the fire service,” said Ortiz. “It gave residents a chance to interact with our firefighters in a non-emergency setting.”

“We appreciate all our firefighters do for us,” said one resident. “This was a nice opportunity to thank them.”

**MPD Special Response Team Ready to Respond When Needed**

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

A collateral duty unit, the Montebello Police Department Special Response Team (SRT) was established in 2014 to assist with all types of tactical emergencies.

“Being a member of Montebello’s 13-officer SRT requires a high level of commitment, physical fitness, marksmanship and mental fortitude and members are expected to keep their skills sharp,” said Team Commander Sergeant Steve Sharp. “We also train several times a year with several nearby tactical teams. This has improved our training procedures and established beneficial relationships with outside resources.”

If assigned a particular role such as police sniper or canine handler, members may train even more.

According to member Corporal Scott Howard, the team could be called upon to deal with barricaded suspects and hostage situations, to contain large crowds causing a criminal disturbance, to assist with high-risk arrests, executive and witness protection, to serve warrants, and in other situations where tactical personnel could better resolve the situation.

In a constant state of readiness, and supported by team leaders Corporal Julio Martinez and Omar Rodriguez, the SRT’s primary mission is to serve the Montebello community. However, through mutual aid agreements, the team could respond to an outside incident if called upon and such assistance would be reciprocated should the need arise.

Interested officers must pass a physical fitness qualifier followed by an oral interview. SRT members select the successful candidates which are then approved by police administration.

“A well-managed response by highly-skilled tactical units to critical incidents usually result in a successful resolution and has been shown to substantially reduce the risk of injury and loss of life to police officers, civilians, and others,” said Chief Brad Kettler. “The skills of SRT officers are used daily while on patrol providing improved service to the community.”
of their best grandchildren stories and photos with each other. Song for Grandma and Grandpa. "Today is a celebration of good things in Montebello," said Mayor Pro Tem Jack Hadjianian. "This project will generate more investment in the City and that's important. When a developer wants to do a project in an area that has not seen much in a long time, it's important the project is not only a good one, but that one that's going to cause the industry to come and possibly enthrall Montebello for future projects. Thank you to city staff for all your help and to all those that were on the council at the time that supported this project."

"As part of the City's economic development ad hoc committee, it gives me great pride to turn a blighted property into one that's going to generate revenue for the City and be on our property tax rolls," said Councilwoman Vivian Romero. "It takes a lot of people to bring together a concept and a vision and we did so successfully."

"You truly are an incredible city to work with," said Olson Company CEO Scott Laurie. "This is a real partnership and this could not have gotten done without everybody in Montebello."

Following opening remarks, city officials and Olson Company personnel, with shovels in hand, officially broke ground on the project. The townhomes, located adjacent to the Montebello post office, are expected to be completed early next year.

Perrin then introduced Father John of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish who blessed the building and the evening concluded with the unveiling of the dedication plaque at the hotel's entrance.

"This hotel raises the profile of the City. Between the two hotels, and this beautiful golf course, we now have a resort-like destination here," said Mayor Pro Tem Jack Hadjianian. "I want to thank everyone who was involved in this project and I look forward to this new tradition." "Everything was great," said another senior. "The food, the music, and sharing it all with fellow grandparents." "You enjoyed putting on these competitions for our local skateboarders in their age division compete simultaneously using the entire skate park. At the end of the allotted time, the judges determine who pulled off the best trick," said Community Services Coordinator Jacob Castillo. "In Skate Jam, each participant has a 90-second solo run and is judged on technical skills, showmanship and variety of tricks. With SK8, when the skater attempts a trick and lands it, the next skater needs to mimic it or will receive a letter. The first skater to spell out the word SK8 loses the game."

"In Best Trick, all the skateboarders in their age division compete simultaneously using the entire skate park. At the end of the allotted time, the judges determine which pulled off the best trick," said Community Services Coordinator Jacob Castillo. "In Skate Jam, each participant has a 90-second solo run and is judged on technical skills, showmanship and variety of tricks. With SK8, when the skater attempts a trick and lands it, the next skater needs to mimic it or will receive a letter. The first skater to spell out the word SK8 loses the game."

"In Best Trick, it takes a lot of people to bring together a concept and a vision and we did so successfully."

"This is a special event for me. I got to work on this project with an amazing team," said former Montebello mayor and current state senator (District 32) Vanessa Delgado, who presented a certificate of recognition to hotel project manager Brad Perrin. "I want to thank everyone who was involved in this project and I look forward to it again next year."

"It's amazing how well we are already doing with the bookings," said Perrin. "To go through planning and environmental, building design, hire a contractor, build it and have it open in less than three years, I don't know too many projects of this magnitude that can even come close."
City of Montebello News

Montebello Again Selected as Filming Location

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

The California Film & Television Tax Credit Program is credited with a rise in overall filming in the greater Los Angeles area and several venues in Montebello have become locations of interest for film crews as Hollywood once again came knocking on Montebello’s door to provide just the right location for a variety of movies and television shows. The City benefits from use of its facilities through permit and rental fees.

Fans of Jay Leno’s Garage may have noticed a familiar north Montebello residential neighborhood as Leno arrived to interview the owner of an original Ford Mustang Shelby 350. The episode, titled General Badassery, aired September 13 and prior to Leno’s arrival at the home, viewers could catch glimpses of familiar sights along Beverly Boulevard, Rosemead Boulevard and Lincoln Avenue.

Veep, starring Julia Louis-Dreyfus, premiered in 2012 and follows the activities of fictional vice president Selina Meyer. Film crews found the locales they needed at Montebello Fire Station 56, located at Greenwood Avenue and Date, and the Montebello City Park baseball field and amphitheater.

An episode of Criminal Minds was filmed at Montebello High School and the Montebello Police Department also attracted a film crew.

A private residence in the vicinity of St. Benedict’s Church was also used as a filming locale sparking the interest of neighbors and others who happened upon the scene.

“This is quite interesting,” said one passerby. “I can’t get over all the equipment and vehicles it takes to make a movie.”

City Holds Health Fair for Seniors

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

Montebello seniors had an opportunity to take advantage of free health screenings, health fitness demonstrations and healthy lifestyle tips all under one roof when the City’s Recreation and Community Services held a free Senior Health Fair October 15th at the Senior Citizen Center.

Seniors could have their blood pressure checked, take part in bone density, stroke and derma scan screenings, and enjoy a therapeutic massage. Demonstrations included cardio fitness and Zumba Gold, as well as a presentation on prescription drug misuse and abuse.

“Visitors also had access to glucose screenings and flu shots,” said Crystal Jaimez, Recreation and Community Services Coordinator. “They also enjoyed music, refreshments, giveaways and raffle prizes.”

“I am so glad I attended,” said one senior. “The health screenings gave me a head’s up as to some things I should discuss with my doctor.”

“This was a comfortable setting in which to gather a lot of useful and important information,” said another.

“We are pleased to be able to put on this type of event for our seniors,” said Jaimez. “We appreciate the support of all our sponsors including Heart of Compassion, Natividad Insurance Services, Silver Sneakers, PIH, Apple Care, Regal Medical, and AltaMed in helping make today’s event a success.”

City of Montebello Recreation and Community Services Department

Winter Camp

December 24, 2018 - January 11, 2019

Winter camp is a program designed to fit the needs of children and parents during the holiday vacation. Camp incorporates co-site in-and-outdoor physical activities, games, arts and crafts more.

Fremont Elementary

200 W. Madison Ave, MTB 90640

Registration Information

(323) 887-6450

Recreation Department - 800 W. Beverly Blvd

Monday - Thursday: 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Registration Begins

Tuesday, November 20th

Ages: 5-12

Fees: $100 Per Weekly Session

Camp Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Daily

One time $25 non-refundable fee, per participant.

S10.00 sibling discount for each additional child enrolled.

All additional weekly field trip fee will be collected at the camp site.

Late pick-up will be charged $2.00 per minute after 6:00 p.m.

Lunch is not included and must be provided daily for your child.

Snickers are offered for free daily.

Camp Sessions

1st Week: 12/24/18 - 12/29/18
2nd Week: 1/3/19 - 1/4/19
3rd Week: 1/7/19 - 1/11/19

Site Closed 12/25/18 & 1/1/19

— Paid for by the City of Montebello —
Over the summer, a collaboration between local staff members of Southern California Edison and a nonprofit solar provider named GRID Alternatives resulted in a windfall for families in a Montebello Habitat for Humanity development.

For low- to moderate-income families in Montebello, the costs of property ownership including payment of utilities can be a strain on the household. With that mindset, SCE provided financial and volunteer support for a unique opportunity: GRID Alternatives installed rooftop solar panels for the homes of four individuals at no cost.

The four homes going solar were built, with SCE support, by the same families living inside them. Construction was supervised by Habitat for Humanity Los Angeles.

Three months after the solar panels were hoisted onto the homes by a weekend team of SCE personnel, Montebello residents are enjoying the clean, green power produced in the community. Electricity bills can be reduced with solar by up to 90%.

Meanwhile, SCE team members have committed to another project that amplifies their impact on the environment: Edison employees will install a residential solar system in an unincorporated area of the South San Jose Hills on the weekend of October 20.

The project for a family of seven has an estimated $8,800 value. According to GRID Alternatives Greater Los Angeles, solar is a rapidly-expanding part of California’s electrical needs and a growing industry for local hiring. As of 2017, the state’s solar workforce is almost 90,000 strong.

With training programs available through local colleges and nonprofits, hundreds of Los Angeles County residents connect to solar jobs every year with companies like Sungrade, Sunrun, Tesla.
A New Year

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Montebello, CA 90640
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http://heavenlychoice.com

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1400 W. Whittier Blvd.
Montebello, CA 90640
(323) 530-0296

Start 2019 right with great dental care! This family-friendly dental practice is focused on serving kids and their parents—dentists on staff specialized to serve either children or adults for dental care including crowns, bridges, dentures, extractions and root canals. Free exam and x-rays when you mention this article through January 31st!

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https://montebello.tutoringcenter.com/

The Tutoring Center’s fun, proven, unique, one-to-one instruction known as “The Rotational Approach to Learning” will help your child improve confidence, concentration and self-esteem while strengthening the academic skills that he or she needs to succeed in school! *Grand Opening Special: $50 Monthly Tuition Discount!

Universo Cleaning
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http://www.universocleaning.com

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2019 Minimum Wage Hike Brings Changes for California Employers

In 2016, Governor Brown signed SB 3, a bill that increased the minimum wage in California to $15 per hour by 2022. The governor’s action made California the first state in the nation to commit to raising the minimum wage to $15 per hour statewide. Large businesses with 26 or more employees began complying on January 1, 2017, and will reach $15 per hour in 2022. Small businesses have until 2023 to reach the $15 per hour rate.

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<th>Employers with 25 or fewer employees</th>
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Until the minimum wage reaches $15 per hour, the governor has the authority to suspend increases based on current economic conditions. However, these “offramps” are discretionary and would come into play only if there are declining state revenues from sales tax, there is a decline in the labor market or there is a budget deficit (this offramp is permitted to occur only twice).

Once the minimum wage reaches $15 per hour for all businesses in 2023, wages could then be increased each year up to 3.5 percent (rounded to the nearest 10 cents) for inflation, as measured by the national Consumer Price Index.

Employers must prepare for the minimum wage increase and examine other pay practices that might be affected by the increase. (Hint: There are more than you might think.)

- Minimum wage
- Overtime rate
- Exempt/non-exempt
- Notice requirements
- Meals and lodging
- Piece-rate employees
- Draws against commissions
- Tools/equipment
- Subminimum wage

This article covers just a partial list of pay practices that can be affected by the minimum wage hike. CalChamber members can visit the HRCalifornia page for the full list of pay practices and best practices.

Overtime

The minimum wage increase affects the overtime rate that must be paid to employees who perform work that qualifies for overtime. Effective January 1, 2019, the overtime rate for minimum wage employees is:

- Employers with 26 or more employees: $18 per hour for time and one-half or $24 per hour for double-time.
- Employers with 25 or fewer employees: $16.50 per hour for time and one-half or $22 per hour for double-time.

Classifying Employees

The minimum wage rate change affects the classification of employees as exempt versus non-exempt. For an employee to qualify under the commonly-used administrative, executive or professional exemptions from overtime, the employee must meet the salary-basis test (which means the employee’s salary must be no less than two times the state minimum wage for full-time employment) in addition to meeting all the other legal requirements for the exemption.

That minimum salary rate is $49,920 annually, effective January 1, 2019, for employers with 26 or more employees. For employers with 25 or fewer employees, the minimum salary threshold for the administrative, executive and professional exemptions is $45,760 for 2019.

By 2023, the minimum salary threshold for these exemptions will rise to at least 3.5% of the state minimum wage. This works out to an increased cost to employers of $20,800 per exempt employee over the salary threshold that was in effect when the new minimum wage law was initially passed in 2016.

Employers should be mindful of the effect of the required salary threshold for exempt/nonexempt classifications and ensure that employees meet the salary basis test for the particular exemption claimed. Misclassification is costly. Employers who are unsure if their employees are exempt or nonexempt should always check with their legal counsel.

Posters and Notices

The minimum wage rate change affects your notice requirements.

First, all California employers must post the official Minimum Wage Order in a conspicuous location frequented by employees. A new minimum wage poster will be mandatory by January 1, 2019, as the current poster (MW-2017) only displays the 2017 and 2018 wage rates.

Second, California employers must provide each employee with a written, itemized wage statement at the time wages are paid (Labor Code section 226). Among other mandatory information, the itemized wage statement must include all applicable hour rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours the employee worked at each hourly rate.

Third, employers in California must provide nonexempt employees with a written wage notice at time of hire and again within seven calendar days after a change is made to any information in the notice (Labor Code section 2810.5).

If an employee’s rate of pay, including overtime rate, increases on January 1, 2019, due to the minimum wage increase, the employee must receive notice from his/her employer by January 7, 2019. The separate wage notice is not required if the employer has reflected the change on a timely itemized wage statement that meets all legal requirements.

Local Ordinances

Remember that local ordinances may affect your minimum wage obligations. Some cities and counties in California adopted their own local minimum wage rates that are separate from the state rate. This is a part of a growing trend. Local minimum

continued on next page
Minimum Wage Hike continued

Wage rates may change at any time; employers should closely monitor them. CalChamber members have access to local ordinance content, including a wizard to help employers determine which local ordinances and labor law posters apply to their business.

Note: Exempt/nonexempt classification is based on the state minimum wage, not local ordinances.

Best Practices for California Employers

Remember: California employers must pay employees no less than the state minimum wage per hour for all hours worked. Because California’s state minimum wage is higher than the federal minimum wage, employers will be required to pay the state rate. When state and federal laws differ, employers must comply with the more restrictive requirements.

- Display a post that includes the official Minimum Wage Order. CalChamber’s 2019 California and Federal Labor Law poster includes the mandatory, updated minimum wage notice.
- Update any necessary payroll documentation.
- Provide revised, itemized wage statements in a timely manner when wages are paid and ensure the statements accurately reflect the new minimum wage increase.
- Provide employees affected by the minimum wage increase with an appropriate wage notice showing the change in the rate of pay, if required.
- The obligation to pay the minimum wage can’t be waived by any agreement, including collective bargaining agreements.

Source: CalChamber HR Expert & Business Advocate

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Macy’s Montebello Provides Makeovers for Abuse Survivors

On November 28, beauty and fashion stylists at Macy’s Montebello provided makeovers for 20 women who are survivors of sexual abuse and domestic violence.

The women, who were supported and empowered by the East Los Angeles Women’s Center to overcome abuse, have now become advocates for other women as members of the center’s Promotoras Contra La Violencia program.

They were greeted with refreshments in the cosmetics department of the Macy’s store located in The Shops at Montebello prior to the store’s regular business hours.

The event was organized by Elva Villalpando, sales Manager for the store’s cosmetics department, and Claudia Davis, the store’s fashion stylist.

The participating women received makeovers and skin treatments by beauty coordinators from Estee Lauder (Elena Zaragoza), Lancome (Brie Chi), Clinique (Jessica Hernandez), Shiseido (Adriana Duran), and Chanel (Katherine Rosales), who provided makeup applications, demonstrated application techniques, and discussed good skin care practices.

Claudia Davis, the store’s fashion stylist, personally coordinated outfits for the women at Macy’s Backstage. Each experience throughout the day contributed to the esteem-building process for the participating women.

To schedule an appointment with Macy’s fashion stylist, Claudia Davis, or to make use of her personal shopper or corporate sales services, call (323) 201-2111, ext. 2569, or email her at claudia.davis@macys.com. Macy’s is located at The Shops at Montebello, 1900 Montebello Town Center in Montebello.

Mexican American Opportunity Foundation Makes Significant Impact

The Mexican American Opportunity Foundation recently released an impact report detailing the impact their programs have had on the communities they serve during the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

Funded by the California Department of Education (CDE), MAOF provides early education and child care to eligible families with children ages birth to four years. Children are cared for in licensed family child care homes that meet state standards for quality set forth by the CDE. The organization also provides resource and referral programs which provide information to all parents and the community about the availability of child care in their area. These programs assist potential providers in the licensing process; provide direct services, including training; and they coordinate community resources for the benefit of parents and local child care providers.

For seniors over 60 years of age and of a low-income background, MAOF provides information and assistance, health and wellness classes, meals, case management, coordinated care, and government enrollment assistance. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, over 50,000 meals were served at the organization’s Congregate Meal Dining Centers, while 45,000 meals were delivered to seniors through their Home Delivered Meals Program.

The mission of the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF) is to provide for the socioeconomic betterment of the greater Latino community of California, while preserving the pride, values and heritage of the Mexican American culture.

Every year, more than 100,000 Californians (95% of which are at the low to moderate income level) benefit from its contemporary programs in 46 service locations. MAOF’s national headquarters is located at 401 N. Garfield Avenue in Montebello, (323) 890-9600, maof.org.
Safety Tips for the Holiday Season from MPD and MFD

By Anne Donofrio-Holter

With the holidays fast approaching, Montebello's police (MPD) and fire (MFD) departments are offering up safety tips to keep your home and family safe. Tips that can help protect your home and family and make the holidays enjoyable for all.

Christmas trees are a festive addition to the season, yet they can present an extreme fire danger when they begin to dry out. A single spark can set a dry tree ablaze in an instant. A dramatic increase in the number of needles the tree drops each day means the tree is no longer fresh and should be disposed of.

Firefighters recommend using non-flammable decorations and LED lights, and caution against linking more than three strands of holiday lights together. Never leave burning candles unattended.

Make sure all electric decorations and extension cords are UL listed. Use only outdoor-rated lights outdoors. Indoor-only lights exposed to the weather can cause electric shock and are a potential fire hazard. Check the wattage rating of extension cords and the power requirements of what you plan to plug into it. Never overload extension cords.

Use a screen to prevent fireplace sparks from entering your home and never burn paper or other material in a fireplace.

"People are busy during the holidays and often forget to check for fire hazards," said Firefighter/Paramedic Donald Cadena. "Simple things like checking holiday lights for excessive wear or turning off Christmas tree lights before going out or to bed can make a huge difference.”

"Never let a preventable accident take the joy out of your holiday,” said Fire Chief Fernando Palaiez. “The MFD wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season.”

According to MPD, the potential for robberies and thefts increase this time of year and you can never be too careful, too prepared or too aware. Always focus on your surroundings, not your cell phone. When out shopping, park in well-lit lots and be aware of strangers approaching you. Avoid wearing expensive jewelry or accessories. If you must keep packages in your car, lock them in the trunk where they will not be visible. And when heading back to your car, locate your keys before you arrive. Carry your valuables in a safe manner, carry only the credit cards you need, use ATM machines located in secure areas, and never withdraw more cash than necessary.

"Thieves look for easy targets during the holidays," said MPD Corporal Scott Howard. "Close drapes so outsiders cannot see items in your home, keep windows and garage doors locked, be aware of strangers at your door posing as couriers or soliciting funds, and always keep your home lit inside and out with automatic timers.”

If heading out of town for the holidays, have a neighbor pick up your mail or request a “Hold Mail” from the post office.

"Those traveling can contact MPD to file a vacation watch,” said Howard. “This will notify patrol units to keep an extra eye out for suspicious activity.”

"Whether hosting or attending parties, always arrange for a designated driver. Never drink and drive,” added Police Chief Brad Keller. “The men and women of the MFD wish the Montebello community a safe and joyous holiday.”

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2018 Taste of the Town

2018 Best Taste Award Winners
Best Appetizer/Entrée: HC Cuisine
Best Baked Goods: Amy’s Pastry
Best Adult Beverage: San Antonio Winery

Event Participants

AMY’S PASTRY
ANGRY HORSE BREWING
APRIL’S CAKES
BEVERLY CAFE
BRIOCH PASTRIES
CALIFORNIA GRILL
CATERING BY HERACH & ARA
CHAGO TORTAS AHOGADAS
CLEARMAN’S STEAK N STEIN
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON - ROSEMEOAD
DON NACHO TEQUILA
EL PESCADOR BAR & GRILL
HC ARMENIAN MEDITERRANEAN
JUAN’S ROTISSERIE CHICKEN
KALAVERAS
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