

Postal Customer

Celebrate The Euskalduna (Basque) People and culture at the 2023 Family Picnic

By Alexis E. Abbott, Reporter

A family tree can stand strong by having roots as deep as the history of mankind itself or stand tall with roots conjoined to hold hands with the network around them. The concept of lineage and family trees is not new and as time marches on, the past only drifts farther and farther away - which is why it is so important that we have organizations like the Basque Club in Los Banos, California.

If you're one of the 42,000 people who call Los Banos their home, it's no surprise that the Basque community is an important part of the culture. But for those who call this lovely town their home that do not know, let's take a dive into the history of the Basque people in California before discussing what the Los Banos Basque Club (LBBC) has to offer and when their next event is coming up.

The Basques originate from both Spain and France in areas bordering the Bay of Biscay and encompassing the western foothills of the Pyrenees Mountains. As of the 20th century, an estimated 850,000 Basques reside in Spain and 130,000 reside in France but can be found around the world.

Known as farmers of small acreages and shipbuilders as well as seafarers they

settled the New World alongside the Spanish conquistadors. In Los Banos, Basques resided here before California was officially declared a state in 1848 with most working as sheep herders as well as ranchers, miners and laborers.



Los Banos Basque Youth Club Dancers at our annual May picnic. Photo by Ross Urrutia

Linguistically, the Basque language is an isolate, meaning that the language is one all its own and is unrelated to any others. Euskara is the Basque word for the Basque language. Very few still speak the Basque language and instead speak either Spanish or French and with the decline of the language, the culture is slowly being lost to time which is why organizations like the Los Banos Basque Club are so important.

Having held their 50th annual picnic

back in 2014, the Los Banos Basque Club has provided a unique form of community becoming ever important as we march into the future. From the original club president, Jim Etcheverry, to the current president, Jean Arambel, the members

have helped the club stand the test of time. But why would not only a single family, but several families, be so involved in an organization for so long?

The answer is simple: pride, culture, and love for their heritage.

"We are very proud of our small but rich culture. I am half Basque and that's the 50% of myself that I claim. That's what I am! Everyone that's involved in it are very proud," Jean Arambel stated when talking about the LBBC, "Food. Family. Culture. That's what being Basque is all about. It's a family deal. There's not a lot of us anymore but we are trying to keep it going. Our main goal is to keep our culture alive and to secure it for the future."

The former president Mark Erreca, was asked his thoughts on the LBBC. He shared, "It's very important to keep the traditions alive. Basque culture is about food and drink and enjoying life. We work hard but we play hard too. Basque culture is all about enjoying life and safe-keeping that culture is important."

This sentiment was reiterated a third time by Ross Urrutia, LBBC's Secretary to the Board, "The biggest thing about the Basque club is passing down the culture and our traditions to our children

See Basque p.4

A mixer of excitement at State Farm

By Brooke Lopez, Reporter

There was a mix of excitement on the beautiful fall evening of September 24th, at State Farm Insurance - Joe Gutierrez's office. The Los Banos Chamber of Commerce held their September mixer and ribbon cutting for Rocket Mortgage, who is now partnered with Gutierrez. There was also a celebration with BBQ and cake for State Farm's 100th year Anniversary, and a show of appreciation for Gutierrez's customers.

"I am blessed; State Farm is such a great company to work for," Gutierrez replied, when asked how it felt to work for such a successful company that helped him build such a great community business.

BBQ Pros provided the food, along with Gutierrez's wife, Socorro who provided the chili beans. LBCC

provided the beverages. Raffle tickets were sold, and various prizes were given out including gift baskets and money. Gift bags were also given away by Gutierrez for everyone who attended. He had it set up as a Trunk or Treat in his 1962 Ford Thunderbird.

In a speech from Gutierrez, he spoke about the history of State Farm, and he also showed great appreciation for his beautiful wife of thirty-three years, Socorro (also a local business owner), his customers, office team: Rhonda and Sylvia, BBQ Pros and the Los Banos Chamber of Commerce.

The Los Banos Chamber of Commerce's October Mixer will be held on Thursday, October 27, 2022 from 5:30-7:00pm at Keller Williams Property Team Real Estate located at 245 H St. #2 in Los Banos.



State Farm's 100th year Anniversary, and a show of appreciation for Gutierrez's customers. Photo by Brooke Lopez

From Llanez p.1

"But with that being said, I do respect the decision made by the council and I will continue to support all members of the council, especially after I am elected as mayor, this November. Then, I will begin the challenge of removing a toxic and counterproductive culture of the current council by giving a voice and decision-making authority back to those it

rightfully belongs to...the people of this great city."

The vacancy was created by the resignation last month of former Mayor Tom Faria. The election is Nov. 8th and the winners of the races for mayor and Council District 2 will be seated during a meeting in December. Until then, Mayor Pro Tem Ken Lambert will continue to serve as the city's acting mayor.

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Merced County Farm Bureau endorses Rabbi Amnon Shor for Senate District 14

By Breanne Vandenberg,
Executive Director

The Merced County Farm Bureau (MCFB) met with candidates vying to represent Merced County for Senate District 14 during the September Board of Directors Meeting. Following the debate by the two candidates, directors discussed each candidate at length. MCFB elected to endorse Rabbi Shor for Senate District 14.

Rabbi Shor was born in Israel, fought in the 1973 Yom Kippur War for the Israeli Defense Forces, and immigrated to the United States in 1980. Since moving to the U.S., he has owned several businesses and is now



Amnon Shor. Source: Shor for Senate

the senior Rabbi for the congregation he formed in 2004. He and his wife, Lynette, have three children and seven grandchildren together.

Rabbi Shor is passionate about the Central Valley and representing the needs of the district. His priorities include improving current water infrastructure and limiting the burdensome regulations on those doing

"...Our farmers should have the water they require to grow the food we need."

business in California.

When asked about the endorsement,

Rabbi Shor responded, "I am very appreciative to receive the endorsement of the Merced County Farm Bureau. Our farmers should have the water they require to grow the food we need."

For more information about Rabbi Shor's campaign visit www.facebook.com/shorforSenate.

About MCFB

Founded in 1917, the Merced County Farm Bureau is a non-profit, non-governmental, grassroots organization that advocates for approximately 1,000 farmers, ranchers and dairy families who live and/or work in Merced County. For more information visit mercedfarmbureau.org.

From Refugio p.1

complaints, and also complained that she had heard gun shots from the homeless encampment.

Resident Kathy Ballard voiced her concerns about appointing an interim mayor until the election next month. She said it was "a farce" and didn't see any reason to do it. Ballard argued that with Paul Llanez running unopposed, he would most likely win, and she doesn't understand why the city can't wait until then.

Council Splits on New Mayor

Appointment

On the matter of appointing a new mayor to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Faria, Interim City Manager Greg Wellman explained the law requires that the council must fill any vacancy of an elected position within 60 days by either appointment or special election. The time between Wednesday's meeting and the election was only 34 days, making a special election impossible. There is no legal requirement from the state or city dictating how the council appoints a mayor. In summary, the

council did not have to appoint anyone because the election is within the 60-day window; but, the council can appoint anyone who is qualified with a simple majority. To be appointed, an individual must be 18 years old, a registered voter and resident of the city.

Lewis Claims Hidden Agenda to Rehire Pinheiro

The appointment effort proved to be controversial with the council being split on how they viewed the situation. Councilwoman Deborah Lewis said that she believes there is a hidden agenda behind the appointment, and that the vote was to "bring a certain public employee back" (referring to former City Manager, Josh Pinheiro, who was fired by Lewis, LLamas and Faria on June 15, 2022). In later comments, she stated that "the former employee wouldn't listen to us".

LLamas Reverses Course

Councilman Refugio LLamas had previously said, "The sooner we can get Mr. Llanez seated the better...We need someone there, right away". He additionally stated, "The council should seek direction from the city attorney and act in accordance with all applicable laws and ordinances in filling the vacancy created by Mr. Faria's departure." However, during Wednesday's meeting LLamas stated that he felt this vote was "to just reinstate a former employee who put us in this situation because they wouldn't listen to outside ideas," referring to the local homeless crisis. He stated that the homeless situation was dire and could benefit from having a mayor, but that this is the only urgent issue that can't wait until December.

In a text conversation with a reporter for the Enterprise, LLamas mentioned his own appointment to the council in January 2021 to fill the vacancy created by Faria's election as mayor the previous November. "There was a set of prepared questions, an interview with ability to ask secondary questions, then a vote. Longer notice to the public, not on a Friday evening," he wrote. When asked if he

had changed his mind about appointing Llanez and believed other candidates should be considered, LLamas responded, "The democratic process should not be undermined for the sake of expediency." He was then reminded of what he had said two weeks prior. When asked again if he had changed his mind about appointing Llanez, he did not respond.

Lambert, Jones Supported an Appointment

Lambert said "we need a mayor not a pro tem" to give us the votes we need and pressing issues dealt with. Councilman Brett Jones called Lewis and LLamas "hypocrites" because they were "rushing" to hire a new city manager before the election and now claim appointing a mayor before the election to be "rushing". He pointed out that Llanez becoming mayor is inevitable and that the council needs to deal with it and stop stalling. The only candidate being considered for the appointment was Llanez, who is currently running unopposed for the position of mayor and is expected to win the election in November as a result.

Lewis and LLamas saw no reason to rush the process and to respect the democratic process even if the outcome is almost certain. Jones and Lambert said Llanez will be mayor either way and appointing him now will help assist with pressing issues instead of waiting until December. Both sides claimed to be acting in the interest of the citizens of Los Banos and accused the other side of having a personal agenda. Mr. Llanez was in attendance as the motion to proceed in the appointment process failed with Lambert and Jones voting in favor and Lewis and LLamas opposed.

If the council had appointed someone, that person would have only served until the new mayor is seated in December and voters would still have the final say as to who is the mayor. Appointing someone does not invalidate nor replace the election.

Allen D. Payton contributed to this report.

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CITY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2




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Los Banos Parks and Recreation, Zumba-riffic

The City of Los Banos Parks and Recreation Department's mission statement is to create community through people, parks and programs. Their vision statement says they strive to create a happy and healthy community, where residents can live, learn, work and play. They do this by offering services in parks, sports facilities, trees, recreation and senior programs.

In November of 2018, The City of Los Banos voted to pass Measure H.

Measure H is a local half-cent sales tax measure that provides funding for The Los Banos Fire Department, The Los Banos Police Department and The Los Banos Parks & Recreation Department.

According to their website, Measure H has allowed Parks and Rec to add more staff, activities and they also have been able to complete some park projects as well.

Some of the activities that Parks and Rec offers are sports such as soccer,

volleyball and basketball. They also offer classes in yoga, zumba and First Aid and CPR training.

For more information or to register for programs you can visit them online at LosBanos.org, where they use the Active Net registration program to sign-up for their programs, you can visit them at the Los Banos Community Center at 645 7th Street in Los Banos or you can reach them at 209-827-7034.

Contribution by Brooke Lopez

From Basque p.2

and bringing that fun and culture and entertainment to our community here in Los Banos."

Part of that culture can be seen in the About section on their Facebook page titled "Los Banos Basque Club" that states, "For people who understand that a wine glass is not only meant to be drank from but also danced upon" giving a nod to the "Godalet Dantza" AKA "Wine Glass Dance" wherein complicated choreography between five dancers in ornate costumes must take turns jumping on and back off a glass of wine as quickly as possible while trying to avoid breaking the glass or spilling the wine contained in the glass. Thought to be originating from a dance for good harvest depending on whether or not the wine was spilled, or the glass broken, the Godalet Dantza is one of many Basque dances that are kept alive and well in the new generations by The Basque Club Dancers. This organization not only teaches cultural dances to Basque children; but, gets them involved as early as elementary school and graduates them as seniors with their final dance being the Godalet Dantza. "The dance is kind of a culmination of all the dances that the children learn

throughout elementary school all the way through high school," Ross Urrutia commented, "The dance is their final hoorah!"

"The wine dance is a grand finale at the annual picnic. It's an accumulation of all the skills they've

learned going through the dance program and it's only for senior members as a way of celebration for

them making it that far through it." – Jean Arambel As mentioned by Jean, the dance is performed alongside many other cultural Basque dances at the LBBC's annual Summer picnic, typically falling on the third weekend in May. This event is one of many that the club hosts in order to keep the Basque culture alive and thriving in Los Banos.

Speaking of picnics. Not only is dance an important part of culture, but so is food. When asked what the staple foods of the Basque culture are, Ross Urrutia, Mark Erreca, and Jean Arambel all replied with the same thing, "Lamb chops, lamb stew, and chorizo sausage!" Other than the lamb, the chorizo sausage seems to be a subject of anticipation for the annual picnics. Ettlette Peppers, a special pepper from the Ettlette region in France, are grown fresh and ground up to be used in a time-honored Basque

chorizo recipe from Bernard Etcheverry. Jean insists that there's nothing like it.

Mark Erreca also makes his own style of Basque sausage to share with everyone. "It's not everybody's taste, but I like making Tripota, which is a blood sausage. It's mostly pork and onions but there is a blood element to it."

When asked about her hope for the future of the Basque club, Ross Urrutia said, "For me, it's to pass down to our children the sense of sharing the joy and the love and the culture and the history and having them meet other young people of their own age and continue that tradition and bring their own families to our club." Mark Erreca added, "Passing that sense of community and culture down to the next generation and safeguarding it for the future is our goal." Jean had some final notes, "We are expanding on projects in order to secure the future and keep that family, culture, and food alive." He was also very excited to share that Los Banos has not only been home to several USA representatives in global MUS tournaments, a card game, but also will be hosting the North American Basque Organization's (NABO) 40th anniversary picnic in 2023, "We are already planning big things including lots of events over a two-day period

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Education Code Sections 5090-5095, the Los Banos Unified Board of Education is seeking interested persons from Trustee Area #6 who may wish to be appointed to serve as a member of the Los Banos Unified Board of Education until December 2024.

To be eligible, an applicant must be a registered voter, reside in Trustee Area #6, and not be a Los Banos Unified School District employee. A map of the trustee area will be made available with the application. Trustee area maps are also on the District website at www.losbanosusd.org.

Interested persons can obtain an application form from the Los Banos Unified School District Office located at 1717 So. 11th Street, Los Banos, CA 93635.

The deadline for submitting completed applications is 12:00 noon, Friday Oct 21, 2022.

instead of our usual one-day event. We can't wait!"

The club itself recently became a 501 c3 nonprofit organization and looks forward to hosting projects that will support the community as well as opening the opportunity for fundraising events to help keep the Los Banos Basque Club going strong.

The next event being held by the LBBC is their annual Family Picnic occurring on Sunday, 23 October 2022 at the Los Banos Sportsmen's Club.

Socializing will begin at 12:00 noon followed with lunch. Tickets will be sold at the door.

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INTRO TO WATER-COLOR WORKSHOP!

AGES 6-13 & 14-18 **Saturday, November 5th 2022**

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 - Paint washes (flat, graduated, variegated)
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 - Tertiary (primary + secondary)
 - Analogous (neighboring colors)
 - Monochromatic (1 color, varying values)
 - Hues
 - Values (tint, tone, shade)
- "Paint Techniques"
 - Wet on Wet
 - Wet on Dry
 - Dry on Dry
 - Dry on Wet
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All programs subject to change - Limited space available

Pacheco homecoming 2022 highlights; Ceres loss puts them 3-1 in league

by Michael Cosenza, Sports Reporter

It was a successful homecoming week for the Pacheco Panthers here in 2022. School spirit was high, the energy was very uplifting. According to coach Jeremy Siemiller, "this is the first real



Pacheco Panthers kicking off Homecoming game. Photo credit: Lupe Medrano

homecoming in the four years I've been a coach. The kids are really into it with their dress up days, parade and everything else".

The night kicked off with a barrage of fireworks as the Panthers made their way onto the field. The excitement of school spirit REALLY pumped up the players as the energy was intense and magnetic. Panthers hosted Grace Davis out of Modesto. Abel Bravo ran for 271 yards, 2 touchdowns and once again led the team in all purpose yards. Bravo leads the whole league in yards, yards per game, and yards per touch. Daniel Scott added 50 yards and a touchdown of his own. Panthers pulled out the victory 28-0, putting them at 3-0 in league games.

Unfortunately, on October 7th, Panthers suffered their first league loss

against Ceres, final score 27-0. Their league record currently stands at 3-1. They'll be on the road again (tonight) Friday, Oct. 14th against Mountain

House, then back home on Oct. 21st against Beyer. Closing the regular season out, Oct 28th with a bang: Crosstown clash against the Los Banos Tigers.



Pacheco Panthers seniors parade school spirits at Homecoming. Photo credit: Lupe Medrano

An Ode to Los Banos football, a coaching legacy

by Alexis Abbott, Correspondent

Just a couple of weeks before playoffs, football teams of Los Banos are making their mark. From elementary level dreamers, to seniors in high school looking for sports scholarships, football has been an important, long-standing tradition for the Los Banos community.

Coach Dustin Caropreso, quoted for the Homecoming game, is actually a second-generation player and coach. His father, Coach Gary Caropreso, was a coach before him and a player as well. Back when Gary Caropreso was a football player, there weren't any floats at the homecoming game, just a dance that was enjoyed by all.

When asked about his favorite memory as a football player in Los Banos, Gary answered, "The biggest memory of playing football in Los Banos that I have is the year that my team beat Dos Palos." Gary shared that the football teams of

Dos Palos and Los Banos have been rivals on the field since as early as World War II, so a win on Thanksgiving Day in 1965 was no small feat, "They had a 55-game winning streak until they came up against us. We won that game! Seeing all our hard work come together to beat Dos Palos was a great memory."

"When I was in highschool, my coach was Coach Bondi. I learned a lot from him and taught with him." Gary taught history and then physical education for a total of 38 years. When he retired, he took over as athletic director.

Asked about his decision to start coaching, Gary responded, "I played the sport so much and loved it so much that I decided that I wanted to get into coaching."

He started out his coaching career as an assistant coach to a friend at Fresno State working with Pop Warner, a national youth football and dance organi-

zation that provides activities to children aged 5-16 years old. It is the largest youth football organization in the United States.

Gary's son, Dustin Caropreso also took a liking to football and coaching. When asked what it was like to coach his own son in football, Gary shared, "It was hard and different. Kids would give him a bad time and would say he was only playing because his dad was coaching. When I coached him, he was just another football player on the field. At home he was my kid. He was a player just like everyone else and I made sure to treat him just like everyone else."

But his son wasn't the only sports talent in the family. His daughter Amy (Pikas) was an athlete as well. "I also coached my daughter in softball throughout highschool. It was a family thing," he said.

"I enjoyed the 38 years of teaching,



Coach Dustin Caropreso and (father) Gary Caropreso, a family legacy of coaches and players of Los Banos football.

Photo provided by Coach Dustin Caropreso

and I enjoyed the 20 plus years of coaching. Being with kids and teaching them to have respect for people and for the game, it was enjoyable to see the kids and how they grew up. They always say coaches are mean and everything but, you know, you teach them how to respect people in sports and you just hope that it carries over with them."

Coaching and teaching does not exist in a vacuum. Teaching is an integral part of a community. Teaching and, in this case, coaching football helps to raise the next generation. Even now, years later, Coach Gary still sees old players that he guided through the game of football at the home games.

In Los Banos football is just as important today as it was in 1965 and truly is one of the backbones of the community. Thank you to all the coaches, players, parents, and teachers that make football and the lessons it teaches a reality for the youth of Los Banos.

(This is the first in an exclusive series of interviews by LBE that will feature coaches, their experiences, and the value they've brought and continue to bring to the community.)

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Tisha Blackwood-Freitas, Editor - editor@losbanosenterprise.com

Justin Collins, Reporter - news@losbanosenterprise.com

Brooke Lopez, Reporter - news@losbanosenterprise.com

Michael Cosenza, Sports Reporter - sports@losbanosenterprise.com

Alexis E. Abbott, Correspondent . Markus Machado, Production Artist

Sydney Benton, Advertising Sales Rep - ads@losbanosenterprise.com

A.J. Griem, Webmaster - aj@losbanosenterprise.com

Allen D. Payton, Interim Publisher - publisher@losbanosenterprise.com

Founding Publishers: P.H. Higgins and Carlos C.O. Freeman

Office: 848 6th Street, Suite 7 . Los Banos, CA 93635. 209.519.0230

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Veterans are celebrated at Salute to Seniors. Left to right —Robert Jurado, Ildo Martins, Rick Jurado. Photo by Brooke Lopez

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departments as: LBPd, LBFD, Parks & Recreation, Public Works and Community Economic & Development. Raffle prizes were given away that were donated by various businesses, including: a TV from Valley Spring Memory Care and gift baskets from Me & Ed's and The New Hampshire. The event ended with bingo led by Kiwanis.

According to the program flyer, contributors of this event were: The City of Los Banos, Los Banos Golden Age Club, Taqueria El Rodeo, American Legion Post 166, Costco-Merced, County of Merced, Me & Ed's, VFW Post 2487, Kiwanis and Walgreens.



Refugio LLamas shows support at the Salute to Seniors. Photo by Brooke Lopez

This event is held annually on the last Friday of September. (Next year marks the 38th annual Salute to Seniors and will be held on September 29, 2023. So mark those calendars!)

Pazin says why he's running for Assembly

By Allen D. Payton

Former Merced County Sheriff Mark Pazin says he is running for State Assembly in the new District 27 to bring common sense to Sacramento. He retired earlier this year "to devote full time to this very important Assembly race," Pazin shared. The district includes Los Banos and other portions of Merced County, as well as portions of Fresno and Madera counties.

Pazin's main issues, the registered Republican said, "Basically, which is very important to the West Side, not just this county but the two adjacent counties in the district is water storage, water storage, water storage and ensuring we get out of this one-party rule in which nothing has been done." Pazin continued, "All it takes is one environmentalist to say, 'you shouldn't do this' and all bets are off. The infrastructure of California was built for 25 million population. We haven't built any water storage in years. The population is now almost 45 million."

Pazin is also strongly in favor of suspending the state's gas tax. "I was advocating about this months ago. At a recent candidate's forum I asked, 'why not suspend the gas tax?' If we had suspended when the initial spike in gas went up, how many millions of dollars would that have saved people?"

"We have this surplus in the state budget," he continued. "Oh, no we can't have that. She wants to keep the gas tax." Pazin added, "California is leaning toward this zero-emission carbon footprint and not sell any gas-powered cars after 2035 which is crazy. It goes back to this one-party rule and that's why this district is so important. We need to get good legislation passed."

On public safety as a major issue Pazin said, "Absolutely, public safety. That's why it's ironic that my opponent is embracing law enforcement. She's bragging about getting \$2 billion for law enforcement. But that's absolute nonsense. It's just that during her term she voted for budgets maybe with an aggregate of that amount."

Endorsed by the sheriffs of Merced, Fresno and Madera counties, the CA State Sheriffs Association, the Peace Officers Research Association of California and the Fresno Deputy Sheriff's Association Pazin is a proponent of strong law enforcement, "We've got to make sure we don't have more legislation that hamstring local law enforcement," Pazin continued. "It's crazy, that zero-dollar bail. We need to make sure the people arrested for felonies are held responsible for their crimes."

Pazin helped get a bill passed in Sacramento regarding the case of Cary Verse, a sexually violent criminal from another county who was going to be placed in a home in Merced County. "We labeled it the Verse Curse." The legislation requires

the "return all civil commitments of a violent predator back to their county of domicile. The courts ruled the person doesn't have the capacity to put forth a reasonable defense," he explained. "But the psychologist was able to convince a judge to place him in a home. We said that wasn't going to happen, here."

"Gov. Schwarzenegger signed that bill into law to ensure that it doesn't happen, again," Pazin stated.

Asked about the bypass road around Los Banos and the California high-speed rail and it's planned route through Merced County Pazin said, "I'm open to reviewing public transportation that's going to move people, safely from point A to point B." Pazin added, "Efficiency and safe passage are going to be the key to this." On state funding for the reroute of Highway 152 Pazin said, "It's a state route. It falls under the Secretary of Transportation. It should be probably funded at the



Former Merced County Sheriff Mark Pazin state level. They're bragging about all this extra money from the surplus." Regarding increasing capacity for water storage at San Luis Reservoir he said, "I'm in favor of increasing capacity at all state and federal sites. These reservoirs are basically funnels, and they capture water during rainy season. That's why I'm running to bring common sense to the table and to challenge these groups that fight against raising capacity, the environmentalists."

When asked about the economy and jobs Pazin responded, "for heaven's sakes, diesel is up over \$7 and gas is over \$6 in some locations. How can people afford to go over Pacheco Pass to work? I'm backed by the National Federation of Independent Business, because they understand without employers you won't have employees, when you're constantly getting hit with a tax, regulation, an impact fee," he added.

Questioned about blocking bad legislation he answered, "that's why this district is so important, to bring people together on a bipartisan basis. In my 10 years as sheriff, we worked with Republicans and Democrats to pass legislation. I'm running for State Assembly for the right reason, not because I need another job," Pazin stated.

To learn more about Mark Pazin and his campaign for State Assembly visit www.markpazin.com.

7th Annual Los Banos Veterans Parade

Honoring All Veterans

Date: Saturday, November 5, 2022
Time: 11:00 am
Theme: Salute to the Navy

Contact: Patricia McCoy - 209.587.5033
or Mike Hughes - 209.704.5301
lbveteransparade@gmail.com
losbanosveterans.org

More to enjoy than just Halloween, come celebrate at All Souls Festival

By Markus Machado, Contributor

Growing up I never observed All Souls' Day, even in a household where my Dad (a devout Catholic) had us at Church every Sunday. In fact, I didn't know what it was until I was an adult. And it's likely that there are a lot of people including Christians that don't know what it is. But maybe we should. In this day and age, an argument could be made that our faith is tested like never before. From all the bad reports in news media to almost every form of entertainment out there, just how much of it is positive or about self reflection on those things that matter? And if there was ever a time in modern history we needed it wouldn't it be now?

All Souls' Day, in Roman Catholicism is a day for commemoration of all the faithfully departed, those baptized Christians who are believed to be in purgatory because they died with the guilt of lesser sins on their souls. Observed on November 2, Roman Catholic doctrine holds that the prayers of the faithful on earth will help cleanse these souls in order to fit them for the

vision of God in heaven, and the day is dedicated to prayer and remembrance. Requiem masses are commonly held, and many people visit and sometimes decorate the graves of loved ones.

But from the antiquity of certain days devoted to intercession on behalf of those who have passed away, comes in modern times an opportunity to make the occasion a devotional celebration of those who meant so very much to their families, friends and the community.

I for one, think that the St. Josephs' Catholic Church All Souls Festival on Sunday, October 30th starting at 9a.m. is the type of thing that every community could benefit from. Not just to honor those who have passed but to remind ourselves just how precious each of our lives

and loves are, and how important it is to welcome others as we do God into our hearts.

All Souls Festival Free Admissions

St. Josephs' Catholic Church is hosting an All Souls Festival, Sunday, October 30th starting at 9a.m. The community is welcome to gather at 1621 Center Ave. and enjoy the following festivities in support of building a new hall:

- **MUSIC:** Live music provided by Cowboy Terry Brown and Mexican Music Groups
- **FIRST RESPONDERS:** Los Banos area first responders will be featured and honored
- **HEALTH:** Golden Valley Health will provide information on their services
- **EDUCATION:** Merced College will share their educational and training opportunities
- **SELF-HELP:** Catholic Charities will explain how they help our community
- **LIFE:** St. Joseph's Respect Life group will answer questions.
- **FOOD:** All types of food and drink will be offered.
- **GAMES:** Fun children's games provided by Domingo Sandoval.

In Memoriam: Former Los Banos city worker, volunteer firefighter Jerry Downum passes at 81

Jerold 'Jerry' Downum
January 24, 1941 – October 1, 2022

Jerold 'Jerry' Downum was born on January 24, 1941, in Stidham, Oklahoma to Thomas and Pearl Downum. He passed away on October 1, 2022, at the age of 81 years old, in Cumming, Georgia surrounded by his family.

Jerry graduated from Dos Palos High School (California), where he lettered in all three varsity sports and went on to attend West Hills College in Coalinga (California), where he was a member of the 1958 Basketball Team that was inducted into the West Hills Athletic Hall of Fame in 2003. He would also meet Diane Falaschi while attending West Hills College. Jerry and Diane were married in October of 1960 and

had just reached their 62nd anniversary together at the time of his passing. They had three children together.

After college, Jerry worked for the City of Los Banos Public Works department for over 35 years and was a member of the Los Banos Volunteer Fire Department for several years. Jerry was active in the Los Banos sports community. Although coaching his own sons was near to his heart, he was beloved by many in the community that he had the privilege of coaching. Jerry was also a member of the Austin 76ers fastpitch softball team, which would defeat the legendary King & His Court at Tiger Stadium in 1978.

After retiring in 1996, Jerry and Diane would move to Cumming, Georgia. They would go onto travel extensively and enjoy the Golf

Community lifestyle. Living right across from the first hole tee box, Jerry was well-known in the Hampton Golf Village community, where he also worked as a Ranger for nearly 20 years.

Jerry is preceded in death by his parents Thomas Arlie and Pearl Irene Downum, brothers Harold, Kenneth and Donald Downum and sister Arlene Downum. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Diane; his children Lauren (Julie) Downum, Richie (Tia) Downum and Thomas Dino (Sara) Downum; his brother Roger (Jeanne) Downum and sister Anne Owen; his five grandchildren Sarah Downum, Austin Downum, Emily Downum, Morgan Grace Downum and Jake Downum; and many family and friends who love him.

A funeral service



Jerold 'Jerry' Downum born on January 24, 1941 and passed on October 1, 2022.

was held on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at Dahlonga Funeral Home in Dahlonga, Georgia. Additionally, a Celebration of Life service is planned for Saturday, November 12, 2022, in the Central Valley, California.

TICKETS NOW ON SALE

6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
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School Campus

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Sausage Tasting**

**Italian Sausage
Making Contest**



Tickets
\$60 in Advance
\$75 at the Door

**21 and Older
Event**

Hosted By
OLF Parents Club

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OUR LADY OF FATIMA SCHOOL

ALL SOULS FESTIVAL

St. Joseph Church

1621 Center Ave

FOOD • DRINKS • GAMES
LIVE MUSIC • FAMILY FUN

Sunday, October 30th
9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

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