

City Manager Newsletter By TRACKDOWN MANAGEMENT

"Providing thread to help stitch together the fabric of the
City Management Community"



March 2025 Special

Volume No. 19 | Issue No. 4

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California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler

This issue of the City Manager Newsletter by Trackdown includes information regarding [Fontana](#), [Fort Bragg](#), [Fort Jones](#), [Fortuna](#), [Fountain Valley](#), and [Fowler](#). The City of [Fort Bragg](#), is the west terminus of the Skunk Railroad, and it is also well known as the site of Glass Beach. The **Goldie Hawn** classic movie, "Overboard" was partly shot there at the mouth of the Noyo River. The City of [Fowler](#) is known as "The Blossome Trail City." Tuskegee Airman **Herman Albert "Ace" Lawson** was born in [Fowler](#).

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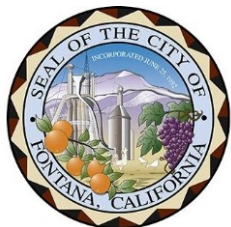
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California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Fontana was previously known as "Rosena" from 1890 until 1919. In its early years, the city was an agricultural center primarily of citrus groves, vineyards and chicken ranches. The area was

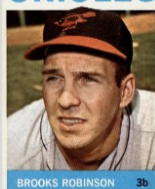
changed during World War II when **Henry J. Kaiser** built the Kaiser Steel mill just outside the city limits. This huge mill helped feed military equipment for the war and pushed the city's land use away from agriculture. The City of Fontana was incorporated in June 1952. The name "Fontana" is Italian for fountain of water in reference to the nearby Santa Ana River. The city's 2020 population is 212,704. It is the 20th largest city in the State of California. The city manager is **Matthew C. Ballantyne** and the City Clerk is **Germaine Key**. **Ray Ebert** is the Deputy City Manager, Phillip Burum is the Development Services Deputy City Manager, and **Daniel Schneider** is the Fontana Community Services Director. **Monique Carter** is the Fontana Communications and Marketing Manager, **Jessica A. Brown** is the Chief Financial Officer.



Matthew C. Ballantyne began his Fontana city manager tenure in April 2022. He succeeded city manager **Mark Denny**, who resigned to accept a position in the private sector. Matt served as the San Marino City Manager from 2006 until

2012, when he was hired to be the city manager for the City of Chino, where he worked for 10 years. Matt earned a BA from the University of California, Los Angeles (**UCLA**) and Master's Degrees from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona and the University of La Verne.

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Roxanne Diaz is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the California City Management Foundation (CCME)

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562.447.6844
vmunoz@willdan.com



Adel Freij, PE
Director of City Engineering
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Retired Anaheim and Bellflower City Manager office official **Lisa Hughes** and retired Cypress public works utilities executive **Gonzalo Vazquez** on a recent visit. Lisa continues the healing progress following a serious stroke. God Bless Lisa and her family and friends.

California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Jessica Brown is the Fontana Chief Financial Officer. She joined the Fontana city staff in November 2021. Jessica began her professional public service career in June 1999 when she was hired as a Financial

Administrator for the Finance and Administration office of the County of San Bernardino. After more than 16 years with the county, Jessica became the Chief Financial Officer for the *Apple Valley Fire Protection District*. In January 2017 she took the same position with the *Lake Arrowhead Community Services District*. Jessica went to work in December 2018 as the Finance Director for the city of Rialto. In May 2020 he became the Finance Director for the city of Placentia. Jessica worked for Placentia until she moved to Fontana. She earned a BBA in accounting and finance from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. She is a Norco College Advisory Board member.

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Mike Sedell, Retired Simi Valley City Manager
Larry F. Pennell, Retired City Manager, Wasco
Kevin O'Rourke, KOLGS; Retired City Manager
Glenn Southard, Retired CM, Indio & Claremont
Joe Tanner, Retired Vallejo City Manager
Guy Huffaker, Retired Porterville City Manager
Vern Lawson, Retired, Lancaster
Robert T. "Bob" Dickey, Retired South Gate DPW
Doug Dunlap, Retired City Manager, Pomona
Rita Geldert, Retired City Manager, Vista
Dale Geldert, Retired CDF Director, State of California
Anthony D. Gonsalves, Joe A. Gonsalves & Son
Jason Gonsalves, Joe A. Gonsalves & Son
Paul Gonsalves, Joe A. Gonsalves & Son
Richard Rowe, Retired City Manager
Lloyd de Llamas, Retired City Man./**HdL** Co-founder
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John Russo, Retired City Manager; SynchroniCITY
Lee McDougal, Retired City Manager, Montclair
Mark Scott, Retired City Manager
Doug La Belle, Retired City Manager, Chino Hills
Don Penman, Retired City Manager, Arcadia
Chuck Bryant, Past City Admin., Hawaiian Gardens
Sam Olivito, Retired CCCA Executive Director
Joe Goeden, Retired City Manager, West Sacramento
Ron Kiedrowski, Retired City Manager

Posse Roster:

Gregory Korduner, Retired City Manager, Huntington Park
Roy Pederson, ICMA Past-President
Rod B. Butler, Jurupa Valley, City Manager
Rita Geldert, Retired City Manager, Vista
Dale Geldert, Retired CDF Director, State of CA
Dr. Carlos A. Urrutia, Retired City Manager, Rocklin
Ray Taylor, Retired City Manager, Westlake Village
Denise Ovrom, Former CM retired from **HdL Companies**
Cynthia Kurtz, Interim City Manager, Pasadena
Ron Molendyk, Retired City Manager, Lake Elsinore
Kevin Duggan, Retired City Manager, Mountain View
Gary Milliman, Retired City Manager, Brookings, Oregon
Jim Lewis, City Manager, City of Atascadero
Donald Jeffers, Retired City Manager, Huntington Park
Wayne Wedin, Retired City Manager, Brea
Karen Herrera, Retired Deputy City Manager, Duarte



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Here is an archive picture of **Sam Olivito**, retired California Contract Cities Association Executive Director, with two late and great former City Managers **Howard Chambers** and **Frank Tripepi** at a "contract cities" meeting on March 19, 2014.

California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Fort Bragg was established in the area extending from the mouth of the Noyo River after a Bureau of Indians Affairs exploration trip to the area in 1855 to establish the Mendocino Indian Reservation. In

the summer of 1857, a military post was established north of the Noyo River and named for Captain **Braxton Bragg**. He later became a General in the Confederate Army. The area kept the Fort Bragg name after the post was closed and the Indian Reservation was discontinued. About 1869, a sawmill was opened in Fort Bragg using the Noyo Harbor for shipping. about 1869. The company was incorporated in 1885 as the *Fort Bragg Redwood Company*. The City of Fort Bragg was incorporated in 1889. The 2020 population is 6,983. Fort Bragg has become a tourist destination due to the amazing views of the Pacific Ocean and some notable points of interest. Glass Beach and the Skunk Railroad are two popular things to see. **Isaac Whippy** is the City Manager, and **Diana Paoli** is the City Clerk. **Merilyn Tiriboyi** is the Assistant Finance Director.



Englander Knabe & Allen (EKA) is one of the leading strategic communications and public affairs firms in Southern California. The Founding Partner is **Harvey Englander**, and Partners include Matt Knabe, Marcus Allen, Eric Rose, Jeff McConnell, Adam Englander, Alex Cherin and Kellie Hawkins lead it. We pride ourselves on providing a unique and strategic perspective on a wide variety of issues.

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Together, **EKA** has more than 100-years of combined experience and a multitude of relationships within the City & County of Los Angeles, and the 88 cities within Los Angeles County. Matt Knabe graduated from Pepperdine University. He was a four-year member of the Pepperdine University Men's Golf Team.

To contact **EKA**, please call 213) 741-1500 or email matt@ekapr.com.
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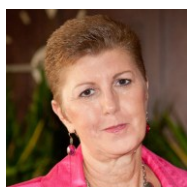
Michael Colantuono is Managing Shareholder, and currently is City Attorney for the City of Grass Valley. Michael is an elected member of the American Law Institute, and he is a leading expert in local government legal issues.

Two of the firm's attorneys were named California Lawyers of the Year (2020).

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Debbie Smith, Executive Director

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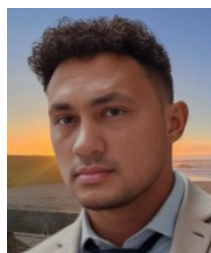
Since its inception in 1988, ICFA has assisted funding more than \$500 million in critical community projects, from hospitals to charter schools, public utilities, and housing.

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Lynwood City Council Member

Independent Cities Finance Authority

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California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Fort Bragg City Manager **Isaac Whippy** joined the city staff as Director of Finance in February 2016. He replaced city manager **Peggy Ducey**, who left in December 2024. Previously he worked as a finance consultant, accountant or auditor in the private sector. In April 2018, Isaac became a co-founder of FoodRunners in Fort Bragg. He was appointed Fort Bragg city manager in January 2024. Isaac earned a Bachelor's of Commerce degree in accounting and economics from The University of the South Pacific. He also attended Indian College, Suva Fiji taking courses in accounting, economics, math, English, geography and computer.

Linda Ruffing, owner of North Coast Community Planning since February 2018, served as the Fort Bragg city manager from January 2006 until February 2018. She previously worked in planning for the County of Mendocino, starting in September 1992 as a Coastal Planner. Linda earned a BA from the University of California, Santa Cruz and a Master of Community & Regional Planning from the University of California, Berkeley.

Gary D. Milliman recently reached out to let us know that he has once again retired. This time as city manager for Talent, Oregon (2024-2025). Gary is an ICMA Credentialed Manager, retired. He served as city manager in Cotati (October 1977-April 1979); Fort Bragg (April 1979-January 1997); South Gate (August 2003-July 2007); and in the Oregon cities of Brookings, Ashland, and Talent. He also served in Port Orford, Oregon. Gary was the Southern California Regional Director for the League of California Cities from 2000 to 2003. Gary earned a BA from California State University, Los Angeles and an MPA from the University of Southern California (USC). He also earned an AA in journalism from East Los Angeles College. In 2019, Gary received a 45 Year ICMA Service Award. He continues to work as a part-time Circuit Judge for six rural Oregon cities.

California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Fort Jones is in the Scott Valley area of Siskiyou County. The town is registered as a California Historical Landmark. Somewhere around 1850 the town was named Scottsburg. It became Scottsville and in 1852 people

began calling it Wheelock, in honor of a local merchant. A post office was established in 1854 with the town name Ottitiewa, the Indian name for the Scott River. Local residents successfully petitioned the postal service to change the town's name to Fort Jones in 1860. The town was incorporated in March 1872. The 2020 population is set at 695.

Cherje Stephen is the Fort Jones Town Administrator and **Jessie Monday** is the Town Clerk.

Fort Jones Town Administrator **Cherie Stephen** worked as a private sector auditor starting in 1988. In June 1998, Cherie joined the city staff in Bakersfield as an Accounting Clerk. She also worked with the Etna Post Office in 2020-2024 before she was hired as the Interim Administrator for Fort Jones in November 2023. Cherie was appointed to the full-time Town Administrator position starting in August 2024. Cherie is an Arcadia High School graduate and further studied accounting and business administration at Bakersfield College and Santa Barbara Business College.

"Proof of Life" Lunch: Thursday, April 3, 2025



The next "Proof of Life" lunch will be at the Northwoods Inn Restaurant in La Mirada on **Thursday, April 3, 2025**. The original date was changed due to a conflict with **Mookie Betts** and the Los Angeles Dodgers.

This "Proof of Life" lunch picture shows: **Wayne Wedin** and **Ron Molendyk**. POL luncheons are opportunities for former colleagues to meet informally. Their importance is magnified when a participant passes on like former Palmdale city manager, the late **James "Jim" Purtee**. Others lost include: **Bill Holt**, **Darrell Essex**, **Frank Tripepi**, **Howard Chambers**, and **Ray Harris**, Gather at 11:30 for the noon lunch.



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A nice day on the pier in Huntington Beach.



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Both MMASC & MMANC support ICMA's educational, diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.



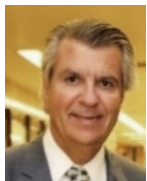
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Joe A. Gonsalves said: "Lobbyist are like parachutes: you don't need them often but when you do, they had better work."

Anthony D. Gonsalves and two of his sons, **Jason A. Gonsalves** and **Paul A. Gonsalves**, are expert local government lobbyists.

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Anthony Gonsalves
 is a long time
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Foundation (CCMF) Board of Trustees.
Taylor Gonsalves is the firm's
 Director of Communications

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California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Originally named "Slide," short for "Slide Hill," in 1874, Fortuna is a Humboldt County city on the northeasterly shore of the Eel River. The town's name was changed to Springville during the construction of the Springville Lumber Mill in 1875. A post office was established by the late 1870 with the town name of Springville. Because there was another Springville in the state, the post office chose the name "Slide" in May 1876. In 1884, town residents supported a name change to Fortuna, Spanish for "fortune" and Latin for "chance." Fortuna was incorporated in January 1906. **Amy Nilsen** is the city manager, and **Siana Emmons** is the City Clerk and Human Resources Manager. **Aaron Felmlee** is the Finance Director, and **Brendan Byrd** is the City Engineer and Director of Public Works. **Shari Meads** is the Community Development Director, and **Casey Day** is the Chief of Police. **Heather Leigh Stevens** is the Director of Parks and Recreation.



Nadean and Bob Dickey continue to explore the world. Bob retired as the South Gate Public Works Director.

California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler

Amy Nilsen became the Fortuna city manager on March 18, 2025. Amy is a former Humboldt County Administrative Officer (CAO). She resigned her county CAO position in May 2021 and she originally signed an employment agreement with the City of Fortuna to serve as the Interim City Manager.

Former City Engineer and Director of Public Works, **Merritt Perry**, served as the Fortuna city manager from December 2018 after working the Director position from July 2014 to 2018. Merritt worked in the private sector starting in 2003. He earned a BS in environmental engineering from Humboldt State University. He is the new Arcata city manager.

An item in the archives tells us that **Robert M. Davis** served as the Fortuna city manager beginning in September 1977. Prior to joining the Fortuna city staff, Bob worked for the County of Humboldt (1975-1977), City of Anaheim (December 1957-October 1975), and Midland, Texas (1955-1957). Bob retired from Fortuna after 10 years there, and moved with his family to Reno, Nevada. Bob passed away in 2016. He was born in Kansas City, Missouri and served in the U. S. Army Air Corp following his high school graduation. He became a 2nd Lieutenant Bombardier and flew 59 missions. Bob earned a BA from the University of Missouri and an MPA from the University of California, Los Angeles ([UCLA](#)).



Presley Simpson Guarino, an avid soccer player, continues to serve as the Trackdown Management Director of Hydration.



Practicing at the Joint Forces Training Base in Los Alamitos. We watched them jump out of perfectly good helicopters while we were there for youth baseball. Photo was taken by **Samantha Simpson**.



Jim L. Barisic, former Artesia City Manager who also worked in Cerritos and Paramount, and is a Viet Nam veteran, founded **Brandywine** in 1994.



Jim and two of his sons **Brett Whitehead** and **David Barisic**, and **Alex Hernandez**, the President of the Homebuilding Division, and **Mario Urzua**, the Chief Financial Officer are the **Brandywine Homes** executive team. [Please check the firm's website](#) for current sales!

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California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Fountain Valley is an Orange County community. The area was known as Talbert or Gospel Swamp. Thomas B. Talbert travelled to California from Illinois in 1878. The area had many farms growing beets that were processed at the nation's largest plants in Huntington Beach (Holly Sugar Plant). A post office was established in 1899 with the name "Talbert." The city was incorporated in June 1957 with the name "Fountain Valley" referring to the area's high water table and local artesian wells. The community's 2020 population is 57,047. **Maggie Le** is the Fountain Valley city manager, and **Rick Miller** is the City Clerk. **Ryan Smith** is the Finance Director, and **Rob Frizzelle** is the Community Services Director. **Matt Sheppard** is the Chief of Police.

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California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Fountain Valley City Manager **Maggie Le-Nguyen** has served in the position since June 2022. Maggie originally joined the Fountain Valley city staff in December 2015 as Assistant to the City Manager.

Maggie began her public service career in 2001 as a Management Analyst for the City of Brea. In 2008, she took an Administrative Analyst position with Buena Park. In November 2010, Maggie joined the Placentia city staff as a Management Analyst, and in March 2015 she took the Economic Development Manager post in the City of Chino. Maggie earned a BA from California State Polytechnic, Pomona, and an MPA from California State University, Fullerton.

Robert Hall served as the Fountain Valley city manager from 2013 to 2017. Bob was Assistant City Manager of Huntington Beach (2005 to 2013), General Manager of the Rancho Santa Fe Homeowners Association (2017), and Interim City Manager of Stanton (2018) and Laguna Niguel (2019). He also served as the General Services Director of Riverside, where he worked from 2000 to 2005. Bob passed away at 64 in July 2024.

Other former Fountain Valley city managers include: **Judy L. Kelsey**; **Robert J. Houston**; and **Raul Godinez II**. Prior to joining Fountain Valley in May 1984, Judy worked assignments in San Diego; San Dimas; Coventry, English; Los Angeles Police Department; Newport Beach; Westminster; Eureka; and Sunnyvale. She served as the Eureka city manager in 1978-1980. Judy earned a BS and MPA from the University of Southern California (**USC**).

Raymond H. Kromer served as the Fountain Valley city manager from October 1990 until he retired in December 2012. Ray worked in Pennsylvania and New Jersey local governments before coming to Fountain Valley. In 2011, Ray received a 35 Year ICMA Service Award.

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Letters and Notes from Readers:

I hope this email address is still active and monitored. I want to pass along the sad news that **Art Simonian** passed away earlier this week. As you know, Art is acknowledged as having had the most instrumental influence over the expansive growth and high-quality development of the City of Yorba Linda. Thanks to Art (and **Roy Stephenson**) the city has become one of the premier places to live in all of Orange County and his many accomplishments will forever be enjoyed by the residents who now call Yorba Linda their home. As you know, he was both a great mentor and close friend to me, and he will be deeply missed.

Another icon in our CM community has passed away. I hope this note finds you doing well.
---**Bruce E. Channing**, City Manager - Retired

Nice shout out in the March 2025 newsletter issue reminding all of us about **Ellen Ward**, one of my favorite people. Always remember that cigarette holder. Also, nice to see folks talking about our friend **Craig Nealis**.
---**Mike Sakamoto**



A picture of **Fred Claire** of the Los Angeles Dodgers and **Michael Rittel** of Temecula taken a few years ago by Dodger photographer **Rich Kee**. Mike grew up in Artesia and he was a football star for Richard Gahr High School.

Mike served in the Infantry in the U. S. Army during the Vietnam war where he was deployed "in country" at Camp Eagle. After working several years, Mike retired from the City of Cerritos. Mike's mother, **Margaret Rittel**, served as City Clerk for the City of Artesia. Mike's wife, Stephanie, retired from the city of La Mirada.



John Gonsalves and his wife **Connie Gonsalves**. John is the brother of Anthony, of **Joe A. Gonsalves & Son**. Connie is a member of the City of Jackson City Council. She has served multiple times as Mayor. In the picture they appear relaxed on a Hawaiian shore.

California Managers in Cities from Fontana to Fowler



Fowler, formerly Fowler's Switch, is a Fresno County city. It is primarily an agricultural community with grape vineyards and farmland. Fowler's first post office was opened in 1882. The city is named for an 1870s California State Senator named **Thomas Fowler**. Fowler was incorporated in June 1908, and its 2020 population is reported at 6,700. Fowler Assistant City Manager **Thomas Gaffery** has been serving as Interim City Manager. **Angela Vasquez** is the City Clerk, and **Margarita Moreno** is the Finance Director.

Thomas Gaffery began his working career in 2002 as a member of the staff for California State University, Fresno. After more than 14 years, Tom left Fresno State to work as the Director of Parking & Transportation for California State University, San Bernardino. In 2017-2018, Tom worked as a parking consultant for Texas A&M University, San Antonio (2017-2018). After working for the City of Fresno a little more than 3 years, Tom joined the Fowler city staff as Community & Economic Development Director in April 2021. He was the Assistant City Manager from July 2023 to July 2024. He was appointed Interim City Manager in July 2024. Tom earned a BA in economics and an MBA from California State University, Fresno.



We appreciate receiving suggestions and information when we have been in error. This allows us to correct our material. Thank you **Anna Guiles** for the "heads-up."

I'm reaching out for a small correction for future issues of Trackdown Management. On Page 8 of the March 2025 issue, the MMANC ad lists our previous president and vice president. Could you please update future newsletters with the following MMANC officers?

Candice Rankin-Mumby, President, Walnut Creek
Anthony Valdez, Vice President, Bakersfield
Anna Guiles, Fairfield



RICHARDS WATSON GERSHON

RW&G is a full-service law firm, headquartered in Los Angeles with offices in Orange County, San Francisco, and Temecula. **RW&G** has specialized in the representation of public and private sector clients for more than 50 years. The depth and diversity of the firm's experience cannot be duplicated. **RW&G** is comprised of lawyers that are committed to excellence in the legal services they provide and to solving problems of business and the public sector with the highest quality legal services.

Roxanne Diaz is the City Attorney for Hidden Hills, and Maywood. Roxanne is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the California City Management Foundation (CCMF). **Quinn Barrow, Steven L. Flower, Kevin Ennis, Peter M. Thorson, Laurence Wiener, Serita Young, David Snow** and **Craig Steele** are among the many other City Attorneys on the **RW&G** staff.

RWG serves as City Attorney for the following cities and towns: Agoura Hills; Artesia; Banning; Beverly Hill; Brea; Buena Park; Calimesa; Covina; Fairfield; Hidden Hills; Highland; Indio; Jurupa Valley; La Mirada; Manhattan Beach; Mill Valley; Monrovia; Moorpark; Norwalk; Rancho Cucamonga; Ross; San Marino; Seal Beach; South El Monte; Temecula; Upland; Westlake Village; and Yucaipa.

RW&G's lawyers have specialized in representing all types of public agencies since 1954. The firm currently serves as City Attorney, Bond Counsel, General Counsel and Special Counsel to more than 50 public agencies throughout California, including airports, cities, towns, community services districts, counties, joint powers authorities, redevelopment agencies, libraries and water districts.

Historically, **Glenn Watson, Richard Richards**, and colleague **Robert G. Beverly** opened the **RWG** firm's first offices in downtown Los Angeles in the fall of 1954. At the time, the firm maintained its founders' focus on real estate and business litigation. The attorneys were joined from the first day and for the next 43 years by **Beth Donald**, who served as both a Legal Secretary and Office Manager. From the early 1970s until her death in 1997, she was the Municipal Law Administrator – responsible for assisting City Clerks in preparing their meeting agendas, assisting City Attorneys in drafting resolutions and ordinances, handling the billing for most of the Firm's cities and maintaining (in her head) an encyclopedic database of California municipal law.

Please visit the Richards Watson & Gershon web page at: www.rwglaw.com

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Youth sports are good development opportunities.



Picking Up the Pieces: Orland City Manager **Pete Carr** resigned. Pete has served as the Orland city manager for 13 years. Before joining the Orland city staff in 2012, Pete worked as the City Administrator for the City of Biggs from 2007 to 2012. He worked in private sector positions in Ukiah and Chico before being hired by Biggs. Pete earned a BA from California State

University, Sacramento. Yucaipa City Manager **Chris Mann** resigned effective March 31. Chris had been placed on administrative leave. Chris has served as Yucaipa city manager since January 2023 following former city manager **Ray Casey**. Assistant City Manager **Jennifer Crawford** will serve as Acting City Manager. Chris served as City Manager for the City of Canyon Lake from March 2019 until February 2023. He was an elected Director/President for the Yucaipa Valley Water District (December 2016-February 2023). He previously worked for the County of San Bernardino. Chris earned a BS in psychology from California Lutheran University and an MPA from San Diego State University. La Palma city manager **Conal McNamara** is the new city of Whittier city manager, replacing City Manager **Brian Saeki**, who has accepted the City Administrator position with the City of Vernon. Conal is a former Whittier Community Development Director, who has been serving as the La Palma city manager since 2020. Conal earned a BA from the University of California, Irvine, and an MPA from California State University, Northridge. California City has a new city manager. Livingston City Manager **Christopher Lopez** has been hired to serve as city manager for California City. He is the 8th California City manager in the past three years. Christopher was appointed Interim City Manager in Livingston in February 2023. **Steve L. McClary** is leaving the Malibu city manager position after reaching a mutual agreement with the city. According to a press release, Steve was hired as interim city manager on April 29, 2021. He previously worked as



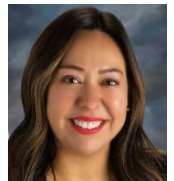
<https://www.bigbear.com/events/tough-mudder/>

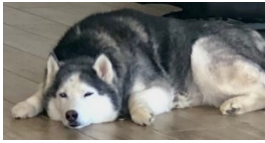
Big Bear Lake's first Tough Mudder is this September 2025. It includes challenging terrain, mud, demanding obstacles, mud, epic views, and mud, teamwork, camaraderie, more mud and finally...delicious!



This exclusive co-branded In-N-Out Burger® Tough Mudder Challenge has got 5K and 10K courses. Proceeds directly benefit the Slave 2 Nothing Foundation that is dedicated to ending substance abuse and human trafficking.

the city manager for the city of Ojai where he resigned for personal reasons in 2019. He worked as an Assistant City Manager in Camarillo, and he started his career in local government in Fillmore in 1997. Steve earned a BA in communications from Pacific Lutheran University. In 2024 he received a 20 Year ICMA Service Award. Steve has been out of the office for personal reasons since Thanksgiving. Assistant City Manager **Joseph Toney** has served as Acting City Manager. Ontario Assistant City Manager **Darlene Sanchez** worked for the City of Monrovia and the City of Glendale before joining the Ontario city staff as Assistant City Manager in September 2020. Darlene served as an Intern in the city of Walnut from November 2000 until April 2002. She was a Senior Project Manager for Monrovia, and after more than 10 years there she took a job with the city of Glendale. Darlene rose to Assistant Community Development Director prior to leaving for Ontario. Darlene earned a BA from California State University, Fullerton and an MPA from the University of Southern California (**USC**), Sol Price School of Public Policy. Ojai Assistant City Manager **Carl Alameda** joined the Ojai city staff in June 2023 after working for the City of La Cañada Flintridge for nearly 20 years. He served as "Interim" for the duration of the city manager recruitment that brought City Manager **Ben Harvey** to the city. Carl is a past member of the **USC** Board of Governors, and he currently serves President of the **USC** Price School, City/County Management Fellowship Program (July 2014-Present).





More Pieces Picked Up: Yuba City has a new Interim City Manager. **Robert Bendorf** will work with city manager **Diana Langley** before Diana leaves at the end of March.

Robert has been serving as the County Administrator for Yuba County for the past 14 years. Robert began his public service career with the Yuba County Sheriff's Department in 1986. He joined the County Administrator's office in 2000. He is a member of the Board for the Yuba-Sutter-Colusa United Way. Sausalito City Council members called off a recent meeting after what City Manager **Chris Zapata** called a "blunt force" hacking attempt on the city computer system. Chris reports that more than 190,000 attempts to compromise staff password access were detected in under 24 hours. Sausalito city staff and technology contractor Marin IT continue to assess the scope of the hacking and potential for future such occurrences. Fremont elevated Assistant City Manager **Karena Shackelford** to be Fremont's ninth City Manager starting in October 2021. Karena succeeded City Manager **Fred Diaz**, who retired. Karena worked as an Administrative Officer for the City of San Jose from 1999 to 2006. She joined the city staff in Fremont in Business Manager in March 2006. She rose to Assistant City Manager with Fred in September 2018. Karena earned a BA from San Jose State University and an MBA from Saint Mary's College of California. She received a 20 Year ICMA Service Award in 2018. Since January, **Leyne Milstein** has served as the Interim City Manager for the City of Sacramento. Leyne served as Assistant City Manager starting in 2017. She is the first woman to serve as the Sacramento Interim City Manager. After working for the State of California with the Department of Finance and the State Public Works Board, she joined the City of Sacramento staff. She served as the city Finance Director from 2008 until 2017. Leyne earned a BA from the University of California, Davis and an MPA from California State University, East Bay. Pasadena City Council Member **Rick Cole** served as the city manager in Santa Monica (June 2015-April 2020), Ventura (April 2004-September 2012) and the City of Azusa (June 1998-April 2004). Rick currently serves as an Assistant Professor for Occidental College, and as an Adjunct Professor for Pepperdine University, School of Public Policy. In addition to rejoining the Pasadena City Council, Rick works as Chief Deputy Controller for the City of Los Angeles. Former City Manager Stephen "**Steve**" **G. Harding** describes himself as a writer, blogger, student, instructor, traveler, volunteer and advisor to local-regional government and a former rock drummer and studio backup singer. Steve was the City of Jurupa Valley's first city manager and the second city manager for the city of Murrieta. In 2008, Steve received a 25 Year ICMA Service Award.



This is a 2014 picture of San Dimas City Manager **Brad McKinney** drinking a Diet Coke. Brad has held positions in Anaheim, Claremont, Rosemead, and Alhambra. Brad graduated from Azusa Pacific University, where he played varsity baseball.

Retired La Mirada official **Stephanie Rittel** is recovering from a long intricate surgery to remove skin cancer. Her husband **Michael Rittel**, who retired from the city staff in the City of Cerritos, says that he has been able to talk to her and he is hopeful for a full recovery. **SHORTS:** *Indian Wells City Manager **Chris Freeland** appointed **Eric Ceja** to serve as the Indian Wells Assistant City Manager. *Fortuna Chief of Police **Casey Day** has been hired as the new Chief of Police for the City of Pacific Grove. *Former acting San Bernardino city manager **Rochelle Clayton**, who is currently the Barstow city manager, contends that there is a culture of corruption and intimidation at San Bernardino city hall. ***Jennifer Torres** received a promotion to Administrative Analyst with the staff of the California Joint Powers Insurance Authority (California JPIA). *Former Lindsay city manager **Joseph "Joe" M. Tanner, Jr.**, and Acting City Manager **Armando da Silva** were replaced by former Exeter Director of Public Works **Daymon Qualls** as the current Lindsay city manager starting in July 2024. *Former Rocky Ford, Colorado Chief of Police, **Sean McDonagh** is the new Chief of Police for the City of Sebastopol replacing Chief **Ron Nelson**, who retired. *Westlake Village city manager **Rob De Geus** worked in recreation with the City of Palo Alto starting in March 2000. *Ojai Assistant City Manager **Carl Alameda** served as the Assistant Varsity Football Coach for the La Cañada High School from January 2011 until December 2015. ***Liz Habkirk** is the Assistant City Manager for the City of Napa and she previously worked for Reno, Nevada (July 2004-February 2011) and the County of Napa (February 2011-January 2020). *Moorpark City Manager **Troy Brown** has been named California City Management Foundation (CCMF) 2025 City Manager of the Year. *A U.S. Department of Justice Federal Antisemitism Task Force will investigate 10 college campuses, including **USC** and **UCLA**, with the goal to combat antisemitism and report incidents since October 2023. ***Kenneth H. Lounsbery** served as the city manager for the city of Escondido starting in 1976. ***Kim Beranek**, who is a parks and recreation professional who earned a BA from California State University, Chico, is the Director of Community Services for the City of Fremont. ***Clayton Iske**, formerly from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Area, is the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Artesia. ***Armando Quintero**, has served as the Director of the California Department of Parks and Recreation since September 2020. ***