

# City Manager Newsletter By TRACKDOWN MANAGEMENT

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

September, 2019

Volume No. 12: Issue No. 14



Retired Norwalk City Manager **Ernie V. Garcia**. Ernie replaced former City Manager **Richard Powers** in 1994 and retired as City Manager in 2011. Ernie joined the Norwalk city staff in 1980 as Assistant Recreation Director when the city took over the old Southeast Parks and Recreation District. Ernie worked for the District in 1978-1980 with the likes of current Cerritos City Manager **Art Gallucci**.

## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

A list of dedicated women city government professionals in cities listed alphabetically starting with the City of Parlier is presented in this 23rd in the Trackdown series on women serving California Cities. This issue begins with Parlier and takes a look at cities through the City of Petaluma alphabetically.

There are many highly qualified and dedicated professional women serving California cities. The list is impressive and addresses the rhetorical question: Where are the women in city management?

Again, we apologize up front to anyone we miss and do not list. The failures of others to not post profiles makes it difficult to be comprehensive.

Jack & Susan Simpson, 16707 Gerritt Avenue, Cerritos, California 90703-1442

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www.trackdownmanagement.net | jack@trackdownmanagement.net

## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

Parlier was incorporated in November, 1921 in Fresno County. The 2018 estimated population in Parlier is 15,286. According to the City's web page, the Parlier City Manager position is currently vacant, and **Dorothy Garza** is the City Clerk. The Finance Director is **Kristi Miller**, and **Felipa Tienda** is the Accountant Tech. City Manager **Antonio Gastelum** was continuing to serve in February, 2019, though Federal prosecutors allege that, while working for an agricultural labor contracting business, he and a business partner violated the law. Antonio has pleaded not guilty to the indictment on fraud charges.

Pasadena was incorporated in June, 1886. It is the Home of the Rose Bowl and known throughout the United States for the New Year's Day Rose Parade. The 2018 estimated population is 141,371, ranking it the 9th largest city in Los Angeles County. **Steve Mermell** has served as the Pasadena City Manager since February, 2016. **Julie Gutierrez** and **Nicholas G. Rodriguez** are the Assistant City Managers, and **Matthew E. Hawkesworth** is the Finance Director.



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**Matt Knabe** is the Managing Partner. Matt is a graduate of Pepperdine University. Matt and his family are residents of Long Beach. Matt's contact information includes

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Email: [Matt@ekapr.com](mailto:Matt@ekapr.com)



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**Sylvia Ballin** of the City of San Fernando is the current President of the ICFA Board of Directors.

**Jose Solache** is the ICFA Treasurer, and **Marilyn Sanabria, Leticia Lopez, Emma Sharif, Ricardo Pacheco**, and **Jorge Morales** complete the Board.

## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

Pasadena Assistant City Manager **Julie Gutierrez** served as the Azusa City Manager starting in 2004 when City Manager **Rick Cole** exited to another city manager post. Before coming to Azusa, Julie worked for three years as the Chief Financial Officer for the Pasadena-based Center for Community and Family Services, a nonprofit agency. Julie worked for the city of Pasadena for three years as the city's Public Works Director. From 1988 to 2003, she worked for the City of Pasadena in a variety of positions including Director of Public Works. Julie also served as Director of Municipal Programs for a private engineering consultant firm before returning to Pasadena as Assistant City Manager. Julie earned her bachelor's degree in Theatre Administration at Pomona College and an MBA at the University of La Verne.

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### Executive Level Posse Roster:

**Wade McKinney**, Retired Indian Wells City Manager

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**Larry F. Pennell**, Retired City Manager, Wasco

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**Glenn Southard**, Retired City Manager, Indio & Claremont

**Joe Tanner**, Retired Vallejo City Manager

**Denise Ovrom**, Former City Manager &

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**Vern Lawson**, Retired, Lancaster

**Ernesto Marquez**, Former City Manager

**Gary K. Sloan**, Retired La Mirada City Manager

**Richard D. Rowe**, Retired City Manager

**Robert T. Dickey**, Former Walnut CM; retired South Gate Public Works Director

**Doug Dunlap**, Retired City Manager, Pomona

**Rita Geldert**, Retired City Manager, Vista

**Charles Huffaker**, Retired City Manager, Porterville

**David Jinkens**, Retired City Manager



Maywood City Manager **Jennifer E. Vasquez** and South El Monte City Council Member **Gracie Retamozo** at a California Contract Cities Association Event.

## Trackdown Posse Roster:

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**Howard Chambers**, Retired Lakewood City Manager

**Dave Carmany**, West Covina, Interim City Manager

**Ken Bayless**, Ret. GM LA Vector Control & Ret. LASD Chief

**Don Penman**, Retired City Manager, Arcadia

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---**Ryan Vogelsong**,  
San Francisco Giants

## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

Former Pasadena City Manager **Cynthia Kurtz** retired in 2008, but has continued to keep her hands in public service working as a consultant and in interim posts. Cynthia began her public service career in 1976 in Portland, Oregon, and she went to work as a City Planner in Portland in 1977 (1977-1981); Street Light Manager (1981-1985); and Administrator of Transportation Planning & Finance (1985-1987). She joined the Pasadena city staff in 1987 as a Capital Projects Administrator. Cynthia became the Acting Director of Public Works in 1990 and the Director of Public Works in 1991. In 1996 the city added Assistant City Manager duties and responsibilities to her plate, and in 1998 she was appointed Acting City Manager, and she became City Manager later that year (1998). Since retirement, Cynthia has served as Interim City Manager in Covina and Santa Ana and as an Ethics Advisor Consultant to the City of Vernon. She also served for a time as the President and CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership. She is a well-respected public management professional. Cynthia earned a BS from Pennsylvania State University and an MA in Transportation and Urban planning from the University of Iowa. In 2007 Cynthia received a 30-year ICMA Service Award. She served as the President of the City Managers Department of the League of California Cities in 2007.



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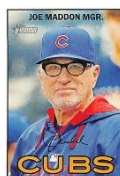
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A 1980s Archive picture of former Assembly Members **Frank Vicencia** and **Sally Tanner** flanking former City Manager **Jack A. Simpson**.



"Never permit the pressure to exceed the pleasure."

—**Joe Maddon**, Chicago Cubs Manager



Here is a 1980s archive picture of the late-Rolling Hills City Manager **Craig Nealis** and **Marlene Tomlin** **Towns** when they served on the executive staff in the City of Bellflower. They were videotaping an Annual Liberty Day Parade.

## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

**Kathleen Blomo** started her career in 1979 working as a Recreation Supervisor for the City of Pasadena. In 1987 she was appointed Assistant to the Director of Community Services and in 1988 she became a Management Audit Specialist. Kathleen worked as a Pasadena Program Coordinator in 1989-1990 before she took a Management Assistant post with the City of Chino in 1990. Kathleen worked her way up in the City of Chino organization: Assistant to the City Manager (1992-1995); Deputy City Manager (1995-1997); Director of Redevelopment (2008-2009) and Assistant City Manager/Community Services Director (2009-2011). Kathleen earned a BA and MPA from California State University. In 2010 Kathleen received a 20-year ICMA Service Award.



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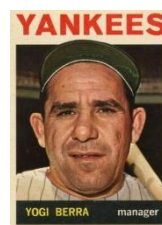
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Names of other women discovered with a Pasadena connection or background include: **Michelle Bernal; Shauna Clark; Bekah Cooke; Valerie Gibson; Patsy Lane; Jhoanna Gorricet-Rojo; Joy Guihama; and Candy Jara**. Again, we apologize to those deserving of recognition who we missed.



"Half the lies they tell about me aren't true."

"A nickel aint' worth a dime anymore."

---**Yogi Berra**



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Paso Robles is a City in San Luis Obispo County incorporated in March, 1889. The City's estimated 2018 populations 32,212. In 1864, the first El Paso de Robles Hotel was constructed and featured a hot mineral springs bath house. In 1866, following the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad, work began on laying out a town site.

**Tom Frutchey** is the current Paso Robles City Manager.



**Marlaïne Sanders** is the Administrative Services Director. Marlaïne joined the Paso Robles city staff in 2011. After serving as Human Resources Manager, she became Interim Administrative Services Director in July, 2017 and Human Resources Manager, and she became the Director in May, 2018.



**Sarah Johnson-Rios** is the new Assistant City Manager since August, 2019. She had been serving as Community Development Administrator for the City of Raleigh in North Carolina (November, 2018-July, 2019). Previous to that, Sarah

worked for the City of Santa Monica as Administrative Services Officer, leaving to go to the Raleigh position. Sarah worked as a Project Coordinator for the City of Chula Vista (May, 2006-July, 2008), and was a Fulbright Scholar before that. Sarah earned a BA from Emory University, and attended graduate classes at Princeton University.

**Shonna Howenstine**, Community Outreach and Tourism Coordinator is listed in the City Manager's Office.



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**Michael Colantuono** is Managing Shareholder. Michael currently serves as City Attorney for the City of Grass Valley.

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"It's unbelievable how much you don't know about the game you've been playing your whole life."

---**Mickey Mantle**



City of Walnut City Manager **Rob Wishner** and his wife Shelly at the "new" Los Angeles Coliseum for a University of Southern California football game.

## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

Patterson was incorporated in Stanislaus County in December, 1919. Patterson is known as the "Apricot Capital of the World," and holds an annual Apricot Fiesta in June. The 2018 estimated population is 22,352. **Ken Irwin**, former Director of Engineering, is the City Manager and **Helen Stange** is the Executive Assistant who also serves as a Human Resources Assistant.

The Human Resources Director is **Dionysia Smith**, and **Lakisha Callum** is the Human Resources Analyst. Dionysia became the Patterson Director of Human Resources in July, 2016. She earned a BA and MPA from the University of San Francisco. Lakisha joined the city staff as an Accountant in 2012. She previously worked as a Financial Analyst for a private firm in San Leandro.

**Minerva "Minnie" Moreno** served as the Patterson Finance Director for five-year, and joined the Patterson city staff in January, 2005. Minnie left Patterson in March, 2016 to become the Finance Officer for the Municipal Utilities Department in the City of Stockton. She began her career in January, 2003 as a Senior Account Clerk for the City of Modesto. Minnie is an alumnus of California State University, Stanislaus.



## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

Perris was incorporated in Riverside County in May, 1911. The city is named for **Fred T. Perris**, Chief Engineer of the California Southern Railroad. The Perris area was originally part of San Diego County, but in 1892 it was transferred to the newly created Riverside County. **Richard Belmudez** is the City Manager and **Nancy Salazar** is the elected City Clerk.



**Clara Miramontes** is the Perris Assistant City Manager and in charge of Development Services. Clara began her public service career as a Principal Planner for the City of Riverside in 1999. She worked there for 11-years, and joined the Perris city staff in December, 2010 as the Director of Development Services. Clara replaced Director **Brad Eckhardt**, who was tragically killed in a traffic accident. While retaining the Director responsibilities, Clara was named Assistant City Manager in April, 2017. She earned a BS in urban and regional planning from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and an MPA and MBA from California State University, Long Beach.



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Among other outside activities, Ryder serves on the Board of the Rose Institute of State and Local Government at Claremont McKenna College.

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Duarte Deputy City Manager **Karen Herrera** at a "Proof of Life" lunch in Southern California.

## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

**Sabrina Chavez** is the Perris Director of Community Services and Housing. Sabrina began her public service career as a Program Manager for the City of South Gate in November, 2001. She then joined a private planning firm and did contract work in the Cities of Montebello, Huntington Park and Perris. Sabrina joined the Perris city staff in August, 2003 as the Assistant to Associate Planner. She was promoted to Housing Division Manager in December, 2008 and she became the Assistant Director of Housing and Community Services in November, 2012. Sabrina earned a BA from California State University, San Diego, and a Master's in urban planning and policy, and a Master's in social work from the University of Southern California (**USC**). She is a graduate of Saint Paul High School in Whittier.

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## Women Professionals In Cities Listed Alphabetically From the City of Parlier

**Dr. Grace I. Williams** served as the Perris Director of Planning & Economic Development from November, 2017 until August, 2019. She is currently a self-employed consultant. Grace earned a BS and Doctorate in public policy, planning and development from the University of Southern California (**USC**), and she earned an MS from the University of La Verne.



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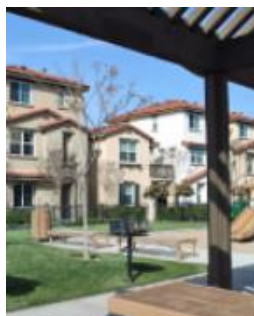
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**Jim Barisic** of Brandywine Homes chats with Long Beach City Manager **Pat West**

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Petaluma was incorporated in April, 1858 in Sonoma County. The 2010 census put the city's population at 57,941, and the 2018 population estimate is 61,917. **Peggy Flynn** is the City Manager in Petaluma, and **Scott Brodhun** is the Assistant City Manager. Peggy came to Petaluma earlier this year from her position as the Assistant City Manager in the City of Novato. Peggy began her public service career as a Communications and Government Affairs Manager, and Special Projects Manager for the San Jose Redevelopment Agency in 1998. In 2004 she joined the Santa Clara Valley Water District as their Communication & Community Relations Manager. After working as the Executive Director of the Downtown Bloomington Association and some self-employment between 2004 and 2009, Peggy became the Community and Government Relations Manager for the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District in 2009. She joined Novato in 2012 as Assistant to the City Manager and was appointed Assistant City Manager in 2017. Peggy earned a BS from San Jose State University. \*\*\*



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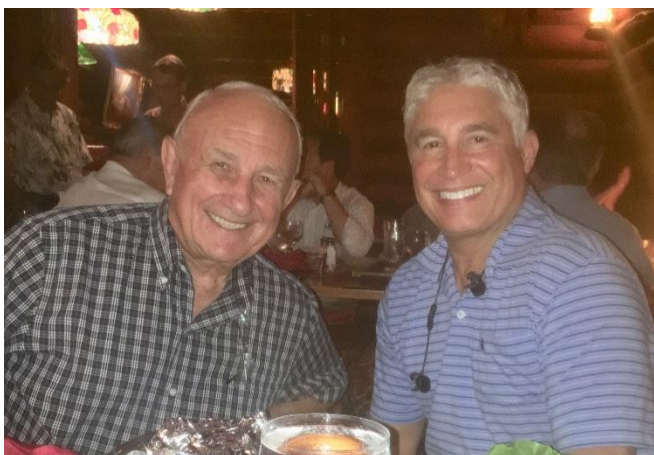
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Find the Retirement Program That's Right for Your Agency



Former City Managers **Ken Caresio** and **Larry Kosmont** at "Proof of Life" Lunch.



### Picking Up the Pieces:

Oceanside Assistant City Manager **Deanna Lorson** has been selected to replace retiring City Manager **Michelle Skaggs Lawrence**. Deanna has worked in several California cities. She is a former Assistant City Manager in Riverside (2011-2016). Deanna began her public management career as an Intern in the City of Redlands

in 1988. She worked as an Assistant Planner in Corona (1989-1993) and she worked for the Economic Development Agency in Riverside County (1994-2009). She was Development Director in the City of Riverside (2009-2011) before becoming Assistant City Manager. She joined the Oceanside city staff as Assistant City Manager in February, 2016. Solvang City Manager **David Gassaway**, hired to replace City Manager **Brad Vidro**, has resigned after only five months on the job. In April, City Attorney **Dave Fleishman** also resigned after serving the City for nearly 21-years. David previously served as the Assistant to the City Manager and Community Development Director in the City of Indian Wells. Mountain View City Manager **Dan Rich** will retire in December after serving with the City for the past 8-years. Dan previously served as the Campbell City Manager (2005-2011); Assistant City Manager in Belmont (2001-2005); Assistant to the City Manager in Sunnyvale (1996-2001); and Management Analyst, also in Sunnyvale (1992-1996). Rich began his career as a Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator **Alan Cranston** (1987-1990). He earned a BA from the University of California, Berkeley and an MPP from Harvard University Kennedy School of Government. In 2017 Rich received a 25-year ICMA Service Award.

**"The great thing about baseball is there's a crisis every day."**  
---Gabe Paul

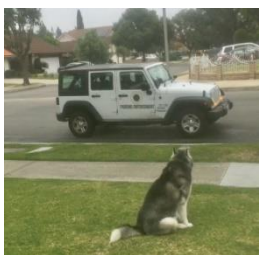
Pomona is ramping up its recruitment effort to find a new City Manager. City Manager **Linda Lowry** will retire at the end of the year. Linda has been the Pomona City Manager since 2008. She was the Assistant City Manager from 2006 to 2008. Previous to joining the Pomona city staff, Linda served as the Diamond Bar City Manager (2001-2006). Her first public service position in California following her relocation from Josephine County, Oregon was Assistant Finance Director in Bellflower in 1987. She served as Bellflower CAO in 1993-1997. In 2018 Linda received a 35-year ICMA Service Award.



A 1980s Archive Picture of Trackdown's **Susan and Jack Simpson**

Rancho Palos Verdes City Manager **Doug Willmore** announced that he will retire in November of this year. He is leaving public management for a position in the environmental industry. He joined Rancho Palos Verdes in March, 2015 after positions in Bell (2012-2015), El Segundo (2011-2012), and Salt Lake County, Utah (2004-2011). Turlock Administrative Services Director **Kellie Jacobs-Hunter**, 52, submitted her resignation effective September 26. Kellie joined the Turlock city staff in March, 2015. She is leaving Turlock to accept the Finance Director position in the City of Atwater.





**More Pieces Picked Up:** Sand City is in the final stages of identifying a new City Manager. Retired Monterey City Manager **Fred Meurer** served as Interim City Manager until June 30, 2019. The municipal code has been

amended to change the position from City Administrator to City Manager. **Todd Bodem** resigned as the City Administrator at the end of last September after serving 4-years with the City. Since Fred vacated the post, City Clerk **Linda Scholink** has been Acting City Manager. Oceanside City Manager **Michelle Skaggs Lawrence** is retiring from her position as City Manager in the Fall. She has worked for the City of Oceanside for the last 30-years, starting as an Administrative Analyst. She was appointed Interim City Manager in February, 2015. Fresno City Manager **Wilma Quan** announced the appointment of **Lupe Perez** as the city's new Economic Development Director. She is currently with the City's Downtown Revitalization Department. Lupe has managed the downtown effort since June, 2014. She previously worked 16-years with the now-defunct Fresno Redevelopment Agency. Yountville Finance Director **Maria Ojeda** will join the Executive Team as Assistant City Manager on September 2. She previously worked as the Deputy City Manager in the City of Pleasanton. Maria is an East Bay native. She earned a BA from Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont, and an MPA from the University of Kansas. Turlock City Manager **Robert Lawton** abruptly resigned following a closed City Council meeting to evaluate his performance. Robert joined the Turlock city staff as City Manager in July, 2018. Prior to that he served as County Administrator in Yates County, New York (September, 2016-June, 2018). He worked as Assistant County Administrator for Sonoma County in 2016. Palmdale City Manager **Jim Purtee** provided testimony in the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act hearing at the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank, also known as iBank. Palmdale officials are supporting a private activity High-Speed Rail Bond that could provide rail service between Las Vegas and Victorville, with a continuation of the line into Palmdale. Long Beach Manager of Government Affairs and Communications **Diana Tang** is joining the Long Beach Mayor's Office as Chief of Staff. She will replace **Mark Taylor** who will resign to work in the private sector. Assistant City Manager **Sean Charpentier**, 46, left his East Palo Alto position on August 27. Community and Economic Development Director **Patrick Heisinger** is serving as the Interim



Hats off to City Managers **Matt Bronson**, Grover Beach; **Jim Bergman**, Arroyo Grande; and **Jim Lewis**, Pismo Beach for participating in a San Luis Obispo County South County Regional Leadership Program.

Assistant City Manager in East Palo Alto. Three Muslim inmates are suing the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, alleging they were denied access to an observant diet and proper religious garments and texts, while the same accommodations were made for inmates of other faiths. The lawsuit was filed by the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Dogs are now prohibited all year on the Museum Trail, South Lykken Trail, North Lykken Trail and Araby Trail. City staff will warn and educate first-time violators, but anyone caught a second time could face fines of up to \$500, Palm Springs Assistant City Manager and Director of Engineering **Marcus Fuller** said. Apparently, dogs are no longer allowed due to efforts to protect Peninsular Bighorn Sheep, which perceive dogs as predators and stress-inducers, according to experts.

**SHORTS:** \*Hanford, where **Mike Olmos** is the Interim City held a community meeting to discuss what qualities residents would like to see in a future City Manager. \***Susan** and **Jack Simpson** of **Trackdown Management** were recently seen at the Las Brisas Restaurant in Laguna Beach. \***Lydia Munoz** of the Bellflower City Manager's office participated in the Santa Monica Classic 10K. \*According to City Manager **Scott Collins**, a 1-percent sales tax increase in Morro Bay will generate about \$2 million annually. \*When 57-year old **Bob Lawton** resigned as the Turlock City Manager, Municipal Services Director **Michael Cooke** was named Interim City Manager. \*Former Banning Human Resources Director **Dr. Robert J. Meteau Jr.** joined the City of National City staff as their new Human Resources Director in February. \*Santa Fe Springs City Manager **Ray Cruz**, former Coro Fellow in Northern California, previously served as the City Manager in Rolling Hills (2013-2018), Director of Community Services in Carson (2001-2013) and Assistant to the City Manager in Glendale (1986-2001). \*Retired Pasadena City Manager **Cynthia Kurtz** has also served as Interim City Manager for the Cities of Covina and Santa Ana. \***David Biggs** is currently the City Manager for the City of Hercules, and previously served as City Manager in Carson, Tustin and Morgan Hill. \*\*\*

