



Wasco Tribune



SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1980

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Ex-finance chief sues city

TONI DEROSA
Wasco Tribune

Former Wasco Finance Director Robert Ruiz is suing the city for breach of contract over his termination in October.

And as of yet, the reasons for the dismissal are secret.

Tuesday night, city officials were closed-mouthed about the reasons for Ruiz' termination. "He's no longer with us," was how City Clerk Maria Martinez responded when asked for more information, citing that it was a "personnel matter."

"I can't discuss it," another official said.

According to Ruiz' attorney in letters to City Manager Daniel Ortiz-Hernandez, his employment agreement with the city ran through June 2020, and stipulated that he

Fired in Oct., reason unknown

would receive a severance package of three month's salary along with three months of medical insurance coverage.

In the correspondence, the attorney, Randy Rumph, said the contract was terminated on or about Oct. 10, 2018. Ruiz came to the city from in June 2017.

Rumph said in the correspondence, the unpaid severance totals \$31,250, plus \$3,000 in health insurance.

In other business, the council was presented an ordinance providing for sidewalk vending. The draft ordinance was result of a new state law that required cit-

ies to allow vendors on sidewalks beginning Jan. 1. Up until then, the city prohibited peddlers, solicitors and hawkers from peddling and/or solicitation on public sidewalks and other areas of the community. A vote on the proposed ordinance is scheduled for Jan. 22.

Another proposed ordinance would amend the city's ordinance on illegal dumping of solid waste and establishes the need for code enforcement officers to access information about suspected dumpers by identifying any labels, empty envelopes or packages that have addresses on them. The

change in this amendment will allow code enforcement officers to directly contact the Sheriff's Department call center to get this information to expedite actions against suspected dumpers.

The proposed amendment will allow code enforcement officers to access the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System. The changee will allow the code enforcement officers, who have direct access to surveillance cameras and observe when illegal dumping occurs, to contact directly the call center. Current policy requires code enforcement officers to ask sheriff's deputies to get registered vehicle owner information; with the new ordinance, the officers may contact CLETS directly for information.



Lucia Lopez sits at the reception desk with her sister, Diana Lopez.

Mayor Garcia: youth, passion and experience

TONI DEROSA
Wasco Tribune

He's walked the streets, put up signs, addressed public forums, made political speeches and held impromptu gatherings in support of a political idea or candidate. He may be Wasco's youngest mayor, but Alex Garcia has already packed a wealth of political experience into his 29 years. "I love Alex's energy and his ability to come up with new ideas," said Councilmember Tilo Cortez. "He's passionate about Wasco and what he can do to keep making Wasco the best place to live."

A 2007 graduate of Wasco High School, Garcia was heavily involved in FFA (Future Farmers of



Alex Garcia's official photograph from 2016 when first elected to the City Council.

America) and was an officer at both the local chapter and sectional levels. He ran for a state FFA officer position, but lost that election. But Garcia said, "Through See **NEW MAYOR** Page 5

Dr. Renken focuses on you

Longtime optometrist treats from the heart

TONI DEROSA
Wasco Tribune

In addition to skill and education, Dr. Wolfgang Renken's warmth, kindness and unassuming humor make his patients feel cared for and at ease, his top priority.

Upon entering his optometry building, the first thing you notice is how the sunny, yellow exterior of the building is reflective of his staff. Maintaining the office with a warm, engaging smile is Diana Lopez who has been with Dr. Renken for 25 years. When asked why she has worked for him for so many years, her response came quickly. "He is one of the most caring and kind



Dr. Renken celebrated 50 years at his location in 2016.

people I've met," she said. "He treats his employees and patients from his heart." Her sister, Lucia Lopez, who was hired five years ago, added, "He is very family ori-

See **DR. RENKEN** Page 3

Trib on the web

The Wasco Tribune is now online, too. WascoTrib.com, a freshly designed web and mobile site including all the features of the print edition – as well as some content exclusive to the web – went live for Christmas.

And we're looking for feedback on how to make it better. Readers are asked to email the publisher, Michael Schroeder, with any comments or ideas. His email is mschroeder@WascoTrib.com

Wasco Rotary club gives here and afar

TONI DEROSA
Wasco Tribune

The Wasco Rotary Club was chartered June 21, 1946 as Rotary International District 5240. This year, Independence High School Principal Martin Lonza is president of the club.

Rotary is an international service organization whose purpose is to bring together both business and professional leaders

to give humanitarian services. It has high ethical standards, with 34,280 clubs and 1.2 million members worldwide.

The Wasco club is involved in the community in many different ways. The organization is primarily interested in giving back to the community.

Their meetings are every Monday at noon in the Veterans Hall at Barker Park located just north of the Parks and Recreation

main office at 1280 Poplar Ave.

The lunch meetings include a presentation on a subject of interest, such as public safety, law enforcement, military, school activities, regional and local business, political candidates and local development projects and activities.

The Rotary's annual goal is to give back \$1,000 per member to the Wasco community. So, as membership grows, so does the

club's giving commitment.

Each meeting is catered by a local eatery. This Monday, it was Hong Kong Restaurant.

Wasco Schools' Assistant Superintendent Brad Maberry gave a presentation on safety measures initiated at the WUESD. He described the RAPTOR program, which tightly screens off-site persons attempt-

See **ROTARY** Page 5

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Community Calendar

For updates or to submit additional information about a club, organization or meeting listed in this public service column, call the Wasco Tribune at 661-292-5100 or email calendar@WascoTrib.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Blood drive -- Knights of Columbus blood drive Friday, Jan. 18 2- 6 p.m. at the old courthouse on Eighth Street in Wasco.

ONGOING

Senior lunch -- Senior center serving meal Monday-Friday at 11:25 a.m., 1280 Poplar St.

MONDAY

Adults Get Crafty -- Join for arts, crafts and conversations. At the Wasco Library, 1-2 p.m.

Fishes & Loaves -- Free dinner every first Monday 5-7 p.m. at 408 Griffith Ave.

Adult education -- Enroll for classes at 1445 Poso Drive. High school diploma program, ESL, citizenship and Microsoft Office.

TUESDAY

NEW: 2019 Vision Board -- Join in creating vision board for New Year goals and resolutions. At the Wasco Library, 1 p.m.

UPDATED: City Council -- Meets first and third Tuesdays at 6 p.m. on 8th Street. NO MEETING NEXT WEEK.

WEDNESDAY

NEW: Word Search Fun! -- At the Wasco Library Jan. 2, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Puzzlemania -- At the Wasco Library, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

ACTS Class -- Alcohol and chemical treatment series meets Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at the Sounds of Pentecost, 2000 Palm Ave. Rides are available.

Reading and crafts -- Family story time and crafts 3:30 to 5 p.m. at the Wasco Library.

PET OF THE WEEK



Angel is an Alaskan Eskimo mix.

Angel needs a home

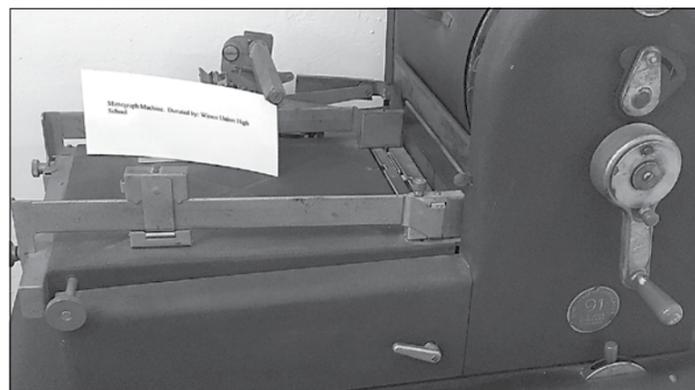
Angel came into Wasco Animal Control as a stray and is approximately 11 months old. She is medium-sized American Eskimo mix female, and is all white and very friendly. She was scanned for a microchip, but nothing was found. The Animal Control staff named the dog Angel. She is available for adoption/rescue.

For additional information on Angel, contact the animal shelter at 5409 7th St. Stop by to visit Angel or many of the other loveable animals at the shelter, or call 661-758-7240. We are open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and closed weekends and holidays.

Mystery history



Here's this week's challenge, contributed by the Wasco Historical Society. If you know the location, circumstances, exact or rough date and/or people in the photo, send your educated (or semieducated) guess to The Tribune, 406 Central Ave., Shafter 93263, or e-mail it to mysteryphoto@WascoTrib.com. Winners will be revealed here next week. **LAST WEEK:** Mimeograph machine donated to the museum by Wasco High School.



CHURCH DIRECTORY

Information for this listing comes from available sources or the churches directly. For additions or changes, contact Kobie Carrasco at 661-292-5100 or kcarrasco@WascoTrib.com.

Apostolic Church 1820 D St.	Diocese of Fresno 1130 9th St.	Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witness 820 E St. 661-758-3643	St John's Evangelist Church 1129 9th St. 661-758-6688
Apostolic Faith Temple 1802 F St.	First Assembly of God 600 Broadway St. 661-758-6380	Liro De Los Valles Assembly of God 767 E. St. 661-758-2531	Tabernacle of Praise 812 9th St. 661-758-6015
Central Missionary Baptist Church 1610 3rd St.	Full Gospel Truth Church 1770 3rd St.	Macedonia Church of God in Christ 1879 Gaston St.	Templo Emmanuel 1324 E St.
Christ Community Church 1079 F St. 661-758-5493	Grace Community Church 1544 7th St. 661-758-6588	Pentecostal Church of God 1325 Adams St.	The Connection Assembly of God 600 Broadway 661-758-6380
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 2309 7th St. 661-758-2538	Griffith Avenue Baptist Church 408 Griffith Ave. 661-758-2516	Seventh Day Adventist Church 1010 Popular Ave 661-758-2315	Trinity Lutheran Church of Wasco 1643 Palm
Church of Nazarane 4th & Poplar	Iglesia Nueva Generacion 1017 Central Ave.		

ARREST LOG

As reported by the Kern County Sheriff's Department, Wasco substation:

Dec. 24

Eduardo David Lopez, 23, of Wasco, was arrested in the 800 block of 16th Street for spousal battery. He was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Guadalupe Nunez Carranza, 28, of Wasco, was arrested in the 300 block of F Street for possession of a controlled substance for sales and being under the influence of a controlled substance. He was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Milton Ramirez, 34, of Wasco, was arrested in the 1000 block of 15th Street on an active misdemeanor warrant. He was cited and released at the scene.

Francisco Rivas, 45, of Wasco, was arrested in the 1100 block of Highway 46 on an active misdemeanor warrant. He was cited and released at the scene.

Dec. 26

Ruven Gomez, 37, of Wasco, was arrested in the 1900 block of Palm Avenue for inflicting corporal injury to a spouse, threatening a crime with intent to terrorize and child cruelty. He was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Dec. 27
Ruben Delarosa, 41, of Wasco, was arrested at the intersection of Highway 46 and Birch Avenue for driving on a suspended license. He was cited and released at the scene.

Dec. 29
Alonzo Anthony Garnica, 27, of Wasco, was arrested at the intersection of 9th Street and Palm Avenue for possession of a controlled substance while armed, possession of a narcotic controlled substance, vehicle occupant with a loaded firearm, felon in

possession of a firearm, carrying a loaded firearm in a public place, driving with a suspended license, concealed weapon in a vehicle, possession of pepper spray and incorrect display of license plates. He was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Jesus Gonzalez, 24, of McFarland, was arrested at the intersection of Lily Street and Clay Avenue for driving on suspended license, expired vehicle registration and driving a vehicle without insurance. He was cited and released at the scene.

Stella Zuniga Penalber, 40, was arrested at the intersection of F Street and 6th Street on two active misdemeanor warrants. She was cited and released at the scene.

Ricardo Soto, 23, of Wasco, was arrested at the

intersection of Highway 43 and Highway 46 for driving without a license, expired vehicle registration and a missing front vehicle license plate. He was cited and released at the scene.

William Warren, 31, of Wasco, was arrested in the 1100 block of Lily Street for felony vandalism. He was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Dec. 30
Agustin Bernardion, 23, of Wasco, was arrested in the 700 block of Adams Street for felony robbery, threatening a crime with intent to terrorize, intimidating a witness/victim, participation in a criminal street gang, driving a vehicle without a license and driving a vehicle without registration. He was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Lesley Flores, 30, of Wasco, was arrested at the intersection of Sequoia Drive and Poplar Avenue for disorderly conduct involving alcohol. She was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Miranda Angelica Gutierrez, 52, of Wasco, was arrested in the 300

block of Griffith Avenue for spousal battery. She was booked into the Kern County Jail.

Robert Perez, 34, of Wasco, was arrested at the intersection of Griffith Avenue and 8th Place on an active misdemeanor warrant. He was booked into the Kern County Jail.

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Wasco Tribune

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1980

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City steps up with kids shoes

TONI DEROSA
Wasco Tribune

When City of Wasco employees learned of a need for athletic shoes for needy children in town, they responded with a \$1,800 donation to provide them. Thanks to the Wasco Planning Department's Biridiana Bishop, employees were made aware of the need for running shoes for Sheriff's Athletic League kids in a boxing program to keep their fitness levels

up. Bishop notified city employees that SAL was looking for donations, and the employees more than obliged. "Boxing through SAL has been available since October," said Wasco Sheriff's Substation SAL Officer Juan Maldonado. "There are about 10 boxers, eight males and two females." SAL boxing is run by coaches Carlos Prieto and Frank Villanueva. In December, Wasco

SAL boxing was involved in an exhibition match with Bakersfield SAL, spearheaded by Senior Deputy Martin Barron of the East Bakersfield SAL program, the Shafter Boxing Club and the Wasco SAL boxing club. Wasco SAL boxing is not quite ready to compete. "It's very much like martial arts," said Barron. "The kids need to learn the skills and techniques of boxing before they begin compet-

ing." Generally, the Wasco SAL program provides afterschool activities for boys and girls by coordinating functions, such as community service, local clean-ups, boxing and running 5Ks, as well as coordinating special day trips for the kids. When Wasco SAL kids got interested in boxing, Maldonado noticed that several of the kids didn't have proper shoes for running and staying fit. He

contacted Bishop, and she passed along the need to the employees. Several of the athletes received their new Nike shoes this week, and more will get them next week. Assisting with organizing events is Traci Mills Clendenen. Also helping with weightlifting, and future barbecuing/cooking and fundraising is Manuel Orozco. Beginning in February, Orquidea Ocampo will be running a tutoring

program for the kids, Maldonado said. "We are currently accepting applications for new SAL members, ages 12 to 17 or 18 if still in high school," said Maldonado. "We can always use more adult volunteers over the age of 25 years old to help out." Volunteers need to complete a background check. Interested volunteers can contact Deputy Maldonado at 661-758-7266.



Former Councilmember Cheryl Wegman was recognized and thanked for her \$500 donation toward a ceremonial bugle.

Get ready for breakfast

TONI DEROSA

The VFW held its monthly meeting on Jan. 3 and talk quickly turned to its upcoming pancake breakfast to be held on Saturday, Jan. 19 from 8 to 11 a. m. at the VFW Hall on E Street.

Post Commander Danny Rueda asked for volunteers from Walmart to help with the breakfast and was advised that for every 20 volunteer hours Walmart employees volunteer for the VFW, Walmart will give the VFW \$500. He was to meet with Walmart to deal with details.

Information on the pancake breakfast is available from Danny Rueda at 661-333-2113.

Rueda announced that Josh Medrano and Victoria Rueda both received a \$250 scholarship from the proceeds of the last VFW car show held at the Oct. 13 Wasco Festival.

Former Councilmember Cheryl Wegman was recognized for her \$500 donation toward a new ceremonial bugle. Member Steve Davis is continuing to



New member Katie Janerson was welcomed to her first meeting.

look for a brass bugle to order for the VFW Memorial Day ceremony.

Rueda acknowledged veteran Katie Janerson and welcomed her to her first VFW meeting.

The renting of the flags for the ongoing fundraiser was discussed, and reservations for a flag will be ongoing throughout the year.

Dr. Renken focuses on you

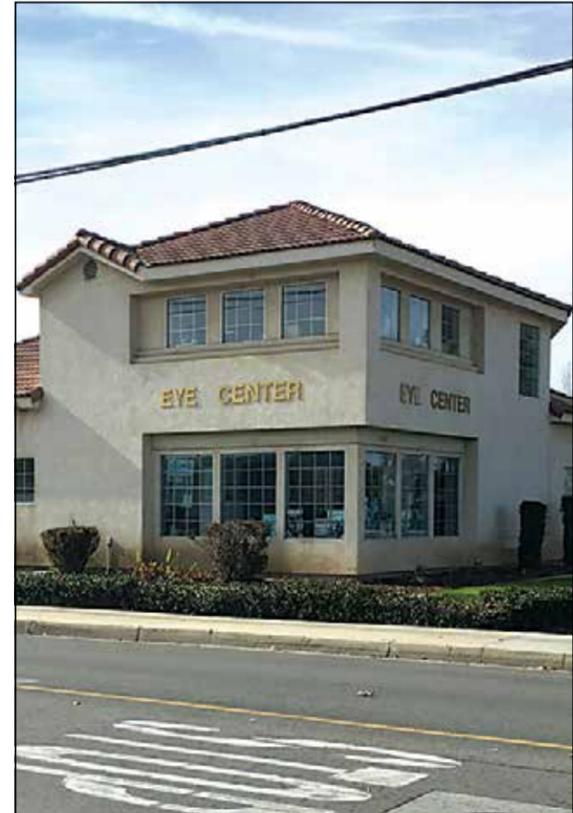
From Page 1
ented." This was confirmed while chatting with him about a recent trip, with three of his grandsons, to his native country of Germany.

Wasco Councilmember John Pallares said of Renken, "I have known him for 20 years now and really got to know him when we volunteered with different events for the Knights of Columbus. He is the most sincere person I know. He doesn't try to be funny, but he makes me smile. His positive outlook on life makes him fun to hang around."

Dr. Renken attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied to become an optometrist. When an optometry position became available in Wasco, he and his late wife, Ingrid, left the Bay Area and moved to the San Joaquin Valley, desiring a smaller community in which to raise their family.

Dr. Renken worked in a partnership with Dr. James B. Hahn at 1414 7th St., until he bought out Dr. Hahn and began looking for a new office location. It was at this time that he had a choice to make whether to relocate to a new shopping development on Highway 46, where Save Mart was located, or stay in the downtown area. While searching, he located a vacant lot, and the building at 1301 7th Street was built and designed to his specifications.

Dr. Renken has now



The Eye Center located on the corner of Griffith Avenue and 7th Street.

been practicing optometry in Wasco for over 50 years. When asked if he thought about retirement, he replied, "Not at all. I will continue working as long as my body lets me."

The office is located on the corner of Griffith Avenue and 7th Street, across from Fiesta Latina Market. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Some of the services he provides include eye examinations, primary care, eye glasses, contact lenses and emergencies. "At the present, Dr. Renken

has over 500 patients," said Diana. "He has his regulars that come in every summer when the kids are out of school as well as those who come in for their annual checkups."

Dr. Renken does not accept walk-ins, and patients must have vision insurance. Patients may use credit cards, checks or cash to pay for their services. This is a tri-lingual office, as Dr. Renken speaks English, German and Spanish. Appointments can be made by calling the office at 661-758-6320.

Rotary Club gives

From Page 1

ing to get onto the school grounds. RAPTOR is a computer-generated identification program that enables the district, to use a visitor's driver's license to access a database and check if the person might be a risk to others.

Maberry gave a Powerpoint presentation in which he discussed previous school shootings. When asked what the difference was between identifying the events of an active shooter event versus a school shooting, he replied, "What you often hear from media is the quoting of school shooting statistics, which will be far higher due to the broad definition of a 'school shooting' -- that is, the shooting took place on a school campus, but did not necessarily involve the shooting of staff or students, and may not even have happened while school was in session.

"An 'active shooter' is much more narrowly defined, as it refers to a person actively shooting staff, students or visitors on campus while school is in session," he explained.

President Lonza announced Rotary's has one main fundraiser during the fall, which funds the major portion of projects that are funded within the Wasco community. This fundraiser is a reverse-drawing dinner. Tickets are \$150 each. These tickets are drawn continuously throughout the evening, and every fifth ticket pulled gets a prize[every 10th ticket drawn, wins \$100 cash; and the last ticket pulled takes \$5,000 cash.

Individual gifts by Rotarians also are used to supplement the money raised. This adds to the total amount given to the community.

The Wasco club contributes to the Wasco Scholarship Association, the Wasco Festival of Roses and candidates for Rose Queen, Relay for Life and the American Cancer Society, the Salvation Army, the Wasco High School Athletic Activities

Booster Club, Wasco Toys for Tigers, the Boy Scouts of America, North Kern Vocational Training Center, the Bakersfield Pregnancy Center, the Orange Heart Foundation, Wasco Union Elementary School District special events, Veterans of Foreign War Memorial Day and Car Show, and other special awards, such as the Girl Scout Award Program, the High School Centennial Celebration, Family Wrestling Foundation and hardship cases within the community.

Internationally, the main cause is Polio-Plus. This continues the Rotary's focus on eradication of polio, which began in 1985. Rotarians have contributed over \$850 million, along with thousands of volunteer hours, to inoculate the world's children. This is in conjunction with Rotary's commitment to the World Health Organization. The Wasco Rotary pledges to match its members' personal contributions for programs and other cause up to \$500 a month.

Additionally, another project the Rotary is participating in is Casting for Recovery, which are free retreats for woman with breast cancer. This retreat gives healing outdoor retreats for women with breast cancer at no cost to the participants. The retreat offers opportunities for women to find inspiration, to discover renewed energy for life and to experience a healing connection with other women and nature. These retreats are open to women of all ages. The club encourages those interested to email cfrsocial@gmail.com for more information.

Current Wasco Rotarians include Lori Albrecht, Amy Bean, Julie Boesch, Gary Bray, Robert Cobb, Hector Delgado, Carol Hamilton, Vicki Hight, Matt Jeffries, Stan Loewen, Martin Lonza, Brad Maberry, Jeff Martin, Eric Merz, Larry Pennell, Veriu Penrod, Raul Rangel, Wolfgang Renken, Kelly Richers, Tom Sikola, Tony Stout, Kevin Tallon and, as an institutional member, the Wasco Union Elementary School District.

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Wasco Elementary School admin	1102 5th St.	Juanita's Barber Shop	640 F St.
West Liquor	801 7th St.	La Norteno	1000 F St.
Express Pharmacy	730 7th St.	Mario's Barber Shop	1336 F St.
Status Belliz	900 7th St.	Peterson Auto Supply	1348 F St.
Divas Beauty Salon	935 7th St.	J&J Market	1375 F St.
Tilo Cortez	1001 7th St.	Thomas Jefferson Middle School	305 Griffith Ave.
La Canasta Market	1017 7th St.	Arrigos Meat Market	829 Hwy. 46
Wasco Library	1102 7th St.	El Pueblo Market	1101 Hwy. 46
Fiesta Latina Market	1220 7th St.	Napa Auto	1125 Hwy. 46
Casa Bonita	1300 7th St.	Towne and Country Liquors (Fastrip)	1209 Hwy. 46
Wasco High School	1900 7th St.	76 Station	1445 Hwy. 46
Wasco High School District admin	2100 7th St.	Shear Design	1801 Hwy. 46
Omni Family Health	2101 7th St.	O'Reilly Auto	1950 Hwy. 46
Wasco Medical Plaza & Urgent Care	2300 7th St.	Chevron	2033 Hwy. 46
Wasco City Hall	746 8th St.	American Tire Depot	2150 Hwy. 46
St. John's Catholic Church	1300 9th Pl.	Tropicana Supermarket	2425 Hwy. 46
St. John's School	929 Broadway St.	Circle K	1395 Palm
Cecilia's	E St.	Wasco Senior Center	1280 Poplar Ave.
Rosie's Cakes	440 E St.	Fiesta Super Market	915 Poso
VFW	603 E St.	Joe's Market	1010 Poso
Unique Touch	628 E St.	Wasco Tire Service	850 Poso Dr.



OUR AREA'S HISTORY

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Summer of the bulker

The money was good, but the work was hard

By Linda McMahon

Growing up and being a teen was not always easy back in the early '60s. I happened to live in the small agricultural town of Shafter, just 18 miles from Bakersfield. Our family budget seemed to be forever challenged and stretched to its maximum, but I always received whatever I needed.

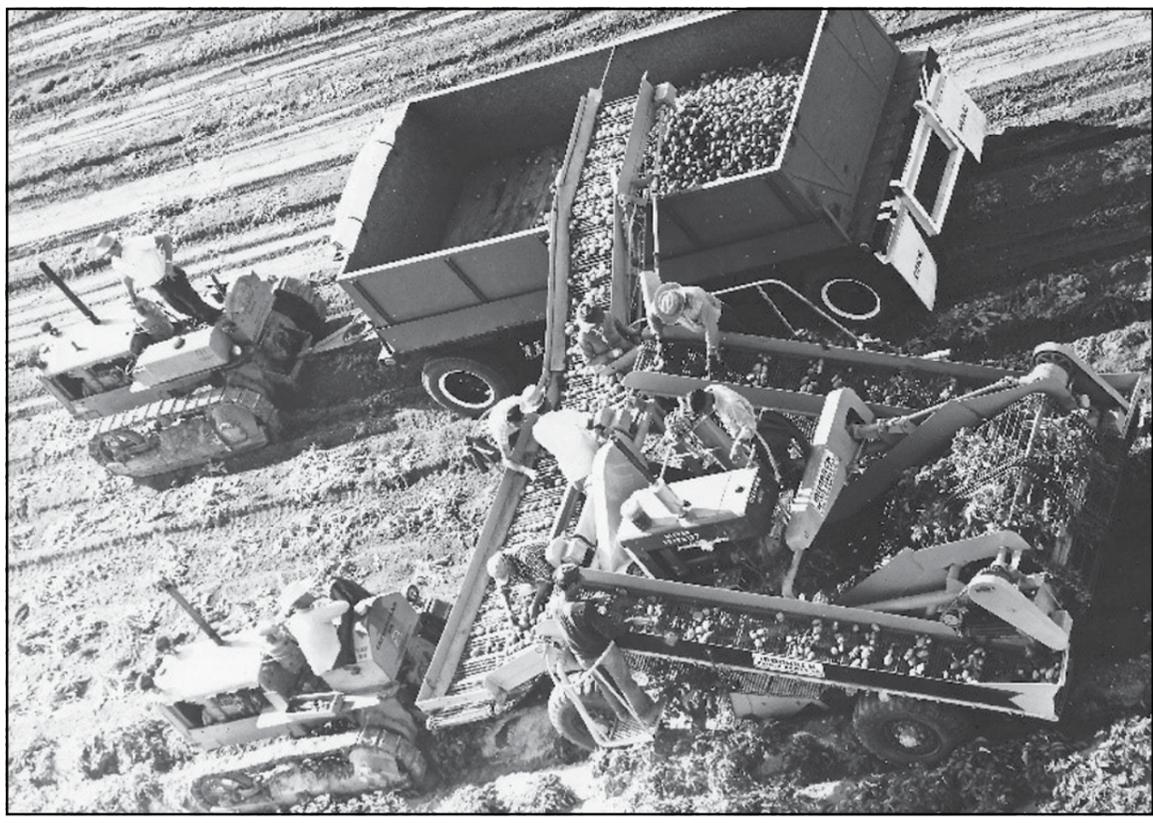
My first employment turned out to be a summer job grading potatoes in a local potato shed, Em. H. Mettler & Sons. I looked forward greatly to earning my own money. Teenagers in the Kern County area during these years got summer jobs in the potato sheds if they could. Jobs consisted of not just grading potatoes, but doing anything and everything to get the potatoes to market. It was a good way for students to earn money. Everyone I knew was eager to acquire employment in the sheds. If they were hired they felt privileged indeed.

Every summer while I was in high school I worked grading potatoes or something associated with potatoes. It was our belief that grading potatoes was really

hard work until that one particular summer. Janet, my younger sister of two years, and I laughingly referred to it as the "Summer of the Bulker" for many years to come. That summer Janet and I had a choice: We could work in a shed, or we could make more money working on the *bulker* in the potato fields of Em. H. Mettler & Sons. It was our decision. Of course, we chose the *bulker*. Why not? It only made good sense to make more money. Little did we know at the time! Mom decided to work on the harvester that year to provide us with transportation.

Let me back up and tell you more about the *bulker*. As a footnote, I believe its name was eventually changed to a harvester. This particular summer was one of the first times it was to be used by the company where we were employed. I guess you could say we were sort of like guinea pigs. In later years they would improve it significantly, but not that year.

The bulker was a large mobile apparatus on wheels that dug potatoes out of the field and rotated them onto a moving



A potato harvester in operation in the field.

belt. The belt passed potatoes and dirt clods down to six or eight women located on each side of the belt. One man was placed at the front of the vehicle to keep everything running smoothly. The women threw out dirt clods and bad potatoes, leaving the good potatoes to be transferred along the rotating belt to the truck.

To say it was a dirty job

would be an understatement. We were located right in the middle of all the dust in the field. As a matter of fact, the *bulker* was the source of all the dust. In my opinion, the *bulker* was the first line of defense for the "lucky" women grading potatoes in the sheds. That being the case, the three of us were on the front line of battle that summer.

The *bulker* was supposed to bring automation to the processing of potatoes in the fields. In the next few years it did make some field jobs obsolete. Mom, Janet and I paid the high price for progress that summer by working on the *bulker*.

The three of us got up around 4 a.m. each morning, drove to work in the dark and usually worked until 5 or 6 p.m.. We worked until noon on Saturdays, sometimes later. That was not the worst part. The summer heat in Shafter was seemingly unbearable.

By the end of the season we were throwing out rotten, smelly old potatoes from morning until night. We even had some summer rain that year that made the work even more miserable. Dirt, dust and rotten potatoes covered us from head to toe each day. We

came home exhausted to the bone every night. We would eat and go to bed, so we could start the next day at 4 a.m. and do it all over again.

Daddy had not realized how dirty, tiring and despicable the work would be as this was the first trial year for the *bulker* for our employer, or he would have never allowed it. At the beginning of the summer season, each morning Daddy would tease us at breakfast regarding getting up so early and looking so tired. He said, "Well girls, Mom being included, "are you ready to throw in the towel today?" Then he would laugh and laugh. He was used to early and hard work. Taking this to be a challenge, we would reply, "Not today!"

Toward the end of the season he realized how appalling it had become. At that time he really encouraged us to quit, but he would not demand that we surrender. Now each morning he would say, "I think you girls should throw in the towel today." There was no more teasing in his voice. The hard labor was definitely taking a toll on all three of us, and it showed.

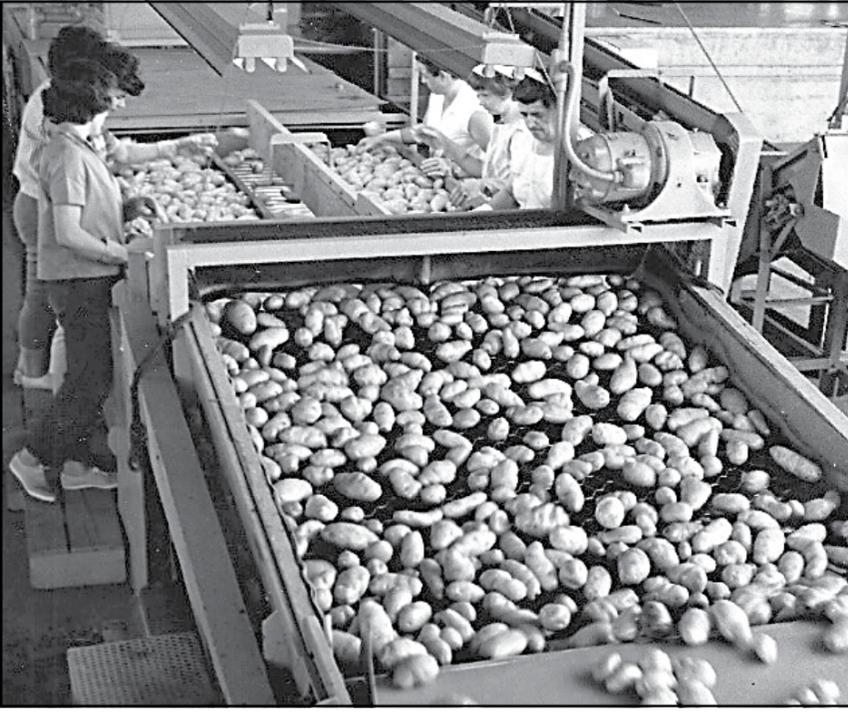
Every day we would

continue to say "Not today," even though we really (and I emphasize *really*) wanted to quit. To this day, that was the hardest physical labor I ever encountered during any time of employment.

We finished out the season, but never again worked on the *bulker*. Janet and I earned more money than we had during any previous time, and also came away with a new respect for hard work. Hard work and money went hand in hand that year.

All of us received quite an education during the Summer of the Bulker. Mom and Daddy knew now their daughters were not only listening to their instruction, but we were acting upon what they had been teaching us our entire lives. Janet and I learned a priceless lesson; a person must be determined and persevere. Once a challenge is accepted, never quit even though quitting would be the easy way out. Our stubbornness and tenacity served us well through the following years.

Linda (Helm) McMahon is a 1965 graduate of Shafter High School and currently lives in Bakersfield.



Potatoes are processed in a packing shed.

The luxury telephone

BY FLORA (LOWE) YOUNG

Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in March 1876. The first transcontinental telephone wire was connected from New York to San Francisco on June 17, 1914. The first call was not made until July 29, 1914. By the mid-1950s, a lot of the general population were enjoying this wonderful invention. But, for my family in the late 1950s, that may as well have happened on the moon. To say they were not interested in this latest "luxury" would be an understatement.

To give my parents credit, though, financially things were not easy. They had been following the crops between Arizona, California and Oregon. We were rarely in one place very long -- and never in a regular house. Then one day [in the fall of 1956] that changed! One of my older brothers got my dad a job in Shafter. Floyd, my twin brother, and I were just going into high school. In fact, we had attended about six weeks in Porterville when my dad learned about the job in Shafter. It meant we would be a little better off. So away we went!

ence" was a group of cabins that had been used for migrant farm workers. We didn't live in those long until we were able to move to what was termed "garden homes" in the same area. This was about 4 or 5 miles outside of Shafter (the North Shafter Farm Labor Camp). The term "garden homes" meant that each little white house had an area large enough for a good-sized garden. My parents loved that! Through the following years they raised enough vegetables to feed their family and many more from their garden and fruit trees!

We enrolled in Shafter High School. That is when we first became aware of the "luxury" called a telephone. Our niece -- who was very close to our age -- lived in Shafter and had a telephone. We desperately wanted to be able to talk to her at any time and plan how she might come out and spend the night with us.

We finally convinced our parents that a telephone in our home would be a really good idea. We played the old "in case of an emergency" card and it worked!

How we anticipated the installation! Then came the day it was hooked up and ready to be used -- but



Rotary Phone on display in the Annabel Thompson rooms upstairs in the Depot Museum in Shafter.

wait -- Someone else was already talking on the line! How could that be? Reality set in! Yes, we had a telephone -- but -- it was a "party line." We soon found out what that meant! We would actually receive two rings -- one would be for us -- the

other for one of the other "parties." Our ring was two short rings and a long ring. Theirs was two long rings. But, if that was not enough, there would be two other parties to share the line; however, we would not get their rings.



The Lowe Family in the garden, Christmas 1958: From left, Floyd, Henry, M.C., Clarence, Dad Wilburn, Mom Ora, Gladys Helm, Inez Lilly, and the writer, Flora.

We finally convinced our parents that a telephone in our home would be a really good idea. We played the old "in case of an emergency" card and it worked!

All in all, this meant that using the telephone would require us to obey a recently acquired "rule." If we ever picked up the receiver and heard someone else on the line, we were to hang our receiver up immediately and give them privacy!

WOW! What an eye opener! Our line seemed to be constantly busy -- but *not* with our calls. Floyd and I often compared notes -- we never listened very long -- most especially when our mother was around -- but we were curious as to who we were sharing the line with. Could it be that "they" were planning a murder, a robbery -- or some other intriguing idea? Or could it be a teacher that we would benefit from knowing what they were thinking about? Or, perhaps it could be a neighbor and they were spreading malicious gossip about us -- of all people! Our imaginations ran wild -- until they overheard us and *completely* squashed

our wild ideas!

Soon the party line was cut to only two parties, and that made it somewhat easier to live with. We were never able to find out who the other parties were, however.

As time went along, the party line was done away with and real "privacy" became possible. What a turn in the road that was! The only thing you had to worry about was other family members standing around waiting for their turn. That brought up a rule 2 -- sharing. A certain amount of time was to be allotted if someone else wanted to use the telephone. We learned to adjust to that one, though. After that we never lived anywhere that we didn't have a telephone installed, if we could.

I treasure my cell phone today and think back to the days before it was even a glimmer in anyone's eye! How could we have existed without this "luxury"?

New mayor brings youth, passion to office



From Page 1
 that experience, I got my first taste of politics.” Garcia then attended Fresno State, where he spent time during the summers as a volunteer registering voters in rural communities within Fresno County. Upon graduation, Garcia moved to Las Vegas and spent the next seven months working on the Obama 2012 re-election campaign.

After the election, he returned to Fresno to work with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), fighting for Latino civil rights. Last year, Kern County lost a lawsuit made by MALDEF regarding the legality of the political boundaries drawn in 2011.



Alex Garcia at the November City Council meeting acknowledging Veterans James Madrone and Danny Rueda.

“When Kern County lost the lawsuit against MALDEF, it cost the county \$1.5 million dollars,” Garcia said.

While in Fresno, Garcia also worked with Service Employees International Union - United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW) on two initiatives which aimed to improve patient care in California hospitals. “It was fun, because several years later, that organization moved me to San Francisco for six months,” he said.

Intrigued by San Francisco, Garcia stayed for several months after his position was completed. “San Francisco was an experience,” he said. “It’s so different from the Valley and also so expensive!” Garcia did return to Fresno to help Amanda Renteria run for congress after Michael Rubio left.

Eventually, Garcia found his way back to Wasco and

won his bid for Wasco City Council in 2016. Since that time, he has taken his political experience and passion for the area and poured it into ideas on ways to serve the people of Wasco. For one such project, Garcia recruited several hair and beauty professionals to offer free back-to-school haircuts to any youth that needed one.

Now in his year as Mayor, a couple of Garcia’s goals are to unite all the churches in Wasco, as well as have the city work closely with the school districts. “I would like to have a round table with both school districts and the city, as well as a separate round table with all the faith leaders. I want to bring people together for the betterment of Wasco and the quality of life for residents.”

Garcia also plans to focus on industrial growth in the area and he continues to stay involved with discussions regarding the high-speed rail. “If it’s going to happen and come through Wasco,” Garcia stated, “I want to make the best of it and reap the biggest reward for our residents as possible. I hope the heavy maintenance facility ultimately gets built in the Wasco area, which will bring employment, housing and a lot more economic activity to Wasco.”

In the area of political processes, Garcia would like to see Wasco move to a stand-alone election for mayor, which would be a two-or-four-year term. Currently, the City Council selects one member to serve as Mayor for one year. “Just when the mayor is getting his bearings on the job, the term is up and a new mayor is selected,” he said. “I think the mayor needs to have a

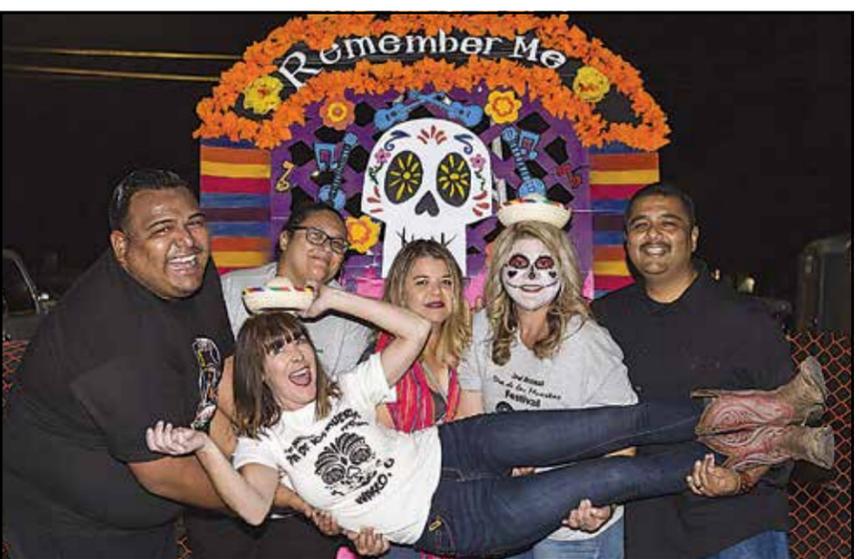
longer term in office.”

But Garcia’s life is not all politics. Garcia works in medical billing with his mother at Garcia Billing Services. “At the present time, we have about ten facilities around Kern County that we bill for,” said Garcia. “I want to help my mom continue to grow the business she built over more than ten years.”

He also enjoys spending time on the disc golf course. “There are chain baskets and you can spot them at many different parks in Kern County. The player throws a disc and tries to get it into the basket. It may take several throws before you make it in the basket (if you are a newbie),” he said. Garcia admitted, “The disc looks like a Frisbee, but that’s not what a player calls it. It’s called a disc!”

While he’s being active, or just driving around in his car, Garcia is also a fan of country music and movie soundtracks. A recent soundtrack he has been listening to is *A Star is Born*, with Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper. “I’ve been blasting it in my car,” he said. “I also love the song ‘Heaven’ by Kane Brown.”

To talk politics with Garcia makes you feel like you are speaking with an old soul, someone who has been around politics for years and years. He is knowledgeable and passionate. He keeps abreast of things occurring in many different areas within the city of Wasco, Kern County and the State of California. He also keeps close tabs on Washington, D. C. And now he is ready and excited to pour his youth, passion and energy into this term as mayor.



TOP: Free haircuts organized by Alex Garcia before school began in August. MIDDLE: Alex Garcia participating in Dia de los Muertos on 7th Street in September. ABOVE: Alex Garcia addressing attendees at the Memorial Day event at the Wasco Cemetery. RIGHT: Alex Garcia with Mr. and Mrs. Claus enjoying the sleigh ride in December.



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Wasco Municipal Code, amending Chapter 8.12, Health & Safety, Section 8.12.701, Illegal Dumping, said amendment identifying video images as sufficient evidence to pursue any administrative enforcement action against illegal dumping. The Municipal Code text changes and any supporting documents may be reviewed during normal business hours at the Planning Department located at 764 "E" Street, Wasco, CA 93280.

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or soon thereafter in the City Council Chambers located at 746 8th Street, Wasco, California, to consider the following: Municipal Code Text Amendment 18-04: Project: Public hearing of an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Wasco amending Title 5 of the Wasco Municipal Code, amending Chapter 5.12, Peddlers, Solicitors and Hawkers, Section 5.12.040, Exemptions, said amendment allowing sidewalk vending subject to the provisions of Chapter 5.40, Sidewalk Vending and Business Use of Sidewalks. The Municipal Code text changes and any supporting documents may be reviewed during normal business hours at the Planning Department located at 764 "E" Street, Wasco, CA 93280.

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Collage of newspaper clippings from Wasco Tribune, including articles about Independence High, City Council participation, and February Safety Surrender Month.

- PROMOTIONAL FEATURE -

RECYCLE SHOUTOUT



Highlighted Recycler: Shafter High School!

This fall, Shafter High School started an organics diversion program with their lunch program. We just wanted to say -- You guys are doing awesome! The students put a media presentation together, for all the students, highlighting the new program and why it's important to divert organics out of our landfills and to a proper facility to further reduce the effects of greenhouse gases. We just

wanted to thank the students and staff for your dedication to putting the right items in the right bins. You are making a huge difference in diversion! Pictured are all organics; at right is the small amount of trash. The organics material goes to an area compost facility, where the material is then spread on our ag lands. Thank you for letting us be a part of your school.

PASTOR'S CORNER

JIM NEAL

Ever seen the candy bar commercial on TV where the "biker dude" is getting a new tattoo, which is supposed to read *NO REGRETS*? Instead because the tattoo artist is a little famished and in need of a sugar fix, she tattoos his arm with the words *NO REGERTS*. How about that for a permanent *NO REGRET*?

Regrets -- have any? Of course you do -- everyone has them, even those who claim to not have any have them -- to really have no regrets in life would indicate a life lived to total selfishness in a world surrounded by hedonistic desires and void of any conscience at all, wouldn't it? It is what the Scripture would call a self-deceived man/woman. Oh, to be fair, to those who claim to have no regrets, I think they have simply learned to redefine their regrets as hurts, mistakes and hiccups along the way -- or perhaps they are like the American celebrity Nicole Polizzi, they couch them as something else, she who says, "I don't have regrets, there are only lessons. You learn from them, and you become a better person."

You see it is not whether we have experienced regrets in our life -- the bet-

ter question is how we make sure they do not paralyze us to the point that they rob our future successes that await. How then can we make sure we turn regrets into positives and not negative energy? Here are a few ideas using the regret as our guide:

R = refuse to allow any regret to continually "re-hash" itself in our psyche -- we do that by remembering this thought "whatever we focus on becomes our controlling factor" whatever we focus on looms largest -- so focus on who you really are, to whom you belong and where you intend to go. Philippians 3: "...Forget that which is past..."

E = develop Eagle's mentality -- that is, use the winds of adversity as the eagle uses the winds of the atmosphere to push him higher and higher until the problems of this world look strangely dim. Isaiah 40:3: "...mount up with wings like eagles;"

G = Grow from the process -- properly deduce to regret, to view each challenge as a life lesson one from which if viewed properly there will come from its seed growth, maturity and victory. Galatians 6:9: "And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season

we will reap, if we do not give up."

R = Reap the rewards of the aforementioned lessons learned -- bearing in mind the Eternal Universal Law placed in our universe by a loving Creator that of "seed time and harvest" -- what you sow that also shall you reap -- sow good seeds and reap a bountiful harvest of blessings and rewards Galatians 9:6: "...whatever one sows, that will he also reap."

E = Encourage others in their plight as you gain strength through your adversity (regret). As is spoken in wedding ceremonies, sorrows are halved and joys are doubled when shared with another. I Thessalonians 4:18: "...encourage one another with these words."

T = Think on the goodness received from the challenge. As Paul exhorts in Philippians 4:8: "whatever things are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, are of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy meditate on these things." Always remember you are and become what you think about. Romans 2:4 "...not knowing that God's goodness is meant to lead you to repentance..."

Jim Neal is pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Shafter.

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Fourplex on .33 acres. One 3-bedroom, 1-bath, basement & detached garage; one 3-bedroom, 1-bath; two 1-bedroom, 1-bath. Main house partially remodeled. All currently rented. Please call for viewing appointment/more info 661-319-4313. \$350,000. 17t5

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17 REAL ESTATE

"HOME FOR SALE"

Near High School. Additional garage, custom built storage in home and garage. Home is over 2300 sq ft. 3bd & 3 full baths. Located at 747 Acacia Ave, Shafter. Price is \$329,900. Shown by appointment only (661) 809-1205 or (661) 428-8599 or 661-303-0291

17 REAL ESTATE

HOMES FOR SALE

OPEN HOUSE SATURDAY 12PM-2PM

277 ASH AVE, SHAFTER

4 bd, 2 bath, updated kitchen/baths - \$220,000

2bd, 1bath home in Shafter. \$120,000

Edwyna Lawrence, Realtor CalBRE# 01291831 661-428-8882 edwyna@jordanlink.com www.edwynalawrence.com

17 REAL ESTATE

SELLING OR BUYING A HOME?

Special commission rates for Wasco and Shafter

661 Realty

Willard Lee • BRE#01505345 (661) 333-9603

40-Year Wasco resident

17 REAL ESTATE

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Beautiful and Charming Shafter Estate Home

Over 4900 sq ft with 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, den, familyroom, In-Law Apt, pool & much more on 1.49 acre lot.

Beautiful custom one of a kind home near SHS with 3 bd & 2 bath, game room, R.V. carport, much more. Must see. Reduced Price at \$349,950

Industrial 40 Acres in Shafter Ave. near 7th Standard Rd. \$1.2 Million

1/2 acre Industrial lot on Ash Ave. \$150,000 - owner will carry loan

Mickie Harvey Associate Broker Certified Property Manager Specialist

Sara Merlo, Realtor DRE01813239 661-717-1495 myrealtorsaramerlo@gmail.com CALL SARA FOR EXPERIENCE YOU CAN TRUST!

Jim Graddy, Broker Lic#00366083

746-1010

BASHAM FUNERAL CARE

"Dignified and Affordable... without Compromise"

NOW OPEN in Shafter

Newly renovated site on State Avenue



An inviting arrangements room puts families at ease as they make those important decisions.



Yeobani and Kevin Lara have partnered with John Basham for this exciting new venture.



There is a beautiful chapel with two large flat screen televisions to play those special tributes and memorials.



An exquisite collection of art and décor makes the space a peaceful one.



An intimate visitation room is available for family and friends. The rooms are intimate and tastefully done.

BASHAM & LARA FUNERAL CARE

343 State Avenue
SHAFTER
746-4200

BASHAM FUNERAL CARE

"Dignified and Affordable Without Compromise"

Chapel seating for 300 people
State-of-the-art audio-visual equipment
On site crematorium

- Traditional Service.....*\$3,595
- Direct Cremation \$1,495
- Basic Burial Service \$2,385
- Caskets Starting At \$290

COMPLETE FUNERAL SERVICE Including a dignified casket, visitation, register book, memorial folders and a service in our chapel, your church or a service at either Hillcrest Memorial Park, Greenlawn, Union Cemetery, Bakersfield National Cemetery, Shafter Cemetery, Wasco Cemetery, or Arvin Cemetery.

\$4,585

* Based upon the purchase of a funeral package with this ad.

4 LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU

- Basham Funeral Care** 873-8200
3312 Niles St. FD 1708
- Basham-Lamont Funeral Care** 845-8200
8601 Hall Rd. FD 2157
- Basham-Hopson Funeral Care** 861-8200
620 Oregon St. FD 542
- Basham & Lara Funeral Care** 746-4200
343 State Ave., Shafter, CA FD 2344

NOW OPEN IN SHAFTER

SERVING SHAFTER, WASCO AND NORTHWEST BAKERSFIELD

Hablamos Español
bashamfuneralcare.com

Basham & Lara Funeral Care
"Dignified and Affordable Without Compromise"
GRAND OPENING SPECIAL
COUPON
Pre-Planning Certificate of Credit

\$200 Discount on pre-planned Cremation Arrangement **-OR-** **\$400 Discount** on any pre-planned Burial arrangements

*Coupon/Certificate only valid for pre-planned arrangements
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FD2344