2013 San Bernardino Elections

It’s Not Just Politics as Usual

Riverside’s Newest Councilman
Mike Soubirous
“Our People Are Our Number One Asset”

Tobin Brinker
Post-Election San Bernardino
5 Things We Can’t Stop Talking About

Inland Southern California’s News Weekly
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Dr. Rod Parker
Acquanetta Warren
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I spent most of last week in Newport Beach at an annual League of California Cities workshop. The League’s mission is to protect local control for cities to enhance the quality of life for all Californians, and the workshop is an opportunity for local leaders throughout the state to discuss strategic goals for the coming year as an organization. Over the years, the goals have addressed key issues: transparency in city government, building sustainable communities, public safety, infrastructure investment, and business and economic development among others. They believe in conducting the business of government with openness, transparency, respect, and civility and that local governance is the cornerstone of democracy.

I agree. And while there are several cities doing it wrong in the Inland region, there are definitely others who are doing it right. This week I’d like to focus your attention on the city of Riverside and some of the great news we are highlighting this week.

The city of Riverside recently ranked third among the top 20 cities of its size in making government more transparent and accessible through the improved use of technology by the Center for Digital Government in its 2013 Digital Cities Survey. The annual awards showcase the best practices in public sector information and communication technology and acknowledge Riverside’s use of technology in building bridges between government and citizens.

In our iepeople section, Riverside’s newest councilmember Mike Soubirous has given us a 15-minute commentary on his vision for the city. Among his goals are to bring openness and transparency to his position in city hall and to champion effective and timely communication between city hall and the community. He promises to be accessible and available to all the residents of the city.

Friday, the Fair Housing Council of Riverside County will be hosting a town hall meeting at the Janet Goeske Center in Riverside for homeowners on identifying predatory lending practices, avoiding foreclosure, and the importance of homeowner education. Rose Mayes and her staff at the FHCRC do excellent work on behalf of the community’s homeowners and renters. Their advice and counsel personally saved me hundreds of thousands of dollars, so I suggest if you have a problem or just want to educate yourself on your options, you should attend.

Finally, please see the announcement on the openings for Riverside city Commissions and Boards. These Boards and Commissions help shape the policies and practices at city hall that affect not just each neighborhood but the entire city.

Our cities can only be as good as our citizens. The League of California Cities believes that our strength lies in the unity of our diverse communities of interest. And I believe that strength begins with all of us – the engaged and active citizens of our cities.
Riverside Among Top-Ranked Cities in the Nation in 2013 Digital Cities Survey

Judges recognize Riverside’s leadership in information and communications technology

Riverside

The City of Riverside’s efforts to make government more transparent and accessible to residents through the improved use of technology has been recognized with a top-tier finish in the 2013 Digital Cities Survey.

Riverside garnered a third-place finish among the top 20 cities of its size that were recognized in the annual awards, which showcase best practices in public-sector information and communications technology. Among cities like Riverside with 250,000 or more residents, Boston finished first.

“Riverside’s high ranking puts it in very good company and is a testament to the vision and hard work of our entire team,” said Lea Deesing, Chief Innovation Officer for the City of Riverside. “Technology can build a bridge between government and the citizenry, and we are working to make that happen in Riverside.”

Artists Showcase To Prevent Teen Suicide

Fontana

Wigs ‘N Weaves & The Natural You” will host an evening of Mental Wellness Edutainment on November 23, 2013 beginning at 4pm as a benefit fundraiser for OneNation Media Services, Inc. to outreach for teen depression and suicide prevention. The event will be held at the Steelworkers’ Auditorium located at 8437 Sierra Ave., Fontana, CA 92335. Tickets are $30.

Women Who Hide campaign director, Cheyenne English, says “Wigs ‘N Weaves & The Natural You - An Evening of Mental Wellness Edutainment” has been designed for the entire family. It will provide an exciting and inviting entertainment environment with mental health and mental wellness messages uniquely delivered in a variety of genres involving instrumental music, hip hop, spoken word, comedy and a live stage play.”

Also planned during the event, a special recognition of Ms. Linda Hart, Executive Director of the African American Mental Health Coalition, in association with El Sol, for successfully training, graduating and assigning mental health community outreach workers to service communities throughout San Bernardino County. For more information visit www.streetpositive.com.
Affordable Banking for Low- to Moderate-Income (LMI) Communities

By Davina Samuel, Union Bank, N.A.

Union Bank is creating positive change in our communities with its new Union Bank Access Account. One of the first of its kind, the new account helps illustrate the bank’s commitment to providing products that serve the needs of the low- to moderate-income (LMI) segment and other consumers, including those on ChexSystems, who may not qualify for a traditional bank account.

The Union Bank Access Account is a direct response to requests from consumers and community groups regarding the needs of the LMI customer segment that includes the unbanked and underbanked population. The Union Bank Access Account is a low-cost product that offers features and functionalities to allow customers easier access to their account and the opportunity to establish a banking relationship with Union Bank.

“The ongoing feedback we receive from our community partners and customers is critical to our product development,” said Union Bank Vice President and Senior Product Manager Rogger LaCruz. “We are proud to respond with an affordable product that offers the features typically offered on consumer checking accounts, while avoiding the risk of incurring overdraft and non-sufficient funds fees.”

Providing customized financial services and solutions has been the heart and soul of Union Bank throughout its nearly 150-year history. Whether we’re helping a family buy its first home, supporting small businesses or the vital work of affordable housing developers, or providing affordable financial services to LMI consumers, fair and transparent banking is a fundamental Union Bank commitment.

“We know that empowering consumers and businesses, and providing them access to affordable financial services is what helps communities thrive,” said Union Bank Senior Executive Vice President Julius Robinson, head of Corporate Social Responsibility. “That includes identifying opportunities where we can serve the LMI market segment.”

For more information on the Union Bank Access Account please visit your local Union Bank branch for further details.

Davina Samuel is a Vice President and Branch Manager of Union Bank’s Tustin Branch. Headquartered in San Francisco, UnionBankCal Corporation is a financial holding company with assets of $102.3 billion at June 30, 2013. Its primary subsidiary, Union Bank, N.A., provides an array of financial services to individuals, small businesses, middle-market companies, and major corporations. The bank operated 422 branches in California, Washington, Oregon, Texas, Illinois, and New York as well as two international offices, on June 30, 2013. UnionBankCal Corporation is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Ltd, which is a subsidiary of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc. Union Bank is a proud member of the Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG, NYSE:MTU), one of the world’s largest financial organizations. In July 2013, American Banker Magazine and the Reputation Institute ranked Union Bank #1 for reputation among its customers. Visit www.unionbank.com for more information.
Apple Valley to Celebrate 25 Years of Incorporation

In November 1988, an overwhelming 84% of the voters approved the measure to incorporate the Town of Apple Valley. From our early days of grassroots leadership, it is still our citizens that drive this community. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of this momentous event, the Town will hold a celebration on November 15.

The public is invited to join in customer appreciation festivities from noon to 6 p.m. Drop by Town Hall and the Development Services Building to enjoy department displays of projects and services we offer. Meet staff members who can answer questions and tell you more about what goes on behind the scenes. Enter a town trivia contest for a chance to win prizes and enjoy free birthday cake while supplies last.

Next door in the Conference Center, walk through the Apple Valley History Expo. Citizens, organizations and the Town’s Historical Advisory Committee will have photos and memorabilia on display, showcasing the history of our town and some of its most colorful characters. We’ll even have some colorful characters on hand at the “living history” corner, where you can visit with some of our pioneers. Learn more about modern day founders Newt Bass and Bud Westlund, our most famous residents, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, as well as many more important people in both our early and more recent history.

Outside, our weekly Farmer’s market will be offering fresh, healthy produce and a variety of other retail items until 2 p.m., but the main outdoor attraction will be free tethered hot air balloon rides from 1 to 4 p.m., weather permitting.

Plans are still being finalized, so visit www.AppleValley.org for a complete schedule of events.

Riverside Residents Encouraged to Apply

City Boards and Commissions Help Shape Future of Riverside

The City of Riverside is encouraging residents to apply for a position on Boards and Commissions that help shape policies and practices at City Hall.

Riverside’s 13 Boards and Commissions offer advice and guidance on important policy decisions for the city which affect daily life in the city. Such issues include General Plan updates, building design, signs, parks, recreation, trees, streets, traffic regulations and public utilities.

Members serve four-year terms and are eligible for consideration for reappointment for an additional four-year term. Openings include: Airport Commission (Ward 4); Commission on Disabilities (Wards 2, 4, 6, 7, and Citywide); Cultural Heritage Board (Ward 4); Human Relations Commission (Ward 2 and Citywide); Board of Library Trustees (Ward 6); Mayor’s Commission on Aging (Ward 7 and Citywide); Metropolitan Museum Board (Wards 3, 6, and Citywide); Park and Recreation Commission (Ward 3 and Citywide); Planning Commission (Citywide); and Board of Public Utilities (Ward 3 and Citywide).

“The Mayor and City Council members value the input from our community volunteers,” City Clerk Colleen J. Nicol said. “By serving as a member of one of the Boards and Commissions, residents will have an opportunity to make decisions that affect their neighborhoods and city.”

Applications are accepted year-round for any of the Boards and Commissions. For more information and applications for each of the Boards and Commissions visit www.riversideca.gov or visit the City Clerk’s Office on the 7th floor of City Hall.
Marcus Miller  
Friday, November 15, 8:00p  
Location: McCallum Theatre, 73000 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, Ca. Tel: (760) 340-ARTS.

Lula Washington Dance Theatre  
Friday, November 15, 8:00p  
Location: McCallum Theatre, 73000 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, Ca. Tel: (760)340-ARTS.

Comedian Rodney Perry  
Friday, November 15 – Nov. 17  
Location: 4555 Mills Circle, Ontario, CA . Tel: (909) 484-5411 or email: improv02@improv.com.

Holiday Fashion Showcase  
Sunday, November 17, 5:00p – 9:00p  
Exquisite Fashion and Theatric Showcase, Swag Bags, Live Jazz, Figaro French Buffet, Fine Art Display, Comedy & VIP Special Guest. Location: Les Noces du Figaro, 618 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, CA. Tickets may be purchased at LL's Consignment, 1205 North La Brea Avenue, Inglewood, CA 99302. For more info, please call (310) 673-0988.

Comedy for Causes: Young Visionaires Homeless Youth Center  
Friday, November 22, 7:00p  
Please join us in raising funds through laughter for Young Visionaries Homeless Youth Shelter (Visionary Homes). Donations for this event will support a homeless shelter that serves local teens. Pay it forward and bring a canned food item, to receive 1 free ticket to enter to win one of the many raffle prizes. $15 per person. 18+ ONLY Event. San Bernardino Valley College, 701 South Mount Vernon Avenue, San Bernardino, CA. To purchase tickets: https://www.eventbrite.com/event/8901190701. For ticket info, please call: 909-224-1556 or 909-272-8437.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner  
Wednesday, November 27, 10:00a – 1:00p  
Location: The Salvation Army Riverside Corps, 3695 First Street, Riverside, CA 92501.

Dear Dr. Levister: I had several polyps removed from my colon. Are all such growths a sign of cancer? J.E.

Dear J.E.: A colon polyp is a growth on the surface of the colon, also called the large intestine. Some colon polyps are benign, which means they are not cancer. Anyone can get colon polyps, but certain people are more likely to get them than others. Some types of polyps may already be cancer or can become cancer. Sometimes, a person can have more than one colon polyp. Colon polyps can be raised or flat.

You may have a greater chance of getting polyps if you’re 50 years of age; have a history of polyps; someone in your family has had polyps; someone in your family has had colon cancer or you’ve had uterine or ovarian cancer before age 50.

The large intestine is the long, hollow tube at the end of your digestive tract. The large intestine absorbs water from your stool and changes it from a liquid to a solid. Stool is the waste that passes through the rectum and anus as a bowel movement. Here are some points to remember: Flat polyps can be smaller and harder to see and are more likely to be cancer than raised polyps. Polyps can usually be removed during colonoscopy—the test used to check for colon polyps. Most people with colon polyps do not have symptoms. Symptoms may include constipation or diarrhea for more than a week or blood on your underwear, on toilet paper, or in your stool. Doctors remove most colon polyps and test them for cancer. Talk with your doctor about getting tested for colon polyps if you’re 50 years of age or older or earlier if you have symptoms or someone in your family has had polyps or colon cancer.

You may also be more likely to get colon polyps if you eat a lot of fatty foods, smoke, drink alcohol, don’t exercise, or weigh too much.

Most people with colon polyps do not have symptoms. Often, people don’t know they have one until the doctor finds it during a regular checkup or while testing for something else.
The Power of Our Shared Vision and Partnership

Two decades ago, as a young organizer in Mississippi, I learned that there are only two types of temporal power: organized people and organized money. I also learned that in a democracy, the people can win every time - but only if we are organized.

Today, when I reflect back on my half-decade at the helm of the NAACP, I am deeply proud of what we have accomplished together as we organized our communities. We have abolished the death policy in five states, defended voting rights from coast to coast, freed multiple wrongfully incarcerated people, and shrunk prison systems. We have increased funding for health care, defended the rights of workers, held wayward mortgage companies accountable and curbed the school-to-prison-pipeline in multiple states. We have built powerful bridges to help faith communities join the struggle for marriage equality and against the scourge of HIV, and come to the aid of our allies in the struggles for environmental protection and immigrants rights. Through all this, we have dramatically expanded the ranks of those who would assist us in combating racial discrimination in the streets and at the ballot box.

Five years ago, the NAACP was what it had been for most of the past half century; the biggest civil rights organization in the streets. Today, we are that and also the biggest online, on mobile and at the ballot box as well.

All of this success is testament to the power of our shared vision and partnership to come together for a stronger, more inclusive America.

Things could have gone a different way. Since 2010, far-right wing extremists have repeatedly and simultaneously attacked the most basic civil rights protections of most Americans. They’ve attacked women’s rights, affirmative action, workers rights, immigration, LGBT equality, food security, health care, and even our right to drink clean water and breathe clean air. One has to wonder whether their decision to attack all of us all at once was motivated by mere greed or by an even more devious design to ensure that we would Balkanize as we each retreated into a defensive posture.

However, together, we chose the courageous path. We have marched forward arm in arm, repeatedly embracing the motto of the three musketeers: all for one, and one for all. As a result: we have passed powerful anti racial profiling legislation in New York City and even abolished the death penalty in Maryland with the help of leaders in the LGBT community; passed marriage equality bills from coast to coast with increased support from faith leaders and communities of color; and most recently we have built a powerful defense-and offense-for voting rights by pulling the entire progressive family together in ways incomparable in recent memory. Occasionally, we have even picked up new conservative friends and allies.

Today, as I prepare to leave my position at the NAACP, I am confident that there is a bright future for both the Association and the larger civil and human rights struggle.

We may have started this century like we started the last: fighting assaults on our voting rights and pushing back against attacks on our most basic civil and human rights. Nonetheless, this time we have a distinct advantage. We know that no matter what happens in the courts, every year our ability to defend and expand civil and human rights protections at the ballot box, in statehouses and on city councils will increase. Moreover, as organizers, we understand that while the future will come no matter what, we have the power to make the future come faster.
Davion Navar Henry Only

“I’ll take anyone,” Davion said. “Old or young, dad or mom, black, white, purple. I don’t care. And I would be really appreciative. The best I could be…”

It was a front page story in the Tampa Bay Times last month that broke hearts around the world. Fifteen-year-old Davion Navar Henry Only has spent his entire life in Florida’s foster care system. His mother was incarcerated when he was born, and when he did an Internet search for her name in June he learned she’d died just a few weeks earlier. He’s been moved from placement to placement throughout his childhood without ever finding somewhere he really belonged. As a teenager now living in a group home, Davion was starting to feel like he was running out of time—at risk of becoming one of the more than 23,000 youths each year who simply “age out” of the foster care system at age 18 or older and are left on their own without ever finding a caring, permanent family connection.

Davion decided to take his future into his own hands and asked his caseworker if she could help him speak at a church. She made arrangements at St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church in St. Petersburg, Florida. There, as the article reported, the shy teenager who worked hard to get A’s so far this year in everything but geometry and would love to play football if he had someone to drive him to practice, stood at the pulpit and asked the congregation if “someone, anyone” could adopt him.

Davion’s story quickly went viral and was shared on social media networks and websites around the country. He appeared on national television and received media coverage as far away as Australia and Japan and there is wonderful news to report. Davion’s story quickly went viral and was shared on social media networks and websites around the country. He appeared on national television and received media coverage as far away as Australia and Japan and there is wonderful news to report.

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2013 San Bernardino Elections: It’s Not Just Politics As Usual

Election day yields major changes to the face of S.B. politics, but progress remains questionable

By VOICE Staff

The recall fervor that has hung over San Bernardino City Hall like the proverbial dark cloud since late Spring finally struck on November 5th after the ballots of thousands of registered voters were cast, signaling a goodbye for some old faces and paving the way for a new chapter in local politics.
Against a civic backdrop of political strife, an antiquated city charter, and an unresolved bankruptcy crisis, voters handed City Attorney Jim Penman, and 7th Ward City Councilwoman and current Mayoral Candidate Wendy McCammack their walking papers. Penman, a permanent fixture of San Bernardino politics since 1987, and McCammack were the only potential recall officials ejected. Penman was replaced by local Attorney Gary Saenz, while McCammack was ousted in favor of retired professor James Mulvihill; almost all San Bernardino councilmembers found themselves on the recall ballot after a concerned citizen’s group called San Bernardino Residents for Responsible Government began a recall campaign in May and distributed a petition that gathered enough valid signatures to initiate a recall election.

Mayor Patrick Morris opted not to run for reelection this year, leaving his seat open to a near free-for-all with 10 contenders chasing the mayor’s seat, including erstwhile Councilwoman McCammack, current City Councilman Rikke Van Johnson, accountant Carey Davis and building contractor Rick Avila. In a twist of sorts, McCammack nabbed the most votes of any candidate, taking the lead over her top opponent Davis. McCammack and Davis will face each other in a run-off in February.

1st Ward Councilwoman Virginia Marquez was unscathed by her challengers, beating both of her opponents by a wide margin. 4th Ward City Councilman Fred Shoret will face local businessman Anthony Jones in a run-off.

In an interview provided to the VOICE in May, regional economist John Husing cautioned residents’ expectations stemming from the pending recall election. Instead, Husing encouraged civic leaders to review and reform the city’s binding charter. Meanwhile, others have blamed the city’s financial perils on poor leadership and officials continued on page 15

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**Former Councilmember Tobin Brinker on the City of San Bernardino Post-Election and the Top 5 Topics We Can’t Stop Talking About**

**1 Jim Penman**

How will Jim Penman be remembered? He attacked every elected leader who ever disagreed with him. City staff lived in fear of his wrath. Penman bulked up his staff in the past six years adding 8 investigators that went out in our city and cited people for brown lawns, issuing $1000 dollar a day Administrative Civil Penalties (ACP’s). He constantly insinuated that everyone around him was corrupt but that he was the only Watch Dog. In the end, he and his closest council ally Wendy McCammack were recalled. Two of his other council allies were arrested. Perhaps now the city can heal.

**2 Wendy McCammack**

Wendy McCammack is unqualified to be Mayor of San Bernardino. In 2009 she was quoted about the city’s financial problems, “When you’re living paycheck to paycheck, sometimes you have to live off the credit card,” she said. In 2010 when the council was told the city would go bankrupt in two years, she wrote an editorial in the SUN calling it a “scare tactic.” She voted against the 2010 budget after making multiple motions to reduce the level of cuts. McCammack’s desire to solve the budget with borrowing and her denial of the severity of the situation reveal just how unqualified she is.

continued on page 21
Downtown Riverside played host to the 10th annual Dia de los Muertos celebration that attracted thousands of inland residents for a day of music, singing, dancing, food, games and art. Although celebrated by various Latino cultures, Dia de los Muertos is a Mexican memorial holiday honoring deceased loved ones.

Participating sponsors and partners included: Division 9 Gallery, Ballet Folklórico de Riverside, Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Riverside Parks, Recreation and Community Services, Tío’s Tacos, Zacatecas Café, City of Riverside, Guitar Center, Johnson CAT Rental, Precious Cargo Medical Transportation, Riverside Arts Council, DJ Romeo, DJ El Sol, ZAPP Productions, Wacko Productions, New-Indy Containerboard, Fundación Sahuáyo, El Zarape Restaurant, and others.

Photos by Carlos Puma
University of California President Janet Napolitano met with UC Riverside faculty, staff, students and selected community members early this month to familiarize herself with the personality and character of the Riverside campus.

This is part of a listening and learning tour that will take Napolitano to every campus and national laboratory in the state’s premier higher education system. She breakfasted with students, heard from a panel of faculty members, met with the deans of the colleges, and discussed staff concerns. In the evening she visited with community members before returning to Oakland, which is the headquarters of the UC system.

“The conversations have been frank, substantial and quite useful,” Napolitano wrote in a note to the chancellors of all 10 campuses.

“The president’s visit is a chance to get a 360 degree view of campus,” said UCR Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox, who himself is in his first few months of leadership of the campus. “UCR is an institution on the move,” he said. “We have a great set of traditions, tremendous faculty, students and staff. We are going to make an impact in coming years.”

Photos by Peter Phun
1 - UC President Janet Napolitano, at left, visits UCR’s Neil A. Campbell Science Learning Laboratory on Monday, Nov. 4. UCR Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox is second from the right. 2 - Napolitano sits with UCR mascot, Scotty Highlander. 3 - Napolitano talks to UCR students.
who feel the city is beholden to police and fire employees with handsome salaries – money that critics say doesn’t feed the city because most of those employees live, shop and recreate in other cities.

Though the subsequent recall election has passed and the next mayor has yet to be elected, the city continues to grapple with a myriad of issues. In 2011, San Bernardino found itself in one of the largest bankruptcy disasters, often compared to Detroit’s bankruptcy troubles. Last month during a city council meeting, Morris presented a detailed recovery plan to pull the city from bankruptcy. How and when the city would follow through with the plan after Morris exits from his post next year is unclear.

The bankruptcy and recall elections were only half the scandals San Bernardino endured this year. Following an investigation, City Councilman and former mayoral candidate Chas Kelley admitted to personal use of campaign funds and plead guilty to related charges. Kelley resigned from his seat. His then-fellow City Councilman Robert Jenkins of San Bernardino was mired in his own alleged illegal activity, charged with 18 felonies and 12 misdemeanor crimes relating to stalking and identity theft in Riverside County. Despite the charges brought against him, Jenkins defended his seat, which was up for reelection, but lost to Benito Barrios, a local businessman.

If voter turnout was indicative of how the recall election resonated with San Bernardino residents, then very few of the city’s 78,000 registered voters felt emboldened to change the city’s course. The city’s pending elections were big news for San Bernardino leading up to November 5, but voter turnout didn’t mirror enthusiasm in terms of civic participation. For example, the mayoral race garnered just over 13,000 votes. Voter turnout was significantly down from the previous election in 2009 when 21.6 percent of registered voters cast their ballots, compared with an approximate 16 percent turnout this year.

The future of San Bernardino’s progress is murky. As some freshman city council members find themselves to be a welcome addition to San Bernardino politics, all eyes are still on the yet-to-be-decided mayor’s race and a bankruptcy solution that will lift the city out of dire financial straits and repair its tattered image.
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I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true, information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime.)

Registerant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious name(s) listed above.

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Charter Reform
There are many problems with the city charter that need to be addressed by our new city council. First, elections need to be switched to even years to boost turnout. Only 16% of registered voters actually voted last week. Next, Charter 186 has created auto-pilot spending on salaries for police and fire. The city was forced to increase pay by $1 million dollars last January. A bankrupt city cannot afford auto-pilot spending. We need a normal negotiation process that can give raises when necessary but can also be used to get concessions when economic times are tough.

Pension Reform
The election of the new city council is a real opportunity. They should immediately put a Pension Reform initiative on the ballot. It should do two things. First, it should lock in the recent pension changes which require the employees to pay the employee share of pension costs. Secondly, it should require a vote of the people before increasing pension benefits in the future. Pension costs are an on-going expense and the city needs to control spending. Pension costs exploded from $12 million dollars a year in 2006 to almost $23 million in 2011 and they are still going up. Money spent on pensions reduces the money available for everything else we want in our city (police, parks, libraries, etc).

San Bernardino after bankruptcy
The city of Vallejo exited bankruptcy two years ago but is right back in the same financial mess it was before because it did not fix its pension problem. San Bernardino has to avoid making that mistake. If the city is successful in fixing its pension problems and renegotiates a reduced payment plan with CalPERs, then our recovery will be much quicker and gentler. However, city residents cannot just rely on elected leaders to fix our city. Post-bankruptcy we all need to do a better job of engaging in our civic culture.

Tobin Brinker served on the San Bernardino City Council from 2006-2011 representing the city’s 3rd ward. He is considered an outspoken advocate for pension reform and is often interviewed for his opinion on the city’s challenges.
Our People Are Our Number One Asset

One of my many goals as City Councilman is to bring more openness and transparency to City Hall. Our people have a right to know what is going on, where their tax money is being spent and what major plans are being undertaken. I want to include everyone in the process – or at least as many people who are interested – of voicing opinions about these issues. Our people, residents and taxpayers deserve this. Everyone should have their voices and opinions heard with matters facing our city.

I believe our people are our number one asset. They work hard, contribute taxes and live with the outcome of their elected official’s decisions. Sadly, only about 18% of our registered voters – those even eligible to vote – exercise that right to make their choices heard. We need to encourage more participation at the voting booth. I hope to bring a renewed interest in what government does and how it affects our people’s daily lives. The best way is through effective and timely communication. I hope to be able to bring relevant information to our residents in order to inform them of the City’s business. I hope to make this information easy to understand and not presented in a way that clouds the issues with my opinions.

I will ensure there is an open door policy – one of accessibility and availability to all people - so when you call or need your councilperson to meet with you – I will do just that. Returning calls, emails and requests for information should be a councilperson’s number one priority and will be with me.

Over the past few years, we have been losing good paying jobs to other cities, other counties and states. We’re not replacing lost jobs as we should be. Without jobs and a vibrant economy, our families will suffer and vital city services will be in jeopardy. On top of this, our residents spend far too much time commuting to other counties for good paying jobs. They work and spend dollars there. We must do what it takes to keep our people working and spending in Riverside.

Less time on the road means more time with our families - and a better quality of life!

It's time to update policies that will encourage businesses to locate or expand in Riverside. Needless regulations and delays should be eliminated, and costly “red tape” should be cut. Delays in project approval are costly to our local businesses and often discourage new businesses from locating here. To help attract businesses, we must also keep fees low, provide the best schools and roads for our residents. We must keep our neighborhoods, schools and business environment safe. We should strive to balance our revenues with more businesses, manufacturing and professional services. Let’s keep our tax dollars in Riverside!

We should encourage investors and business owners to relocate their businesses to Riverside. To do this, we need to ensure we have the best restaurants, shopping, recreation and other amenities that draw people and their families to our city. When we become a “destination,” we will attract and keep tax dollars here and businesses will invest and grow here. We should not be satisfied with just being a domicile for other communities. How often do you travel to other cities for dining - and spend close to $4 dollars a gallon to get there? Riverside needs more good dining places - not just more fast food places. Let’s make Riverside a destination city! Business success depends on this, as does keeping our UCR Medical School graduates practicing here. The bottom line is, we need to do what it takes to make Riverside thrive.