



Report to the People

2012 Miss Commerce Pageant Special Coverage Inside

Where Quality Service Is Our Tradition

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www.ci.commerce.ca.us

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The Commerce Transportation Department's free bus system travels to every business and residential area of the City. The Blue route recently added a new stop allowing passengers to travel to the Citadel from the Bandini and Bristow areas.

TRANSPORTATION: KEEPING COMMERCE MOVING

To provide a safe, reliable transportation network to get people where they need to go, the Commerce Transportation Department provides a dynamic and comprehensive array of services to Commerce residents and the general public.

The Transportation Department is responsible for the operation of the City's Medi-Ride Program, transportation for City excursions, and the five route bus system that covers the entire City, as well as oversight of Commerce's vehicle fleet.

The Commerce Medi-Ride Program is free to Commerce residents that have a disability or that are 50 years of age or older and provides them with curb-to-curb service to and from their home to medical appoint-

ments within a 12 mile radius of City Hall. Medi-Ride provided transportation to residents for more than 9,000 medical appointments and doctor visits in Fiscal Year 2010/2011. The Medi-Ride service is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Transportation Department is also responsible for getting Commerce residents to various locations all over Southern California via the City's excursion buses, having transported more than 33,000 residents in FY 2010/2011. Recently, these high comfort excursion buses have transported Commerce teens to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Pershing Square (to go ice skating); children and families

to Camp Commerce and Disneyland; and Commerce seniors to the San Diego Japanese Gardens and the Santa Anita Race Track.

Although the Medi-Ride Program and excursion buses service a large number of residents, the City's free bus system, which has been a Commerce tradition since 1962, serves more than 650,000 public transportation passengers on an annual basis. The system features five bus routes that reach every business and residential area of the City.

These routes have been optimized by Transportation staff to benefit residents and local businesses so people can easily get to the places they most want to be. Riders use the City's bus

See **Transportation** page 8



ILLEGAL ADDITIONS AND CONVERSIONS

In residential zones, any accessory or structure greater than 120 square feet must be permitted, and any home, home addition, apartment, or rental unit must be permitted.

The Code Enforcement and Building and Safety Divisions routinely investigate suspected illegal structures. With a growing shortage of parking on our city streets, complaints of illegal garage conversions and accessory structures are on the rise.

In some instances the property owner is shocked to learn that their property is in violation because the property was purchased that way or existed with the illegal construction for years. If you suspect your property or a property you are considering for purchase has unpermitted additions or structures, there are a few things you should know.

The City can demand that an illegal addition or structure be demolished and the property restored to its permitted state at the property owner's expense.

At the City's discretion, subject to approval from the Planning Division and the Building and Safety Division, permits may be issued to legalize the construction, provided all fees are paid, all construction meets current code and passes all required inspections.

Inspections may require drilling to check slab depth, cutting holes in walls to check framing and electrical conduits, etc. All necessary corrections must be made. All expenses are the property owner's responsibility.

If a situation ever occurs in which a homeowner's insurance claim is filed, the insurance carrier may refuse coverage due to

See **Illegal Conversions** page 2

HOLIDAY CHEER PROGRAM MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR HUNDREDS OF RESIDENTS



The Commerce Casino held a Children's Holiday Party for 100 children.

To brighten the 2011 holiday season, the Community Services Department coordinated the annual Holiday Cheer Program, which helped deliver approximately \$34,000 in donations, goods and programs to benefit 522 needy residents, which included families, children and seniors from 195 Commerce households.

Contributions came from numerous Commerce resi-

dents, employees, businesses, civic organizations and other agencies.

The top contributor was the Commerce Casino who hosted a Holiday Party for 100 children at an estimated cost of \$10,000. The event was held at Rosewood Park and featured a buffet, a magic show, clowns making balloon animals, and a visit from Santa Claus who gave brand new

toys to children in attendance.

The City of Commerce Employees Association AFSCME Local #773 hosted a similar affair for 30 children at an estimated cost of \$3,000. This event, which was held in the Ruben C. Batres Community Room at Bandini Park, featured a kid friendly buffet of chicken

See **Holiday Cheer** page 8

If you have been following the news lately, you know that the California Supreme Court upheld the redevelopment agency elimination bill and struck down another bill that would have allowed the agencies to remain in operation as long as they made payments to the state. As it currently stands, the State's 400 redevelopment agencies will be dissolved on Feb. 1. As Report to the People went to press, efforts were being made to extend the Feb. 1 deadline.

This is a devastating blow to the future economic development of our City. The redevelopment process has been integral to Commerce. The Citadel, Costco and Vista Del Rio redevelopment projects showcase how effective Commerce has been in creating housing and jobs for the benefit of our community and the Southeast region. The Council will be looking into ways to address the impact the RDA abolishment will have on job creation, infrastructure development, affordable housing and blight removal. We will continue to update you on this important issue.

On behalf of the City Council, I want to thank all the volunteers who participated in our Commerce Community Day of Service on Jan. 14. The response was tremendous. The volunteers, ages 14-18, cleaned, painted and planted flowers at the City's Teen Center on Astor. If you get a chance, drive by and take a look. Their hard work will help to build pride and respect for our City and will inspire others to do the same. The event was held not only to beautify Commerce, but also to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose legacy encouraged citizens to take a role in improving their communities through volunteer service. Thanks again, Commerce teens.

Speaking of beautification, I'd liked to congratulate the winners of the Christmas Decorations Contest. They are: Best Use of Animation--Luis Frias, Most Creative/Original--The Landeros and Vicuna families, Best Christmas Theme--Noemi Martinez and Family and Best Use of Lights--Maria Aida Magallon

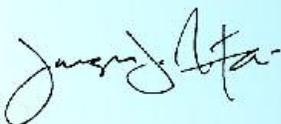
This month we will be hosting the 52nd annual Miss Commerce Pageant on Feb. 25. Eighteen young women have entered the pageant for the opportunity to represent Commerce as the City's Queen. During the pageant, the 2012 Young Man of the Year Scholarship Award will also be presented. Residents can watch the pageant live on Commerce Cable Channel 3 or online at www.ci.commerce.ca.us. Good luck to all the participants!

If you haven't already noticed, the Commerce Transportation Department has added new stops to its Blue Line. The Blue Line now makes stops at the Citadel Outlet Stores and the Commerce Casino. Taking the bus is convenient, saves gas, wear and tear on your vehicle and you don't have to park it. Best of all, Commerce bus service is free.

I want to remind residents that concurrent regular meetings of the City Council and the Commerce Community Development Commission are currently being held at the Commerce Senior Center, located next to City Hall, at 2555 Commerce Way. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m., every first and third Tuesday of the month. The City Council Chamber is undergoing improvements to make it accessible and usable to individuals with disabilities. The work is expected to be completed in April.

City Hall and Libraries will be closed on Feb. 13 in observance of Lincoln's Birthday and Feb. 20 in observance of Washington's Birthday.

Sincerely,
Jorge Rifá




NIKE REUSE-A-SHOE PROGRAM

Old Shoes Can be Recycled and Put to Good Use



Since 1990, Nike's 'Reuse-A-Shoe' Shoe Recycling Program has collected more than 25 million pairs of athletic shoes. Recycling your old shoes is simple and convenient. All you have to do is drop off any brand of athletic shoes at the Converse Outlet Store or Nike Factory Store at the Citadel, 100 Citadel Dr., Commerce.

You can recycle up to 10 pairs of athletic shoes of

any brand. Items that are not accepted are shoes with metal, cleats, dress shoes, wet or damp shoes, sandals or flip flops.

What happens to all these shoes?

They are ground up, sorted, and processed into three types of raw material: Rubber from the outsole, foam from the midsole, and fabric fibers from the upper part of the shoe.

This "Nike Grind" becomes part of athletic courts, tracks, fields, playgrounds, carpet underlay material, and new shoes and apparel.

ILLEGAL CONVERSIONS

Cont. from Page 1

unpermitted construction, leaving the property owner liable for the costs of loss, damage, or injury.

If a City building official discovers an illegal construction, they can issue a notice of correction and file the notice with LA County to effectively bar a sale or transfer of title until corrective measures take place.

Full disclosure of a property's condition is the responsibility of the seller. Real estate agents are usually protected by clauses in the listing agreement so you may not want to rely on agents, buyers or sellers to investigate and verify permits, etc. Once the sale is final any unpermitted conditions become

the responsibility of the new owner. If you're the buyer research and verify building records before anything is finalized.

One final note: Additions, garage conversions, or accessory structures constructed without proper permits are considered uninhabitable. Landlords may have no legal right to demand or accept any rent for such structures.

If you have any questions, or wish to inquire about your property or a property you are considering for purchase, please contact the Building and Safety Division, Planning Division, or Code Enforcement Division at (323) 722-4805.

COUNCIL ACTIONS

Regular Meeting of December 6

- Received a scroll from Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs Vice President Mark Davis, for the City's ongoing support of the Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs and the District Attorney's Office investigators working in Los Angeles County.
 - Authorized Community Development Department staff to advertise for proposals to construct a new Emergency Operations Center.
 - Commended Outgoing Montebello Unified School District Board President Edwin Chau.
 - Authorized the Transportation Department to advertise for proposals to purchase a transit data management system.
 - Approved a retainer agreement with the Law Firm of Remy, Thomas, Moose and Manley, LLP to review the Environmental Impact Report for the Southern California International Gateway Project.
 - Awarded a contract for the installation of Bristow Park Security cameras to Integrated Security Incorporated.
 - Approved a resolution adopting the updated guidelines and agreements for the Community Development Block Grant Funded Home Preservation Grant Program.
 - Established the date for the Keep Commerce Beautiful Campaign's Day of Service Event.
 - Received and filed a report on the "Get Out the Voice" youth voter registration drive.
 - Approved the final disposition of property at 4906 Jardine Street.
 - Approved a delegate to the Los Angeles County Vector Control District.
 - Adjourned in memory of Evelyn Slagle, sister of retired City employee Beverly Wiggins; Ruth Cano, longtime Commerce resident, former City employee and aunt of City employee Mary Ann Griego-Talley
- ### Regular Meeting of December 20
- Approved an appeal granting curbside physically challenged person's parking for Eric Sanchez.
 - Approved the formation of an Ad-Hoc subcommittee

of the City Council to interview and recommend a consultant to facilitate services for the 2012 Strategic Planning and Goal Setting Workshop.

- Adopted a resolution in support of the "Get Out the Voice" Youth Voter Registration Project.
- Adjourned in memory of David Thrasher, longtime employee of Commerce business CalStrip Steel, and Esther Parks, mother-in-law of Los Angeles County Building and Safety Department employee Michael Pyles.

Regular Meeting of January 3

- Adopted a resolution approving the annual financial status for the State of California Housing and Community Development Department – HCD and the annual financial statement of the Commerce Community Development Commission.
- Received and filed a report regarding the Washington Boulevard Improvement Project.
- Received and filed a report on the Green Policy/Green Zones proposed by the Environmental Justice Advisory Task Force.
- Received and filed an update regarding the status of creating digital billboard standards for the City of Commerce.
- Adjourned in memory of Joe Aldaco, longtime Commerce resident.

Report to the People

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City of Commerce
February 2012



52nd Annual
Miss Commerce Pageant

Volume 52 No. 2, February 2012

www.ci.commerce.ca.us

Special Coverage

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Miss Commerce 2012
Pageant Participants

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ASHLEY PAEZ
JOCELYN MARQUEZ
VANESSA LOPEZ
LISA SANCHEZ
YVONNE CORTEZ
AMANDA ALVARADO
SELENIA RAMIREZ
JENNIFER MENDOZA
BRITTANY BETANCOURT
UNIQUE HERNANDEZ
MELODY GOMEZ
JANET REGALADO
ROSEMARY MARAVILLA
ISAURA QUINTERO
KATHRYN SANDOVAL
ALYSSA RUBIO
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Committee Message

Royal Court Memories



2011 Miss Commerce Lesly Mendez

Reflects on the Past Year

There was never any doubt that Lesly Mendez would participate in the Miss Commerce Pageant.

"Commerce is the City I grew up in, been in all my life," said Mendez. "Aside from modeling, once I found out about the pageant, I was like 'This is it! I have to do this! It's home!'"

She entered the pageant to challenge herself and accomplish something memorable. And that's exactly what she did.

"The outcome was so much better than what I had expected. It was an amazing journey with wonderful experiences," said Mendez.

The night of the pageant when the emcee announced that she was chosen Queen, Mendez was overwhelmed with joy.

"No words can describe exactly how I felt," said Mendez. "I woke up the next morning, saw my crown on my nightstand and my first thought was, 'I won! I did it!'" Once she captured the crown, Mendez became a community role model, a responsibility she cherished.

"I enjoyed being a role model because it inspired me to do more than I thought I could and made me strive for more. It was an incredible feeling to have little ones look up to me and to be able to set an example by sharing with them the amazing experiences and opportunities that came throughout my reign," she said.

Serving as 2011 Miss Commerce also helped her grow as a person.

"I learned to communicate more effectively, address a crowd and express myself with confidence," said Mendez. "It gave me a broader perspective on what life



Miss Commerce 2011 Lesly Mendez shows her trademark royal smile.

has to offer. It made me want to get involved and make a difference."

One of her queenly duties was to represent Commerce during a goodwill trip to Aguascalientes, Mexico. It was her first time visiting Mexico, but it won't be her last, she said.

"Everyone was so attentive and the hospitality was incredible," said Mendez.

During her visit, she partici-

signed plenty of autographs that day!"

While Mendez experienced many incredible moments, her best moment was when she and her princesses were presented together as the Queen and Royal Court at the pageant.

"This was an unforgettable and special moment because at that point, I gained a second family," said Mendez. "The five new friends I gained became my sisters at that moment and from then on I knew we were going to have a great year."

Mendez attends California State University, Dominguez Hills where she is earning a degree in business administration with a concentration on human resource management. Once she receives her bachelor's degree, she will

continue going to school

to become a nurse. She also works as a floor supervisor for Calvin Klein.

As the end of her reign draws near, Mendez thanks everyone who contributed to making her year a successful one including, the Pageant Steering Committee members, Parks and Recreation staff Scott Wasserman, Denise Raigosa, Cynthia Machuca, Adolfo Marquez and the Commerce Sister City Association.

"I'd like to thank the whole City," Mendez said.

She leaves the 2012 participants with these words of advice: "Preparation is all it takes. Be confident. Have fun! Be yourself and enjoy the experience. In the end, everyone is a winner and takes back with her wonderful memories."

pated in the Sister City's 49th anniversary celebration, visited orphanages and bonded with the Sister City Association members. Spending time with children at the orphanages was the highlight of her trip.

"They were amazed once they saw my crown," said Mendez. "I

Miss Commerce 2011 Lesly Mendez just after being crowned.



52ND ANNUAL
MISS COMMERCE PAGEANT LIVE

Commerce Cable Channel 3 & www.ci.commerce.ca.us

Saturday, February 25, 2012 5:00 p.m.





2012 Pageant Participants

KARELY RAMIREZ

Daughter of Ruben & Florida Ramirez
21 years of age
East Los Angeles College
5 ft. 7 in. tall
Brown hair
Brown eyes



Karely Ramirez has set her sights on becoming a kindergarten teacher. "I believe that teachers are important because they can make an impact on a child's life and they serve as important role models," she said. "Beyond a doubt, teaching is the field where I want to grow in and make a successful career." Ramirez has already gained experience working with children as a teacher's assistant in the Infant and Toddler Center at Schurr High School and as a volunteer for project "Read-to-Me" at the East Los Angeles College Child Care Center. "The experience motivated and assured me that teaching is the profession I am passionate for," she said. She is also majoring in child development at ELAC and eventually plans to transfer to Cal State Los Angeles to continue her education. When she's not in school, Ramirez works at Jack in the Box restaurant. She started off as a cashier four years ago and worked her way up to shift leader where she assists her team in meeting its goals for providing quality service. During her free time, Ramirez enjoys drawing, painting and reading inspirational books.

ASHLEY PAEZ

Daughter of Mrs. Sylvia Mendoza & Mr. Joel Paez
19 years of age
East Los Angeles College
5 ft. 1 in. tall
Black hair
Brown eyes



Ashley Paez's experience as an LA County-USC Medical Center volunteer has inspired her to become a registered nurse. "As I worked there, I grew to love the hospital environment, the multiple jobs the nurses do and their ability to take care of sick people," said Paez. "I feel that it's my calling." She is currently attending East Los Angeles College where she plans to major in nursing. This past fall, Paez participated on the ELAC Cheerleading Team as a song leader, traveling with the school band and performing at parades, fairs and games. Her community activities include participation in the Commerce Scholarship Program, the Bristow Park Dance Team and the YES Program. "I was one of the lucky ones who was picked from the lottery," said Paez, who worked for the YES program at the Greenwood Branch Library and Bristow Park. "I learned so many things, but what stuck with me was that customer service is the most important thing at a job site." Paez has also dabbled in show business. She will appear as an extra in the upcoming movie, "Complicity."

JOCELYN MARQUEZ

Daughter of Maria & Ramiro Marquez
17 years of age
Bell Gardens High School
5 ft. 5 1/2 in. tall
Brown hair
Hazel eyes



Jocelyn Marquez is intent on a career in teaching. "For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to become a teacher," said Marquez. The Bell Gardens High School senior is open to teaching all grade levels—from elementary school to high school and hopes to inspire students to realize their potential just as her teachers inspired her. Marquez's volunteer activities focus on helping others. She recently joined We Love Paws, an organization that provides homes for stray dogs and cats. "We help find families who are willing to care for them and love them," she said. She is also president of the Varsity Club, which promotes school spirit, positive lifestyles and support for BGHS athletics. Last school year, Marquez participated in beach and campus cleanups in her advanced environmental science class. "We should all take responsibility in our own way to help keep the environment clean," she said. Additionally, she served as a Rosewood Park School Reading Buddy. In her spare time, Marquez enjoys reading, hiking and spending time with her family.

VANESSA LOPEZ

Daughter of Esther & Macario Zavala
18 years of age
Rio Hondo Community College
5 ft. 1 in. tall
Brown hair
Brown eyes



Vanessa Lopez started Rio Hondo Community College this spring where she is majoring in criminal justice. Her career goal is to become a homicide detective where she will gather facts, collect evidence and investigate murder cases. "I want to be at the scene of a crime and help solve crimes," Lopez said. Besides attending college, she is happily employed as a cashier at Del Taco in Commerce. "I enjoy going to work," said Lopez. "I get to meet customers and I feel like my co-workers are my second family." At Del Taco, Lopez is responsible for working the drive thru, maintaining the facility and offering good customer service. "Customer service is important to me because in most jobs, you need to learn how to work with people and different personalities," she said. "I want to make sure that when I am at work, customers leave happy and want to come back." While in high school, Lopez served as a Commerce Youth Advisory commissioner and performed with the City's Competitive Dance Team. During her free time, she enjoys dancing and listening to music by Beyonce.

LISA MONIQUE SANCHEZ

Daughter of Mrs. Estela Frias & Mr. Luis Frias
17 years of age
Bell Gardens High School
5 ft. 8 in. tall
Dark Brown hair
Dark Brown eyes



Lisa Monique Sanchez plans to become a high school counselor, hoping to offer students the same inspiration, motivation and guidance that she has received from counseling. "My high school counselor always provides me with whatever I need and is always there to help when I need her," said Sanchez. "I would like to do the same." Her future goal is to earn a master's degree in educational psychology, which she believes will complement her career. "It will help me to counsel youths because I will better understand the way they think and be able to connect with them more," she said. A senior at Bell Gardens High School, Sanchez is active in numerous organizations including, the Auto Tech Club, AVID, Girls League, Future Ed and Yearbook staff. This year she joined an anti-genocide club called STAND. "Right now, our focus is on the genocide in Darfur," she said. The group raises awareness of genocide and explains how students can help. When she's not busy at school, Sanchez enjoys reading, visiting museums, hiking and being with her family.

YVONNE MARIE CORTEZ

Daughter of Juan & Belinda Cortez
20 years of age
Rio Hondo Community College
5 ft. 3 in. tall
Dark Brown hair
Brown eyes



Yvonne Marie Cortez is a kinesiology major at Rio Hondo Community College with the goal of becoming an athletic trainer. "I have grown up playing sports all the way through high school and knew that I would like to still be involved in sports as a career," she said. She is already getting a jumpstart on her career as a volunteer coach for the Hot Shot Basketball Team at Rosewood Park and the boys' varsity and junior varsity volleyball teams at Schurr High School. "I like giving back to the community as well as helping children and young adults find a passion for sports the way I did," said Cortez, explaining why she volunteers. "Sports benefits youths because it helps keep them active and off of the couch and teaches them responsibility and commitment that can be applied later in life." While big on sports, Cortez also has an appreciation for writing. English is her favorite subject and writing essays comes easy to her. "It's as though my fingers are an open faucet of ideas that can be typed onto a computer," she said. Cortez's hobbies are playing volleyball, softball, basketball and dancing to hip-hop.

2012 Pageant Participants



Amanda Marie Alvarado's passions are communicating and working with people, which is why she seeks a career in public relations. The Long Beach City College student is interested in working in the nonprofit sector, so she can do a job that makes a difference. "Working with a nonprofit organization and being its voice to get heard in the community is the job for me," she said. Alvarado currently practices her PR skills as a sales associate for both The Children's Place clothing store and for Vince Camuto Shoes, which are both located at The Citadel. "I enjoy being able to work one-on-one with customers and learning new responsibilities that can help me in my future," said Alvarado, about her jobs. Her community activities include serving as a volunteer at SEAACA, participating in the YES program and serving as an ambassador for the People to People student travel program. A former member of the Miss Commerce Royal Court, Alvarado served as 2010 Miss 4th of July. "It was one of my favorite memories," said Alvarado. Her hobbies are volunteering and spending time with her family.



AMANDA MARIE ALVARADO

Daughter of Jose & Yvonne Alvarado
19 years of age
Long Beach City College
5 ft. 7 in. tall
Black hair
Brown eyes

Selenia Ramirez manages her time between school and work. She is a full-time student at Pasadena City College, a main cashier for Old Navy and a cashier for McDonalds. "I think that motivation and having the determination to do it all is what keeps me going. Time management is part of it as well," said Ramirez, explaining how she balances her busy schedule. Her future goals are to earn a master's degree in counseling from UCLA or Berkley and become an elementary school counselor. She wants to become a counselor because she has a strong desire to help others, especially children. "I think it's very important for them to grow up with the correct guidance. This sets a good foundation for them to be successful," said Ramirez. Apart from school, Ramirez focuses on her two jobs, where she strives to provide good customer service. "Making customers happy completes my day," she said. "It makes me feel like a good person." Her community activities include participation in the Teen Club and Puente Club. When she does get a spare moment, Ramirez enjoys reading inspirational books and hand sewing.



SELENIA RAMIREZ

Daughter of Ruben Ramirez & Florida Ramirez
19 years of age
Pasadena City College
5 ft. 8 in. tall
Dark Brown hair
Dark Brown eyes

Jennifer Guadalupe Mendoza wants to help save lives and aspires to become an emergency room physician. "In high school, I took an elective class to become a first responder. The first two weeks of class, I was hooked," said Mendoza. "I love helping people the best way I possibly can. To have the knowledge to save people's lives, when they need you the most, is an indescribable feeling." Besides attending Cerritos College, Mendoza works in the drive-thru at Jack in the Box. "What I love about Jack in the Box is the customers--knowing that they left with a smile on their face and will be back really soon," Mendoza said. She is also a volunteer aide at Bell Gardens Intermediate, where she assists students with class work and projects. Musically inclined, Mendoza has been playing the flute since 6th grade, performing in her school's concert band and for her church choir. During her senior year in high school, she served as drum major for the marching band. "It taught me strength and leadership skills that I use to this day," she said. Mendoza's hobbies are writing and taking photographs.



JENNIFER GUADALUPE MENDOZA

Daughter of Cecelia Garcia & Juan Mendoza
20 years of age
Cerritos College
5 ft. 4 in. tall
Light Brown hair
Brown eyes

Brittany Betancourt's goal is to become a registered nurse at a cancer treatment facility for children. Her inspiration came from family members, including her grandmother, aunts and cousins who are breast cancer survivors. The epiphany came when she visited the Los Angeles Children's Hospital to see her niece who was diagnosed with childhood rheumatoid arthritis at the age of three. While there, she observed other children who were patients. "I got a chance to witness how strong and brave these children were and I would love to be a part of making them smile," said Betancourt, who also participates in walk events to benefit a variety of health issues, such as heart disease, arthritis and breast cancer. Betancourt is a full-time student at East Los Angeles College where she is taking dance classes in hopes of becoming part of a dance company, which builds on her participation as a youth on the Commerce Competitive Dance Team. Betancourt has also volunteered for City sponsored events and is a member of the Community Emergency Response Team.



BRITTANY BETANCOURT

Daughter of Josie Betancourt & Ron Jamieson
18 years of age
East Los Angeles College
5 ft. 4 in. tall
Blonde hair
Brown eyes

Unique Starlene Hernandez recently started the nursing program at East Los Angeles College where she is pursuing one of her dreams to become a pediatric nurse so she can work with children. Because she enjoys working with kids, Hernandez has volunteered in the City's Day Camp Program and currently serves as a Sunday school teacher at the Door of Hope Community Center. Hernandez is also considering an education in the culinary arts, possibly at Le Cordon Bleu College, so she can one day open her own bakery. "It started as a hobby baking a few cakes for people's birthdays, but then I really got into it because there are so many things you can do. Becoming a certified baker and opening my own bakery is another dream of mine." Growing up in Commerce, Hernandez participated on the Crush Volleyball Team, as well as the Day Camp Program, which she later worked in through the City's Youth Employment and Service Program before becoming a volunteer. Hernandez also works part-time at the Citadel's Perry Ellis store.



UNIQUE STARLENE HERNANDEZ

Daughter of Brenda Diaz & Joe Hernandez
19 years of age
East Los Angeles College
5 ft. 7 in. tall
Brown hair
Brown eyes

A big part of **Melody Gomez's** life has been dance. As a little girl, Melody had a bedroom set decorated with ballerinas. This bedroom set still reminds her of two of her favorite things: the color pink and her love for dance. While Gomez played recreational softball through the City's Parks and Recreation Department, dance was her calling. She has been a member of many City dance programs, including Recreational Jazz, Hip-hop, and the Commerce Competitive Dance Team. From there, she went on to join the Schurr High School Dance Team during her freshman and sophomore years. "My experience in these programs helped me learn the importance of teamwork, dedication, and leadership," she said. Currently a senior at Schurr, Gomez has focused her study on mathematics. She hopes this emphasis will help her achieve a career in accounting. "I love working with numbers and mathematics and feel that I would do well as an accountant," said Gomez, whose favorite class is trigonometry/pre-calculus. She hopes to attend California State University, Los Angeles.



MELODY GOMEZ

Daughter of Leticia Gomez & Salvador Gomez
17 years of age
Schurr High School
5 ft. 2 in. tall
Dark Brown hair
Green eyes



2012 Pageant Participants

JANET REGALADO

Daughter of Jairo Regalado & Erie Regalado
18 years of age
Bell Gardens High School
5 ft. 5 in. tall
Brown hair
Brown eyes



Janet Regalado is a senior at Bell Gardens High School where she spends much of her time volunteering. As a club member of the Health Occupation Students of America, she volunteers for blood drives and activities through the American Red Cross. Regalado also volunteers at St. Gertrude Church, where she helps with fairs and other activities, as well as assisting with Catechism classes that she teaches on occasion. Regalado is currently working in the City's Youth Employment and Service Program at the Commerce Senior Center. "It's been a great experience. I answer phones, do posters, and help serve food to the seniors. There's a little of everything to learn in this job and I like it." Regalado's career goal is to become a teacher for children with disabilities. "This isn't just a job I'm willing to have in the future; it's something I take pleasure in doing." Regalado also said that she loves visiting her grandfather at his ranch in Tepatitlan in Jalisco, Mexico. "The time I spend with my family is simply priceless."

ROSEMARY MARAVILLA

Daughter of Hector Jesus Maravilla
17 years of age
Montebello High School
5 ft. tall
Brown hair
Brown eyes



Rosemary Maravilla is a senior at Montebello High School where she volunteers as a teacher's assistant. She has lived in Commerce her whole life and has participated in many of the City's parks and recreation programs, including the Commerce Competitive Dance Team, which she was a member of for eight years. "I had the best time of my life when I was in dance because it's something I love and that I am good at. Being in the dance team helped me become focused and confident," she said. Maravilla said it motivated her to take on challenges and taught her to be responsible in keeping her grades up, learning to be on time and having a positive approach. According to Maravilla, she loves helping others, which is probably why her career goal is to become a homicide detective. "I want to bring closure and justice to the families that have been affected," said Maravilla, who was inspired by and enjoys the forensic science and investigation aspects of television shows like "The First 48."

ISAURA QUINTERO

Daughter of Mrs. Rosa Quintero & Mr. Alejandro Quintero
20 years of age
Cerritos College
5 ft. 3 in. tall
Brown hair
Brown eyes



Isaura Quintero jumped head first into college. "In high school, I just went to class but when I started attending Cerritos College, it seemed as if my whole life changed," said Quintero, who ran for and got elected as a Student Senator in the Associated Students of Cerritos College in Fall 2009. She then took on the position of Student Minority Leader representing the student body. She's also in Phi Theta Kappa, which is an international honor society, the International Student Association, and part of an organization called Project Hope, which is dedicated to increasing the number of underrepresented groups entering health careers. In her studies at Cerritos she's ventured into the sciences. "I found out I love biology and optometry, which is a great blend of the passions I have," said Quintero, who added that she is fairly certain she wants to become an optometrist. Quintero worked in the Transportation Department through the Youth Employment and Service Program in 2010 and currently works at her family's restaurant, El Charro, which is located in the City of Commerce.

KATHRYN DIANE SANDOVAL

Daughter of Candace Schweiger
18 years of age
Cantwell Sacred Heart of Mary High School
5 ft. 1 in. tall
Light Brown hair
Hazel eyes



A senior at Cantwell Sacred Heart of Mary High School, **Kathryn Diane Sandoval** plans to obtain a degree in occupational therapy and one day open her own facility in the City of Commerce. Sandoval said she always knew the medical field was the right fit, having bounced back and forth from possible career paths like veterinarian, nurse, physical therapist, doctor and dentist. "My brother had to visit an occupational therapist and I became intrigued with how the therapist worked with my brother and other children. From then on I knew exactly what I wanted to do." With school, a part-time job at Tilly's in the Citadel, and serving as a volunteer at Beverly Hospital, Sandoval has a challenging schedule. "Time management is key in balancing all that I do. School comes first, next the commitment I have to my job and in my spare time I volunteer. I give my all when doing each thing," said Sandoval who added that helping people is her main motivation. She is also a former varsity cheerleader and has performed in school musicals.

ALYSSA BRIANNA RUBIO

Daughter of Mr. Eliel & Mrs. Josie Rubio
17 years of age
Montebello High School
5 ft. 3 in. tall
Brown hair
Brown eyes



A senior at Montebello High School, **Alyssa Brianna Rubio** is in her third year as a cheerleader for the Oilers. Rubio said she learned her leadership and communication skills in the Commerce Crush Volleyball and Water Polo programs. While she enjoyed both sports, she was looking for something different when she became interested in cheerleading. "My older sister inspired me to try it and when I did it just clicked," said Rubio. As a cheerleader, Rubio has volunteered with her squad to teach younger cheerleaders in the Junior All-American Montebello Indians and the Bellflower Broncos cheerleading teams. Inspired by crime drama shows like Law and Order: Special Victims Unit, Rubio's career goal is to become a child psychologist or FBI profiler. "I really like working with kids. I also like the idea of working with victims to make them feel comfortable and let them know they aren't alone," said Rubio, who plans to go to Cerritos College and transfer to California State University, Fullerton to major in psychology with a minor in criminal justice.

JANNINE MANCILLA

Daughter of Ciro & Carmen Mancilla
20 years of age
East Los Angeles College
5 ft. 3 in. tall
Dark Brown hair
Dark Brown eyes



Jannine Mancilla is a budding environmentalist. "Since I was a little girl I knew I wanted to have a career that helped people. Reducing pollution and energy waste seemed like the perfect way to help people live longer and healthier lives," said Mancilla, who is in her first year at East Los Angeles College where she is studying to become an environmental engineer. She is in a club at school that raises student awareness of environmental issues and a group called Tree People, which plants trees in areas they are needed. Mancilla has also served as a volunteer at the Commerce Literacy Center since she was 14. "It makes me happy when parents tell me how much their child has improved in school because of the help I've given them." Mancilla is also pretty handy with a wrench. Her dad, a former mechanic, taught her to fix a flat and change the brakes on her car. "There's a lot I need to learn about cars but with my Dad's help I'm sure I'll be able to learn everything."



A MESSAGE FROM THE 2012 PAGEANT STEERING COMMITTEE

What a pleasure it is to be part of the 52nd annual Miss Commerce Pageant. We are honored that the City Council selected us to serve on the 2012 Pageant Steering Committee.

The pageant began back in 1961 and five decades later is still going strong. Each year the event gives young ladies in Commerce the opportunity to make a difference in the community. Participation promotes leadership, personal growth and comradery. We are proud to be offering this opportunity to our City's young women.

We commend our pageant participants for continuing this cherished tradition. We know your participation will be a positive experience contributing to your personal and professional growth. Good luck. It's been a pleasure working with pageant director Adolfo Marquez and the members of the Parks and Recreation staff this year. Together, we came up with new ideas and suggestions that we think will create a memorable experience for our participants.

We also appreciate the continued support we receive from civic and service organizations and individual volunteers. Additionally, the business community has been generous in providing donations, especially the Commerce Casino. Thank you all for contributing to the program.

Finally, we acknowledge our 2011 Queen and Royal Court. We have nothing but praise for the wonderful service they provided to the city. Thank you Miss Commerce Lesly Mendez, Miss Dodgers Shanese Shawntae Perea, Miss Galaxy Natalie Contreras, Miss Fourth of July/Miss Friendship Rocio Espinosa Ulloa and Miss Cinco De Mayo Janet Garcia for the great job you did this year. We hope your experience has left you with many happy memories. Take care, ladies. We wish you well.

Sincerely,

Sally Rivas-Alvarez, Chairperson, Sandy Cornejo, Member, Leilani Davis, Member, Lorena Griego, Member & Rosa Rodriguez, Member

2011 ROYAL COURT MEMORIES

2011 QUEEN & COURT



Left to right, Miss Fourth of July/Miss Friendship Rocio Espinosa Ulloa, Miss Dodgers Shanese Shawntae Perea, 2011 Miss Commerce Lesly Mendez, Miss Galaxy Natalie Contreras and Miss Cinco de Mayo Janet Garcia.

HER NAME IN LIGHTS



2011 Miss Commerce Lesly Mendez poses in front of the marquee at Steven's Steak House.

CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATED



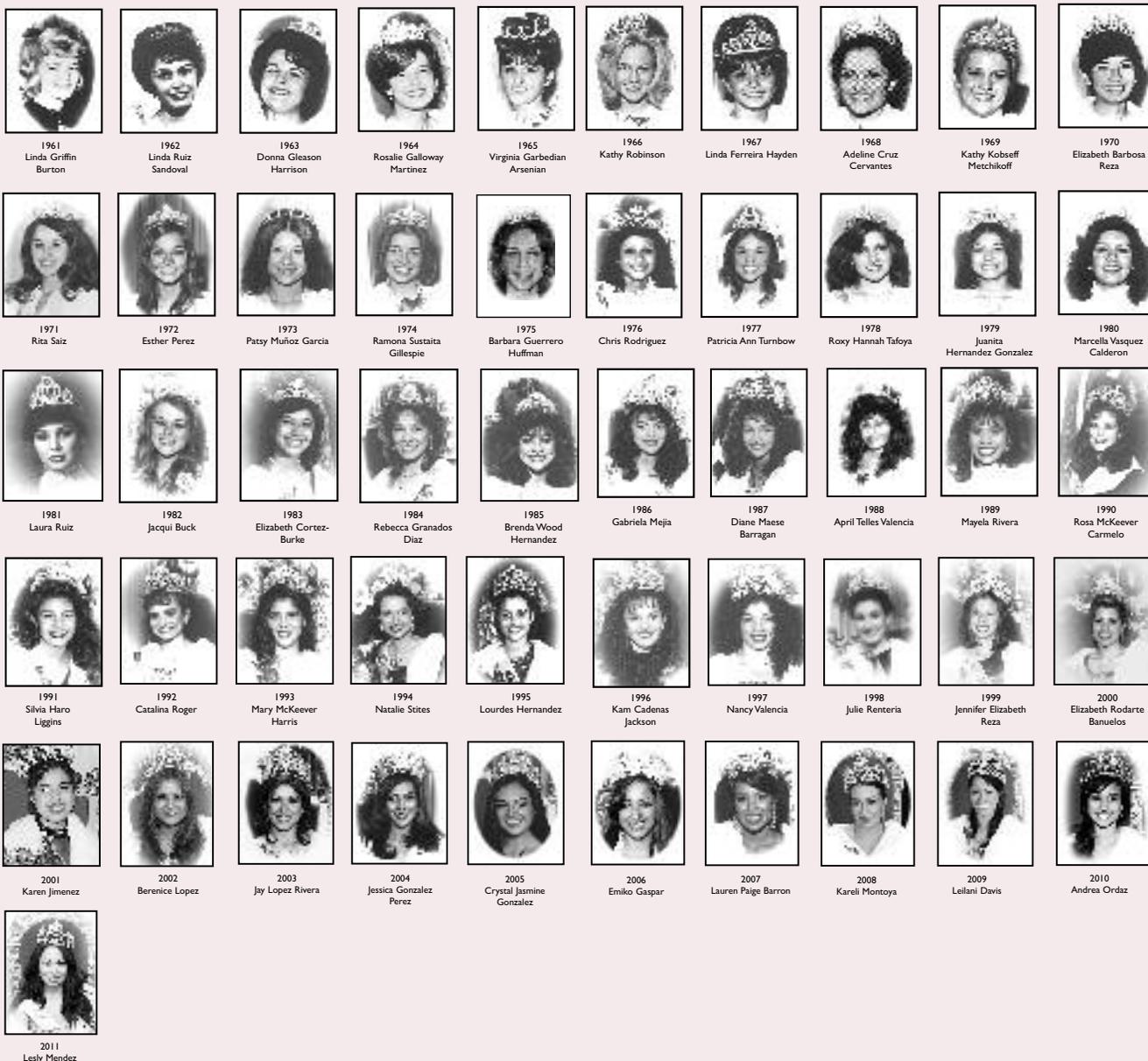
Miss Commerce and her Royal Court gathered to commemorate the Battle of Puebla at the Cinco de Mayo festival held May 1.

2011 YOUNG MAN OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to our 2011 Young Man of Year Julian Casillas and best of luck to the 2012 Young Man of the Year participants. They are Franklin Arroyo, Carlos Medina, Francisco Javier Salazar, Alfonso Mendez and Ernesto Covarrubias.

MISS COMMERCE QUEENS



COMMERCE CITY COUNCIL



Joe Aguilar, Mayor
 Tina Baca Del Rio, Mayor Pro Tem
 Robert C. Fierro, Councilmember
 Lilia R. Leon, Councilmember
 Denise M. Robles, Councilmember



The Public Information Office welcomes your story ideas, suggestions, and opinions. Deadline for submission is the first of each month for publication the following month. For more information, call 323•887•4447 or go to www.ci.commerce.ca.us

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RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

TRANSPORTATION

CONT. FROM PAGE 1



The Medi-Ride Program provides curbside service to get seniors and disabled residents to and from medical appointments.

system to get to their place of work, visit friends and family, to reach City facilities and events, or to shop at destinations like the East Los Angeles Shopping Center and the Citadel.

In addition, the buses feature a low floor design, making it easier for seniors, passengers with strollers and people with physical disabilities to board

and ride Commerce buses. All of the buses, which run seven days a week, are CNG fueled, which means they are cleaner burning, fuel efficient vehicles that reduce pollution and the City's fuel costs.

Transportation also services and maintains the City's vehicle fleet, which includes Public Safety and Code Enforcement patrol vehicles, maintenance vehicles, and passenger cars and vans used for City business.

For more information on the Medi-Ride Program or the City's free bus system, call the Transportation Department at (323) 887-4419 or visit the City's website at www.ci.commerce.ca.us/. For more information on youth, family or senior excursions, call Parks and Recreation at (323) 887-4434.

HOLIDAY CHEER

CONT. FROM PAGE 1

nuggets, mini corn dogs and pizza. There was also entertainment from the Commerce Employees Choir, a theatrical skit by employees Sigrid Hudson and Josue Martinez, and a visit from Santa Claus aka City employee Robert Real who gave brand new gift wrapped toys to children in attendance.

Other top contributors who gave \$500 included the Commerce Truck Stop, Enriquez Materials and Quilting, Lion Tank Line, Signature Flexible Packaging Inc., West Bay Imports and Zemarc. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Risk Management Bureau also donated more than 100 brand new toys.

Another noteworthy contributor was JDSU Printing Services who volunteered staff and donated fresh eggs, milk, meat and other food to the Holiday Cheer Program. In addition, the Library's Food

for Fines canned food drive in which Library card holders turned in cans to reduce or eliminate Library fines, netted canned goods equivalent to more than \$6,000 in fines.

The Community Services Department also coordinated volunteers who packaged 350 bags from the Library's Food for Fines donations and in kind donations estimated at a value of \$8,500 that were given to participating families. A total of 28 families were also adopted by local businesses, City Department employees and local organizations and given clothes, toys, and cash to pay for utility bills.

The City would like to thank and commend all of the generous individuals, businesses and organizations that volunteered their time or donated to the Holiday Cheer Program.



FEBRUARY DATES TO NOTE

1
 Senior Citizens Commission, 2:30 p.m.
 Housing Committee, 5 p.m.
 Traffic Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

2
 Parks and Recreation Commission, 6 p.m.

4
 Queen's Breakfast, 10 a.m.

6
 English Book Club, 6 p.m.
 Youth Advisory Committee, 7 p.m.

7
 City Council/CDC, 6:30 p.m., Senior Center

9
 Community Services Commission, 6 p.m.

12
 Lincoln's Birthday

13
 Lincoln's Birthday Observed
 City Hall and Libraries Closed

14
 Valentine's Day
 Beautification Committee, 3:30 p.m.
 I-710 Local Advisory Committee, 6:30 p.m.

20
 Washington's Birthday Observed
 City Hall and Libraries Closed

21
 City Council/CDC, 6:30 p.m., Senior Center
 Library Embajadores Meeting, 6 p.m.

22
 Washington's Birthday
 Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

25
 Miss Commerce Pageant

27
 Education Commission Meeting, 6 p.m.
 Read Across America, Central Library, 6 p.m.
 Spanish Book Club, 6 p.m.
 Adult Computer Class, 5:30 p.m.

28
 Library Commission Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
 Read Across America, Atlantic Library, 6 p.m.
 I-710 Local Advisory Committee, 6:30 p.m.

29
 Read Across America, Greenwood Library, 6 p.m.