

# DETECTIVE STANDS ACCUSED

## LAPD DETECTIVE ARRESTED FOR GRAND THEFT

By Damian Kelly

LOS ANGELES—Los Angeles Police Department Detective Ramon Alvarez was arrested on Monday, January 27 for alleged grand theft of money from a suspected narcotics location in L.A. According to an LAPD news release, Alvarez, a 25-year LAPD veteran who was assigned to the Gangs and Narcotics Division was serving an arrest warrant at the location when a fellow detective believed Alvarez had taken money from the area.

The detective immediately reported his suspicions to his supervisor and a search of Alvarez' vehicle was conducted. Money be-

lieved to belong to the narcotics suspect was recovered from Alvarez' vehicle.

Members of LAPD's Internal Affairs Criminal Investigation Division placed Alvarez under arrest for violation of Section 487 of California's Penal Code. According to the Legislative Counsel of California's website, Section 487 states that grand theft is when the money, labor, or real or personal property taken is of a value exceeding \$950.

Alvarez was booked into the LAPD's Metropolitan Detention Center at 180 North Los Angeles Street in Los Angeles. The detec-

tive's bail was set at \$20,000.

LAPD officials have advised and been in contact with prosecuting attorney offices regarding this arrest. Alvarez was immediately placed on administrative leave, pending the outcome of the criminal and administrative investigations.

In a statement, LAPD Chief Charlie Beck commented on Alvarez' arrest.

"I am extremely disturbed and shocked by the arrest, but heartened by the actions of the detective who immediately reported what appeared to be criminal behavior," Beck said.



LAPD Detective Ramon Alvarez was arrested for alleged grand theft on January 27.

Photo courtesy of Los Angeles Police Department

## LABONGE CALLS REDISTRICTING MAP "DISAPPOINTING"

By Damian Kelly

LOS ANGELES—Los Angeles City Councilman Tom LaBonge of District 4 has expressed disappointment with the draft redistricting map that was released for his area on Wednesday, January 25. District 4 includes, among other cities, Los Feliz and the Hollywood Hills.

The District 4 map is one of 15 maps that were drawn up by the 21-member Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission as part of a process where district boundaries are redrawn every 10 years to account for population changes in each of the 15 districts in L.A. Each commission member represents a district in L.A.

In a statement from his office, LaBonge said that the residents in District 4 participated in the public hearing held on Wednesday,

January 4, in Los Feliz and stated "loud and clear the importance of neighborhood integrity, the balance of diversity and the political representation of communities of interest in Council District 4." But they apparently were ignored by the commission, which LaBonge said disappointed him most of all.

LaBonge, a chairman for the Trade, Commerce and Tourism Committee, also said he believed the proposed redistricting map for District 4 would "weaken" the political representation of the Santa Monica Mountains and "fracture" the community of Hollywood among three L.A. City Council Districts. LaBonge, who has been a member of the L.A. City Council since 2001, also believed the "historic" core of his district

area (specifically the greater Wilshire area which includes the Miracle Mile, Larchmont Village, Windsor Square, Pan Pacific Park and Park La Brea) would be dissolved by the new district boundaries.

According to the L.A. City Council Redistricting Commission's website, redistricting is significant because the manner in which districts are drawn have the potential to determine a community's ability to elect the representatives of its own choosing. If possible, districts need to have an equal number of populations so that communities have equal access to political representation.

Seven public hearings will be held to allow the public to comment on the draft maps, with the first one taking place on Wednesday,

February 1, at 6:30 p.m. in the Wilshire Ebell Theatre located at 4401 West 8th Street. The second one will be held the following evening on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at Loyola Marymount University, in the Ahmanson Auditorium, located at 1 Loyola Marymount University Drive in L.A.

"I therefore encourage all interested residents and community leaders of the 4th District to attend the upcoming public meetings on redistricting and make their voices heard unequivocally on keeping their neighborhoods and communities of interest together," LaBonge said.

A full list of all seven public meetings can be found at [www.tomlabonge.com/news/story/733](http://www.tomlabonge.com/news/story/733).

## \$5,000 AWARDED TO DOGFIGHTING TIPSTER

By Rosana Clarkson

SANTA MONICA—On January 26, Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley announced that the Humane Society of the United States (H.S.U.S.) paid a reward of \$5,000 to a tipster who reported the alleged practice of dogfighting by an Antelope Valley couple.

44-year-old Jesse Jimenez and 41-year-old Yvette Jimenez were initially arrested on March 3, 2011 on suspicion of felony dogfighting and drug possession after the anonymous caller reported the alleged operation to authorities during February, 2011.

A search warrant was conducted at the accused individuals' desert community-based home in Lake Los Angeles, where deputies found 11 adult pit bulls—all with scars and recent injuries—three pit bull terrier puppies and a Chihuahua.

A female pit bull, who is believed to have given birth to several litters, was found with her teeth hand-filed down to the pulp in order

to breed her without causing injury to her partner. "Guiness," an 11-month old black-and-white pit bull mix, was also rescued during the bust. His new owner is a Santa Monica resident named Carissa Cole.

Police further found evidence of a dogfighting operation during the crack-down, including manuals on dogfighting and breeding, treadmills, hand-written logs on the animals' training (dating from the mid-1990's), a blood-splattered dogfighting ring and medical equipment to treat the animals' injuries.

Additionally, cocaine was found at the Jimenez residence, along with four children, ages one to 14, who were later taken into protective custody. The Fund Animals Foundation led rescue efforts for the confiscated animals. Though the anonymous informant of the alleged crime was eventually honored with a symbolic check, the tipster's name will not be disclosed, as part of H.S.U.S. tip line policy.

In a written statement, Cooley said, "It is my hope that anyone who becomes aware of this criminal activity [dogfighting] will use the L.A. County dogfighting tip line to help put these brutal criminals behind bars. Often, animal fighting is associated with a subculture of violence, gangs, drugs and gambling. This vile practice will not be tolerated in Los Angeles County."

Jesse Jimenez is slated to serve 365 days of county jail time. On November 30, 2011, he pleaded no contest to 31 felony counts, including dogfighting, willful animal cruelty and animal neglect; on the same date, co-defendant Yvette Jimenez pleaded no contest to one count of willful animal cruelty and two counts of felony dogfighting. She received a sentencing of three years of formal probation and restitution, and 274 days of county jail time.

The H.S.U.S. website describes dogfighting as a "sadistic contest in which

two dogs—specially bred, conditioned and trained to fight" are made to "fight each other for the spectators' entertainment and gambling." H.S.U.S. reports that the matches last on average of one to two hours, ending with one of the dogs not continuing to fight or being unable to continue. Often, the injuries inflicted on the animals are severe, even fatal.

A video on dogfighting has been uploaded by the H.S.U.S.'s Youtube channel at [youtube.com/watch?v=Q9rVV-PWJsk](http://youtube.com/watch?v=Q9rVV-PWJsk).

For those who wish to report illegal dogfighting, please call the H.S.U.S. Dogfighting tip line at 1-877-TIP-HSUS (1-877-847-4787). Callers are assured that they may remain anonymous and may even be awarded up to \$5,000 for any helpful information.

To learn more about the H.S.U.S. campaign to end dogfighting, please visit [http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/dogfighting/end\\_dogfighting.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/dogfighting/end_dogfighting.html).

## ACTIVE SANTA MONICA PROMOTES FITNESS

By Krystle Hudson

SANTA MONICA—The City of Santa Monica kicked off Active Santa Monica last week with Active Week. The event took place at the Memorial Park Fitness Center. It ran from January 23 to January 30. The fitness center is open to residents 16 and up.

Community Recreation Manager Kathy LePrevost discussed how Active Week began and could benefit residents.

"Active Santa Monica is a citywide fitness initiative that we launched here in January in the community to get people more active in Santa Monica and to encourage people to participate here at Memorial Park," said LePrevost in an interview with Canyon News.

Memorial Park Fitness Center is just one of the places Santa Monica residents can get fit and active. "What we will be doing is featuring programs throughout the city and Active Week at the fitness center is our first start," added LePrevost.

In February, there will be another activity held at the Santa Monica Swim Center. After having been closed for a number of weeks, it opened its doors again on Monday, January 30. "During the month of February, we're promoting some of the activities at the Swim Center and Biking facilities within the city," added LePrevost. The Memorial Park Fitness Center offers the following classes at the center: Group Fitness, Yoga Sculpt, and Abs Workout. The fitness room includes Life Fitness



Active Santa Monica promotes fitness and healthy living.

Photo courtesy of Facebook

Strength training machines, free weights and cardio machines.

There is no membership required to use the facility, though there is a \$3 entry fee per visit for residents and \$4 per visit for non-residents. Four week passes are also available as well as a cost of

\$24 for residents of Santa Monica and \$32 for all non-city residents. A parent's signature is required for the entrance pass if under the age of 18.

The fitness center is open Monday through Friday from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. Weekend hours are 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Memorial Park Fitness Center is located at 1401 Olympic Boulevard. Active Santa Monica promotes the well-being of the community through fitness, recreation, and a healthy lifestyle. More information can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/activeSM>.

## KREKORIAN TO CHAIR BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

By Damian Kelly

LOS ANGELES—Los Angeles City Council member Paul Krekorian is to head the Budget and Finance Committee after council committees were reorganized on Friday, January 27, by City Council President Herb Wesson. Krekorian, who will begin his new assignment on Friday, February 6, represents District 2. The swath of District 2 includes (among other areas) Studio City and Sherman Oaks.

Krekorian replaces fellow councilmember Bernard Parks of District 8, who had chaired the committee since 2003. Mitchell Englander of District 12 will serve as Vice President with Tony Cardenas of District 6, Paul Koretz of District 5 and Bill Rosendhal of District 11 rounding out

the committee as members.

In a statement from his office, Krekorian complimented Parks on his time as Budget Committee chair.

"For eight years, Councilmember Bernard Parks has led this committee with dedication, skill and vision. His fiscal discipline has helped keep the City afloat in incredibly stormy seas. All Angelenos are in debt to Bernard Parks for his service as Budget Chair," Krekorian said.

According to the City of Los Angeles's website, the five-member Budget and Finance Committee is authorized to review the mayor's proposed yearly budget in its entirety. The committee's other duties include reviewing expenditures of city funds, levying

taxes and fees (except city business taxes) and reviewing the city's debt financing procedures and activities.

Looking ahead to his new assignment as Budget Chair, Krekorian said he was well aware there would be "no simple fixes or easy solutions" to the city's budget deficit, which is estimated at \$150 to \$200 million. Krekorian, who has been a councilmember since 2010, said that how the city council and the residents of Los Angeles respond to this time of "crisis" would define Los Angeles for years to come.

"The work we do now can and must create a firm foundation upon which to build a strong future for our city," Krekorian said.

Krekorian previously chaired the Arts, Parks &

Neighborhoods Committee (now called Education and Neighborhoods) and will vacate the committee upon assuming his duties on the Budget & Finance Committee. The former California Assembly member said he was proud of what was accomplished in the Education & Neighborhoods Committee.

"I am very proud of the record of achievement that we established during my chairmanship of the Education and Neighborhoods Committee, and I am confident that the path forward for neighborhood councils is now bright. While I will no longer chair that committee, I will continue my commitment to a stronger neighborhood empowerment movement in this city," Krekorian said.

## WOMAN FATALLY SHOT AT HOLLYWOOD DINER

By Rosana Clarkson

HOLLYWOOD—On January 27, a fatal shooting occurred at the popular "Pink Pepper" diner in Hollywood.

The incident occurred on 1638 North La Brea Ave. at around 10 p.m., when three shots were fired into the diner, shattering patio glass

and striking a woman and a man who was with her; the two victims' relationship to each other is unclear.

The male victim, whose identity has not been released, has received surgery for his injuries and is

expected to survive; however, his companion, identified as 44-year-old Jitrujee Buatet, later died from her wounds, according to police. The suspects remain at large.

It was initially suspected that the shooters were two

males who drove away from the scene in a black Sedan, yet no information regarding the suspects has been confirmed.

No additional details regarding the possible motive behind the shooting is available as of press time.