



Erickson & Brown Funeral Home

Neddy Clark, Owner
Saida Perez, Funeral Director
FDR 4229
Lic. # FD756

661-765 - 4111
501 Lucard Street
Taft, CA 93268

MIDWAY DRILLER

\$1.50



SERVING TAFT AND THE WESTSIDE COMMUNITIES SINCE 1910

Thursday, January 13, 2022

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Two pedestrians suffer major injuries

Taft Police believe the two pedestrians struck by a car Thursday evening were in or very close to a crosswalk.

Sgt. Corey Beilby said the man and woman were walking eastbound across Sixth at Lucard when they were struck by a northbound car.

He said officers would be talking to witnesses and reviewing surveillance video from nearby businesses to determine exactly where pedestrians were when they were struck.

Beilby said the car that hit the pair was northbound in the number 2 lane when the accident occurred.

The car was driven by a 17-year-old unlicensed driver, he said.

Alcohol and speed are not believed to be factors in the accident, Beilby said.

Both victims suffered major injuries in the 5:33 p.m. accident. One was flown to a Bakersfield hospital and the other was transported by ground.

TUHS establishes security department

Taft Union High School's Board of Trustees voted Monday to approve the establishment of a district security department and a job description for a chief of security.

The move comes just three weeks before the district loses its school resource officer, a Kern County Sheriff's deputy assigned to the district.

When the department is established, the new chief will oversee the district campus supervisors in addition to many other tasks.

The job description approved by the board at a special meeting Monday morning will be required to have at least four years experience in law enforcement, as a school resource officer or in school safety management.

A bachelor's or master's degree in criminal justice, police science public administration, psychology sociology of a similar field is preferable.

The chief will be required to hold a Police Officers Standard and Training Certificate and be able to be licensed to carry a gun on a school campus.

Schools throughout Kern County have been looking for alternatives to school resource officers since the KCSO announced early last fall that all SRO contracts would be terminated on Jan. 31.

Sheriff Donny Youngblood says his department has a shortage of deputies for patrol duty and needs the SROS to move back to street duty.

Maricopa official wins award of merit

The Kern Council of Governments will honor 17 individuals and programs for making significant contributions to this area's quality of life through innovative, cooperative efforts during its annual Regional Awards Program.

One award will go to the Westside. Maricopa's assistant to the city administrator, Laura Robison is being recognized for her work in local government.

That event was canceled by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The awards will be presented on March 3 at Seven Oaks Country Club, 2000 Grand Lakes Ave., Bakersfield. The program starts with a reception at 5:30 p.m. and the program and a two-entree buffet starts at 6 p.m.

The cost is \$65 per person which includes a two-entree dinner buffet.

Reservations and payment are due by noon Feb. 28 by calling 661-327-1698 or by emailing vanessa@provconsult.com. No money will be accepted at the door.

Here is a complete list of winners:

2020
Community Involvement:

CONTINUED ON PAGE A2



Kern County firefighter at garage fire in the 600 block of Tyler Street early Sunday. See page A6 for another photo and story.

Omicron variant speeds COVID spread in Kern

Kern County Director of Public Health. Brynn Carrigan provided an update on the COVID-19 situation as the county undergoes another surge in cases caused by the omicron variant.

"Local COVID-19 related hospitalizations are increasing, but our ICU numbers are currently remaining relatively stable. We hope this is a sign that Omicron will cause less severe illness; however, hospitalizations typically trail increases in cases by a couple of weeks, so it is too early to know for sure," Carrigan said.

Kern County added more 5,000 cases over the weekend and another 1,143 on Tuesday. Taft has 10 more active cases as of Tuesday morning and now has 216 active cases.

Kern County's case rate has increased dramatically in the past week, health department spokesperson Michelle Corson said. It went from 58.6 per 100,000 this week from 15.2 one week ago one week ago.

Zack Scrivner, chair of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, said the surge is being felt among healthcare workers.

"We are seeing an increase in cases county-wide and an increase in cases among healthcare workers," he said Monday.

Carrigan said people need to take steps to

avoid becoming ill.

"With this recent increase in COVID-19 cases in Kern County, and the presence of the highly transmissible Omicron variant, it is imperative that we use as many layers of protection to prevent the spread of this disease. Individuals with chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart

disease or who are obese are at higher risk of severe complications from COVID-19," Carrigan said. "Even if you do not have underlying chronic conditions, it is imperative that we all keep our bodies healthy and resilient by eating a healthy diet, getting plenty of rest, and exercising regularly."



Taft High and Shafter's girls soccer teams play a match in heavy fog last Friday.



STARTING THURSDAY, JULY 1, 2021
West Side Family Health Care will open at
7:00 am Monday - Friday
Holiday and weekend hours will remain 10:00 am - 9:00 pm

NEW HOURS



West Side Family Health

100 E. North St. Taft, CA 92368
661-765-1935 • WSHCD.org



For information regarding classes, prices, registration deadlines, ages etc. please call 661.765.6677

