

SECTION  
**B**

The Bakersfield Californian

# LOCAL



**Marylee Shrider**

Contributing columnist

## Don't snuff out our personal freedoms

On a cool fall morning about 10 years ago, my husband puffed his last Camel, slapped a nicotine patch on his shoulder and never looked back.

Good thing, too. Had he not quit, the tendency by today's paternalistic busybodies to harass and ostracize adult smokers might have given him a heart attack.

California is apparently full of such meddlers, whose sensibilities are so delicate that the mere sight of a cigarette or the faintest whiff of tobacco smoke is all the reason they need to force their restrictions on others' freedoms.

Some of which, like smoking, are perfectly legal.

But legalities are irrelevant to the 12 buttinskies on the Los Angeles City Council, who voted Wednesday to continue the harass-and-ostracize trend, approving a "curb-to-curb" ban on smoking in city-owned parks.

On Tuesday, the busybodies in El Cajon were even busier than those in L.A., banning smoking in all public places where nonsmokers are likely to be, such as outdoor restaurants or walking down a public street.

But, hey, El Cajon smokers can still smoke if they want, say city officials.

They can smoke themselves silly in their own homes or backyards or patios.

Unless, of course, said backyards or patios are less than 20 feet from a common area like a pool or a laundry room.

In that case, the smoker should probably just cave in and quit or perhaps pack up and move.

I guess it wasn't enough for us Californians when, 12 years ago, we banned smokers from restaurants or, three years later, from bars — a ban which, at least in many of the smaller Bakersfield bars, remains largely ignored.

And it still wasn't enough in 2003 when smoking was banned from a number of California beaches.

Now, to protect ourselves and our children, we are told we must ban smoking from any outdoor area where people might congregate, even in areas where nonsmokers may step easily away from those engaging in distasteful, but legal activities — like smoking.

Similar ordinances are already in place in cities and counties throughout California, though not yet in Kern County. Supervisors Mike Maggard and Michael Rubio tested those waters in March, but, perhaps sensing a distinct lack of support on the issue, opted to let the matter quietly drop.

Good move. Freedom-loving local residents aren't ready to go that far. Not just yet.

There isn't a literate person alive who doesn't know that smoking is bad, that smoking smells and that smoking can kill you, which are just a few of the reasons I don't smoke.

We all know, too, that second-hand smoke is just as bad, killing thousands of nonsmoking Americans each year.

Even so, it's not my place to tell a local business owner how to run his business or to tell a stranger in a park, under a wide-open sky, to stop smoking. Instead, I can simply choose to do business elsewhere and keep my distance from the stranger. My health and their personal freedoms remain intact.

Smoking isn't the only legal-but-risky behavior around — more than a few innocents are killed by drunken drivers every year — but for some reason it's the only one that ignites an annual flurry of ordinances, bills and regulations.

There will likely come a day when smoking is illegal in the United States, but until that day comes it's still a choice.

A choice each of us is quite capable of making on our own. Marylee Shrider's column appears on Saturdays. Reach her at 395-7474 or mshrider@bakersfield.com.

## SATURDAY FORUM, B9

As Bakersfield grows, we need to be sure not to forget the children, our most important resource, writes hairdresser Jennifer Cecero.

### ON THE ROAD

## CHP warns of texting dangers while driving

BY JASON KOTOWSKI

Californian staff writer  
e-mail: jkotoski@bakersfield.com

Cell phone technology allows people to immediately contact each other from just about any location.

As helpful as such technology can be, it can also be a huge distraction. Text messaging, part of the cell phone phenomenon, has proven to be almost addictive to some teenagers.

And it may have played a role in the deaths of five teenagers in New York. According to The Associated Press, police say text messages were sent and received on Bailey Goodman's cell phone moments before her SUV collided head-on with a big-rig.

Goodman, 17, and the four passengers in her car, all recent high school graduates, were killed, AP said.

Locally, California Highway Patrol Officer Greg Williams said people need to keep all their attention on the road while driving.

Please turn to **ROAD / B2**



### CALIFORNIAN EXCLUSIVE

## Boy at home while burglar steals jewelry

BY FELIX DOLIGOSA JR.

Californian staff writer  
e-mail: fdoligosajr@bakersfield.com

Bradley heard the dowels that locked a kitchen window crack, and he jumped from his living room seat Thursday morning.

The 12-year-old hid in a bedroom closet as a burglar stepped into the northwest Bakersfield home and rummaged through drawers. The man stole about \$2,000 worth of jewelry.

After Bradley called his aunt from his cell phone and his mom's call rang unanswered in the kitchen, the burglar walked out the back door.

The whole thing lasted a few minutes. "Within five minutes of me leaving the house, the man broke in and was gone in less than 10 minutes," said the boy's mother, Jennifer. She declined to give her last name because the suspect has not been caught and she feared retaliation. "It's still hard to believe."

A man burglarized a house in the 10000 block of Michele Avenue on Thursday as a boy hid in the home, according to the Kern County Sheriff's Department and the victims. Bradley was not injured.

Please turn to **HOME / B3**

### INSIDE

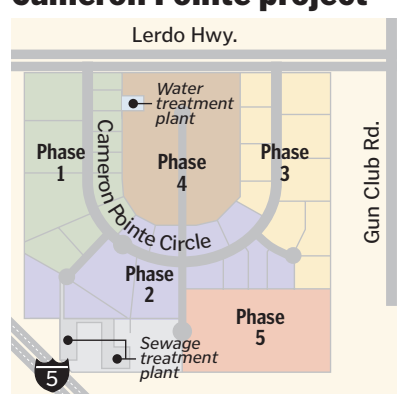
Police release drawing of suspect in a Tuesday robbery in southwest Bakersfield. **B3**

## Did you know?

Kern's public schools are the county's biggest single employer, providing 27,000 local jobs.

Source: Kern Economic Development Corp.

### Cameron Pointe project



Source: Dixie Ridge Town Center, Inc. THE CALIFORNIAN

### Californian exclusive

## Work under way on I-5 retail project

Desire to serve drives developer of 160-acre complex

BY KEVIN GERRITY

Californian staff writer  
e-mail: kgerrity@bakersfield.com

Mike Torabi enjoys watching the thousands of cars and trucks streaming along Interstate 5 northwest of Bakersfield. He pictures the pavement as a river and he's a simple fisherman casting a line that pulls in millions of bucks.

Torabi is the owner and developer of what he envisions as a 160-acre, \$120 million project called Cameron Pointe Town Center Plaza at I-5 and Lerdo Highway,

14 miles west of Shafter.

"One million square feet of retail," Torabi exclaims.

"Four hundred stores."

He's rolling now just like the trucks and cars on I-5.

"An RV resort park."

Torabi, who exudes the energy and enthusiasm of a man half his 58 years, has been preparing for the Cameron Pointe project since 1990 when he bought up hundreds of acres.

"He doesn't need the money," said

Please turn to **POINTE / B2**

## Reunion



AMY RYMER / THE CALIFORNIAN

Jeffrey "Jazz" McKinney hugs relative Rachel Meeks at the Meeks family reunion Friday — after he first shook her hand and Meeks' dad joked that since they are family, they should hug instead. Relatives Alice Meeks, left, of Kansas City, Kan., Yvonne Bass, center, of Kansas City, Mo., and Richadean McKinney, of Kansas City, Kan., also came to Bakersfield for the reunion.

# Embracing the family

### Fortified by their faith, 300 family members unite for first reunion

BY DREW PHILP

Californian staff writer  
e-mail: dphilp@bakersfield.com

From lynch mobs in 1920s Arkansas to doctors, lawyers and engineers around the world today, the Meeks family has overcome adversity.

The family said faith has helped them through tough times, and it has brought five generations and 300 family members together in Bakersfield this weekend for the first Meeks family reunion.

Family members have come from across the country, including Detroit, St. Louis and even The Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa, to be with the family.

"If it were not for the church we would not be having this conversation today," said Stanley Meeks, relaxing in a plush chair in the ballroom of the Hol-



Albert Meeks Jr., left, talks with Mark Meeks, center, and his mom, Alice Meeks, about the reading that he will give aloud during the Meeks family reunion banquet about his great-grandfather, Bryant Meeks, one of the seven children of Virgil and Frances Meeks.

iday Inn Select.

He said his father was the first black electrical contractor in California and earned his license in Bakersfield.

"The adversity comes to make you strong," he said. "You can use it as a stumbling block or a building block."

Please turn to **REUNION / B2**

**The All New 2007 BMW 3 Series Convertible.** January, check. June, check. The 2007 BMW 3 Series sets a new benchmark for how all other sport sedans will be judged. For four generations, the 3 Series has set the standard for pure driving performance in its class. The time has come for drivers to enjoy more. Come and experience the 2007 BMW 3 Series.

**BMW Ultimate Service™**  
Pay nothing, 4 years/50,000 miles. The most comprehensive maintenance plan (including wear and tear items) in its class.\*  
Brake Pads: \$0 | Brake Rotors: \$0 | Engine Belts: \$0 | Oil Changes: \$0 | Wiper Blade Inserts: \$0 | Scheduled Inspection: \$0

\*All BMWs come with BMW Ultimate Service and Warranty standard for 4 years or 50,000 miles, whichever occurs first. Roadside Assistance comes standard for 4 years. BMW Assist comes standard for 4 years on every Model Year 2007 5 Series, 6 Series and 7 Series vehicle and is available as part of the premium package on every Model Year 3 Series, Z4, X3 and X5. TeleService and Remote Door Unlock are available on all models with BMW Assist except for the Z4 and X3. ©2007 BMW of North America, LLC. The BMW name and logo are registered trademarks.

**THE NEW BMW of Bakersfield**  
5400 Gasoline Alley Dr.  
In The Bakersfield Auto Mall  
661.396.4040

3 Series Convertible  
bmwusa.com  
1-800-334-4BMW

The Ultimate Driving Machine®



An artist's rendering of the Cameron Pointe Town Center Plaza.

COURTESY OF DIXIE RIDGE TOWN CENTER INC.

## POINTE: Travelers may benefit most from plan

Continued from B1

Vince Connelly, general superintendent of M.S. Walker & Associates, Inc., the primary contractor on the project.

"The fact that he would want to do this is inspiring," Connelly said. In late February, the company broke ground on the first of five phases, a 32.6-acre job that covers the basic infrastructure. Connelly said Cameron Pointe is planned to have a private water treatment plant and sewer and storm drainage systems.

Right now, Cameron Pointe is not much more than underground concrete structures, stacks of pipes, bulldozers and brown dirt as far as the eye can see.

The county approved a specific plan for the project in 1994, but Torabi still has some zoning and environmental work to complete before he can secure building permits, according to Kern County Planning Director Ted James.

If all goes well, Connelly said, the project is expected to provide stations for firefighters and sher-

iff's deputies.

By the time the project is finished seven years down the road, Torabi said Cameron Pointe will provide 1,500 jobs and produce annual revenues in the neighborhood of \$150 million.

That translates to more than \$2 million in sales taxes for Kern County, said legislative analyst Allan Krauter.

At least 80 percent of those revenues, Torabi said, will come from outside Kern County.

Among other attractions, Torabi said his project calls for a hotel, motel, two gasoline stations and a 50-acre, high-end RV park with some 400 spaces.

Torabi described Cameron Pointe as a resort with rolling greens and styled landscaping where patrons can relax.

The location brims with potential, especially since the Buttonwillow Raceway Park and "Kern County's New Home to NASCAR" are in the picture.

Les Phillips, Buttonwillow's president and CEO, said travelers

will benefit most from the addition of Cameron Pointe.

Phillips said few options are in the way of high-quality amenities along the freeway. But the promise is there.

Except for the time when the raceway is closed for maintenance, Phillips said, "We have got something going on every day of the year."

Brian Olsen, vice president of the soon-to-be-completed NASCAR track, echoed similar sentiments about Cameron Pointe.

"Any improvements they do will help the traveler," Olsen said.

Torabi, who has built projects here and abroad during the past 28 years, said he's driven by the desire to serve.

Born in Iran, he was 2 years old when he lost his father. He was no stranger to poverty. But he refused to give up and eventually served as a jet fighter pilot. He takes exceptional pride in being a U.S. Air Force veteran.

"I live to fight," Torabi said. "I don't fight to live."

## REUNION: Family ready to organize its next gathering

Continued from B1

The family is so large that many of the members don't know each other. An entire system of registration is set up for the event, with a Web site devoted to wrangling the family members.

"I'm going to be meeting half (of the family for the first time)," said Kirk Hunt a descendant of Virgil Meeks.

In an embroidered Meeks family reunion T-shirt, Hunt told the story of his grandfather, who was forced to leave Arkansas in the early part of the century because of the color of his skin and the woman he was in love with.

His crime: He loved a white woman.

But he made his life a faithful one in Bakersfield, and grew his family into a successful one.

"The Meeks family has always



AMY RYMER / THE CALIFORNIAN  
Mark Meeks, center, introduces Richadean McKinney, left, from Kansas City, Kan., to Jeffery Hunt on Friday, the first day of the Meeks family reunion. Hunt's mother has the same first name as McKinney, and both women are Meeks.

had a positive impact on the world at large," Hunt said. "This crowd is a pretty accomplished group."

Jennifer Hunt said she garnered a strong work ethic from her family, and although the family's dispersed around the country, the bond is always strong.

"We've never met each other, but we know we're family," she said.

After this weekend the family is going to start planning the next reunion. On their Web site, family members can vote for where the next reunion should be held.

"The two most important parts of history is to tell us: this is what we should do, this is what we shouldn't do," Hunt said. "I don't think (family) realizes the impact of the stories they tell."

## ROAD: Danger not understood, police say

Continued from B1

Anything that distracts them should be turned off or put away.

"People take driving for granted," Williams said. "It's part of their lives and they don't understand the dangers of operating heavy machinery."

Both Williams and Bakersfield police Sgt. Greg Terry said they were unaware of accidents in Kern County that were specifically caused by texting, but said anything that takes a driver's attention off the road is dangerous.

Legislators have taken notice of the dangers of driving while on the

### GET READY

Under SB 1613, which goes into effect July 1, 2008, cell phone use by the driver of a moving vehicle will be prohibited unless the driver uses a hands-free device.

Following are other provisions:

**Drivers of commercial vehicles** will be allowed to use push-to-talk phones until July 1, 2011.

**Drivers will be** allowed to make emergency phone calls without using a hands-free device.

**Drivers of emergency response vehicles** will be allowed to use cell phones without a hands-free device.

Source: Office of Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger

phone. On July 1, 2008, the use of cell phones by motorists in California will be prohibited unless the driver is using a hands-free device.

"We all need to be defensive drivers," Terry said. "We need to look out for what's going on around us."

a strike, said SEIU spokeswoman Aimee Barajas, but it is a good indication of what the members think of the county's offer.

### Bakersfield Police Department lobby closed for 2 weekends

The main lobby of the Bakersfield Police Department at 1601 Truxtun Ave. will be closed to the

public this weekend and next for renovations.

The lobby will be closed today and Sunday and again on Aug. 11 and 12, according to a BPD news release. For those weekends, the public can obtain police services at the BPD's Westside substation at 1301 Buena Vista Road. The lobby of the substation will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on those days.

### Mediation hearings to begin between county, union

Contract talks between Kern County and the Service Employees International Union, Local 521 have broken down far enough that the two sides need a referee.

County and union sources both say mediation hearings between them will begin next week.

Members have flooded recent Board of Supervisors meetings to plead their case.

And union members voted this week to ask the Central Labor Council to support them if mediation ever breaks down and a strike is called.

The decision does not authorize

**BakersfieldLife**  
Magazine

Inside *The Bakersfield Californian* the third Saturday of the month.

## Obituary notices

### To our readers

*The Californian* provides a free death listing (no services, services pending or services scheduled) using information supplied by mortuaries. The in-depth notices that follow are paid obituaries and remembrances, available to families and the public; these listings must be purchased by 3 p.m. Monday through Friday and/or by 11 a.m. Saturday. E-mail us at obitphoto@bakersfield.com to be published in the next day's paper. Contact the classified advertising department at 395-7302. Full obituaries with photos are available on the Internet at bakersfield.com at 9 p.m. on the day before publication.

### No services

**Richard Wells Bleak**, 89, Tehachapi, Aug. 2. Kern River Family Mortuary, Oildale.

**Max Leon Mellies**, 64, Bakersfield, July 26. Kern River Family Mortuary, Oildale.

### Services pending

**Deltessa Bratcher**, 90, Bakersfield, Aug. 3. Jesse E. Cooley Jr., Funeral Services.

**Harvey H. Clevenger**, 91, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Basham Funeral Care.

**Billie Flatt**, 73, Bakersfield, Aug. 1. Mish Funeral Home.

**Roger Graham**, 50, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Mission Family Mortuary.

**Wesley Hale**, 60, Taft. Aug. 1. Mish Funeral Home.

**Everett J. Hoover**, 85, Bakersfield, Aug. 3. Greenlawn Mortuary.

**Johnathan David Anthony Kenon**, infant, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Basham Funeral Care.

**Ann Jouch**, 57, Bakersfield, Aug. 3. Basham Funeral Care.

**Hardit Singh**, 61, Bakersfield, Aug. 3. Greenlawn Southwest Mortuary.

**Albert Lee Walters**, 48, Arvin, Aug. 2. Arvin Funeral Home.

**Mary Williams**, 56, Bakersfield, Aug. 1 in Tulsa, Okla. Mish Funeral Home.

### Services scheduled

**Craig Daniel Beers**, 14, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Visitation 5 to 8 p.m. Aug. 6, Doughty-Calhoun-O'Meara Chapel, funeral service 9 a.m. Aug. 7, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church. Doughty-Calhoun-O'Meara Funeral Directors.

**Vincenza "Jenny" Jean Davies**, 84, Stallion Springs, July 24. Funeral service 1 p.m. Aug. 3, Kingdom Hall, Tehachapi. Wood Family Funeral Services, Tehachapi.

**Marjorie M. Davis**, 63, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Private services. Basham Funeral Care.

**Melody Lynn Davis**, 47, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Private services. Basham Funeral Care.

**Anthony H. Garcia**, 83, Bakersfield, Aug. 3. Visitation 10 to 10:45 a.m. with rosary at 10 a.m. and Mass at 11 a.m. Aug. 6, Our Lady of Guadalupe, interment at Hillcrest Memorial Park. Basham Funeral Care.

**Jose Guerrero**, 33, Delano, Aug. 1 in Bakersfield. Visitation 5 to 8 p.m. with rosary at 6 p.m. Aug. 7, Delano Funeral Home; Mass 9 a.m. Aug. 8, Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church. Delano Funeral Home.

**Irma Lou Huston**, 70, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Graveside service 9 a.m. Aug. 6, Hillcrest Cemetery. Doughty-Calhoun-O'Meara Funeral Directors.

**Ana Maria Nieto**, 51, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Visitation 4 to 8 p.m. with wake at 7 p.m. Aug. 5, Basham Funeral Care; graveside service 10 a.m. Aug. 6, Union Cemetery. Basham Funeral Care.

**Rosemary Nixon**, 63, Bakersfield, Aug. 2. Visitation 2 to 8 p.m. Aug. 7, Peters Funeral Home; graveside service 10 a.m. Aug. 8, Wasco Memorial Park. Peters Funeral Home, Wasco.

**Donald Lee Tolle**, 74, Bodfish, July 26. Funeral service 11 a.m. Aug. 4, First Baptist Church, Lake Isabella. Sierra Mortuary & Funeral Home, Lake Isabella.

**Bertha Mae Weaver**, 95, Lake Isabella, July 29. Memorial service 11 a.m. Aug. 10, Mt. Mesa Church of Christ, Lake Isabella. Mish Funeral Home.

### Wesley Lee Hale

May 14, 1947 - Aug. 1, 2007

Wesley was born to Marvin Eugene Hale and Lola Mae Hale in San Angelo, TX. He moved to Taft, California when he was 2 years old. Wesley graduated from Taft Union High School in June 1966 and married Roberta Haase shortly after. He worked for Hale & Sons Construction as a crane operator for over 20 years.

Wesley is preceded in death by his parents, Eugene and Lola Hale; and he is survived by his wife of 40 years, Roberta Hale; son, Scott Hale (Jodi); daughter, Kristy Hale-Stubblefield (Jake); 3 granddaughters, Kelsi Hale, Kallie Stubblefield, and Morgan Hale; brother, S.E. Hale and family; and numerous other family members and friends.

For those who wish to celebrate his life, please join us at the family home: 417 Shasta St., in Taft, CA, on Sunday, August 5th, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

www.dignitymemorial.com  
DIGNITY MISH Funeral Home-Oildale  
www.bakersfield.com/obits

### Edmond Demond Smith

March 7, 1975 - July 22, 2007

A memorial service for Edmond Demond Smith, 32, resident of Bakersfield, CA, will be held on Saturday, August 4, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., Rising Star Baptist Church, Bakersfield, CA, 3421 Wilson Road.

Edmond attended the local schools. He was the oldest of three children. Edmond was deeply devoted to his family and friends. He was a loving care taker for his daughters. He leaves to cherish his precious memories, a wife, Janika Mackins-Smith; daughters, Rayneisha Smith and Sydney Bailey; mother, Debra Germany; two brothers, Johnny and Stephon Smith; three sisters, Tina, Marshelle, and Ednesha Smith, all of Bakersfield, CA; he also leaves to cherish two special aunts, Maryann and Faye; five close friends, Loren, Johnny, Kelvin, Brutus, and Donovan. Edmond also left a host of nephews, nieces, and loving relatives. He will be truly missed by all those who knew and loved him. For additional information call (661) 631-2825.

Services Entrusted to:  
Beloved Care Funeral Services  
www.bakersfield.com/obits

### Anthony Garcia

Nov. 18, 1923 - Aug. 3, 2007

Visitation for Anthony Garcia will be held at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church on Monday morning, August 6, 2007 from 10:00-11:00 a.m. with the Rosary recited at 10:15 a.m. Mass of the Christian Burial will begin at 11:00 a.m. Interment will follow at Hillcrest Memorial Park.

Anthony, better known to all as Tony, was born November 18, 1923 to Ventura and Eneida Garcia. Tony was raised on a dairy in Chino, California with 13 brothers and sisters. Tony married Dorothy Joan Ford of New York City in 1948. Together they had 3 daughters, Nancy Shubin, Lucy Ann Fund and Kathleen Joan Richards. Tony and his family moved to the Greenfield area in 1949 when he began his dairy business. Dorothy then went to be with the Lord on November 7, 1992.

Tony was loved very much by his family and friends because of his gentleness, kindness and giving spirit. He also had a huge heart and the gift of gab. He had a smile and warm hello or a joke for everyone. He knew no stranger. He suffered much in the last few years but now he is resting in the hands of the Lord. He will be missed by many. In his later years, Tony married Mila Garcia. For additional service or floral delivery information, please contact Basham Funeral Care at 873-8200.

Basham Funeral Care  
www.bakersfield.com/obits

### In Loving Memory of Thelma Jean Lacertoso

May 1, 1927 - Aug. 4, 1997



Mom, ten years ago today you left to go play cards with the angels. I miss you as much now as I did when you left. Love and will always love you, Mark

www.bakersfield.com/obits

**BASHAM FUNERAL CARE**

"Dignified and Affordable Without Compromise"

**873-8200**

Traditional Service.....\*\$1,995  
Direct cremation.....\$895  
(Actual Price - No hidden costs)

Basic Burial Service.....\$1,540  
Caskets starting at.....\$290

**COMPLETE FUNERAL SERVICE** including a Digitized 20 Gauge Steel Casket. Includes visitation, register book, memorial folders, casket floral spray, and a service in our chapel your church or a service at either Hillcrest, Greenlawn, Union Cemetery, or any other Local District Cemetery.

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

**\$2,985**  
Hablamos Español  
FD #1065

John & Ruth Ann Basham

3312 Niles Bakersfield www.bashamfuneralcare.com

"Commitment to Excellence"

Dignity **MISH** Funeral Home

**661-399-9391**

Onsite Crematory & Preplanning Available  
FD#1065

expand his world.

When they see you read, they'll show an interest too.

Subscribe today  
**392-5777**

The Bakersfield Californian  
www.bakersfield.com  
More than before.

# Charges unlikely in toddler's death, authorities say

BY JASON KOTOWSKI  
 Californian staff writer  
 e-mail: jkotowski@bakersfield.com

It's unlikely charges will be filed in the death of a toddler who was backed over in an east Bakersfield neighborhood Thursday evening, authorities said Friday.

Johnathan Kennon, 15 months, died at Kern Medical Center after he was struck by a car in which his grandmother was the passenger, California Highway Patrol Officer Greg Williams said.

The CHP will submit the case to the District Attorney's office for review, but it appears to be an accident.

The driver of the 2006 Chrysler

300 that hit Kennon was Charity Ochoa, 30, of Bakersfield. Investigators believe Ochoa was backing out at about 2 mph when Johnathan was struck.

Williams said he's seen many similar incidents over the course of his 27-year career.

"I don't know how you completely avoid something like this,"

Williams said.

Johnathan was hit in an alley behind his grandmother's home in the 1600 block of Flower Street, according to police reports. The grandmother, Herlinda Luna, said the child was covered in blood when his mother ran to him after the accident.

Williams said parents need to

keep a constant watch over their children, especially around vehicles.

But he also said something like Thursday's incident can happen in a matter of seconds and it's a tragedy that happens regularly around the country.

In January, two toddlers were accidentally run over by relatives

in separate incidents.

Ronald Higgins, 21 months at the time, suffered severe head trauma after his father backed up his Chevrolet Suburban and struck him. Domenico Delatorre, 2, suffered minor injuries when his grandmother backed up her vehicle and hit him, according to police reports.

## Drawing released of robbery suspect

The Bakersfield Californian

The Bakersfield Police Department is asking for the community's help identifying a suspect believed to be involved in Tuesday's home invasion robbery in the 6300 block of Tobago Court.

Detectives have obtained a composite drawing of one of the suspects, a BPD news release said.

The suspect is described as a clean-shaven Hispanic man in his late 30s, 5 feet, 8 inches tall, with brown eyes and a thin build. He was wearing a white wool cap and a white T-shirt, the news release said.

There were three other suspects who are only described as Spanish-speaking men, the news release said.



Suspect

The men spoke Spanish throughout the robbery.

Various items were taken from the residence, but a motive for the robbery has not been confirmed. The investigation is ongoing.

Anyone with information about the robbery or the suspects is asked to call the BPD at 327-7111 or Detective Martin Heredia at 326-3953. Anonymous and confidential information can be provided through Secret Witness at 322-4040.

## HOME: Man rang doorbell before break-in, mom says

Continued from B1

"Jewelry is jewelry," Jennyfer said. "My son is OK and that's what's important."

At about 8 a.m., Jennyfer dropped off her son at his grandmother's house as she went to her legal secretary job, the mother said. The boy was home alone.

A few minutes after she left, the doorbell rang as the boy was watching television.

"He was taught not to answer the door for strangers," Jennyfer said.

Bradley peered through the living room blinds and saw the man walking back to his car. He saw a little girl in the backseat of the man's silver Honda Civic.

A few minutes later, the man was breaking the locks of the kitchen window, Jennyfer said.

The boy ran to the closet in the master bedroom.

The burglar moved bottles of oil, a plant and vase on the kitchen counter as he stepped over the sink.

Bradley nervously called the first number on his cell phone — his aunt — then called his mother.

"I didn't think there was a burglary," Jennyfer said. "It's a good neighborhood."

Jennyfer sped back to the house after she called the home and there was no answer.

After hugging her son, she called 911.

The man is described as a Hispanic, 5 feet, 9 inches tall, in his 20s, with short hair and wearing a white t-shirt and baggy dark jeans.

"It's just unreal," Jennyfer said. "The guy parked on the street can be the guy who breaks into your house. It's that simple."

## Get involved

**Today**

**Third annual Access Weekend**, informational event to increase awareness about people with disabilities, highlight services and organizations, today and Sunday, First Presbyterian Church, 1705 17th St. 395-9419, ext. 43.

**Upcoming**

**Alliance Against Family Violence & Sexual Assault**, advocate training, 6 to 10 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays through Sept. 11, Alliance Outreach Office, 1921 19th St. \$30 materials fee. 322-0931, ext. 121.

**Delano Neighborhood Partnership**, community meeting, 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Community Connections Center, 1842 Norwalk St., Delano. 721-7036.

**Kern County Board of Supervisors**, 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tuesday, County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave.

**Stop the Violence**, citizens group formed to help eliminate gang violence, 6 p.m. Tuesday, Bakersfield Police Activity Center, 301 E. Fourth St. 472-2637 or 861-9300.

**34th St. Neighborhood Partnership**, community meeting, 9 a.m. Wednesday, Kern County Museum, 3801 Chester Ave. 326-3051.

**Indian Wells Valley Collaborative**, community meeting, 10 a.m. Wednesday, 825 N. Downs St.,

Suite A, Ridgecrest. 760-375-4357.

**East Kern Collaborative**, community meeting, 2:30 p.m. Thursday, 15662 K St., Mojave. 824-4118.

**Greenfield Collaborative**, community meeting, 9 a.m. Thursday, 5400 Monitor St. 837-3720.

**Kern County Planning Commission**, 7 p.m. Thursday, County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave.

**Wasco Union High School District**, 7 p.m. Thursday, 7 p.m., Main Campus, 1900 Seventh St., Room 2 Science, Wasco.

**Bakersfield Branch NAACP**, advocating for improvements to our educational system, gang violence and social injustices, 9 a.m.

Aug. 11, St. Peter Restoration Community Christian Ministry, 510 E. Brundage Lane. 322-8370.

**MoveOn.Org**, political action committee, 7 to 8:15 p.m. Aug. 11, 11909 Palm Ave. Reservations required. Bring a side dish, drink and chair. 565-8834.

**Taft Planning Commission Meeting**, 6:30 p.m. Aug. 14, City Hall, 209 E. Kern St., Taft.

**Wasco Union School District**, 7 p.m. Aug. 14, District Office Board Room, 639 Broadway, Wasco.

**Light the Night**, team captain kickoff, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Aug. 15, Rusty's Pizza, 6675 Ming Ave. Web site www.lightthenight.org/cca or 800-960-2002.

## Public safety

**COURTS**

**Grandparents accused of taking child get new trial date**

A new trial for the grandparents accused of stealing their grandson is set for Aug. 13.

Robert and Bonnie Embrey, who had custody of Travis, are charged with a felony count of child stealing in violation of court-ordered visitation. They took the boy to Arizona from 2004 to 2006 without telling his mother, who had court-ordered visitation.

The dissent of one juror led to a mistrial in June. Eleven others believed the Embreys to be guilty. If convicted, the Embreys could face up to three years in prison.

**CRIME**

**High-speed chase leads to arrest of shooting suspect**

A Bakersfield shooting suspect was taken into custody Thursday after a high-speed chase on Rosedale Highway.

Seth Edwards, 29, was booked into the Central Receiving Facility on suspicion of possession of a loaded gun, evading and resisting arrest and a parole violation, according to a Kern County Sheriff's Department news release.

An off-duty sheriff's sergeant was returning home from SWAT training at 10:20 p.m. when he saw a grey El Camino parked in a lot at Rosedale Highway and Allen Road, the news release said.

The sergeant recognized the vehicle from an earlier broadcast and knew the driver, Edwards, was wanted by the Bakersfield Police Department for a July 22 shooting, as well as a robbery that had occurred in Sacramento and for a parole violation.

When the sergeant approached the car, Edwards drove off and a pursuit followed that reached speeds of more than 80 mph, the news release said. Edwards crashed into a light pole near Verdugo Lane and ran from the car with a gun in his hand.

Responding deputies chased him

and caught him in a residential neighborhood a short distance away, the news release said. The gun was no longer visible and Edwards fought with deputies as they took him into custody.

The handgun was later found a short distance from the crash site in a parking lot that Edwards had run through, according to the news release.

**Three arrested on suspicion of burglarizing two homes**

Police arrested three men accused of burglarizing two homes within the past week.

Camilo Rodriguez, 21, and Daniel Rivera, 18, were arrested on suspicion of two counts of burglary and conspiracy to commit a crime, according to the Bakersfield Police

Department. Marcos Picasso, 19, was arrested on suspicion of burglary, receiving stolen property, possessing burglary tools and a dangerous weapon, police said.

The suspects are accused of burglarizing a home in the 10 block of Beech Street on July 27 and a home in the 100 block of Beech Street on Tuesday.

Police arrested the suspects after a resident reported them driving in a suspicious truck in the 600 block of M Street on Thursday.

The license plate matched a vehicle possibly involved in one of the robberies.

Officers stopped the truck, arrested the men and Lisa Gonzales, 18, on a warrant for using drugs, according to police.

To report suspicious activity, call 661-327-7111.

**New TV Listings**

Every day inside Eye Street.

- Nearly double the channels listed.
- More accurate.
- Easier to use.

The Bakersfield Californian  
 www.bakersfield.com  
 More than before.

**Peking Palace**

Selected to be on *The Bakersfield Californian* recommended Dining List for excellence in quality service, atmosphere & moderately priced.

**4 Star Food**  
 Moderately Priced • No Long Waits

★★★★  
 by food critic Pete Tittl

**Open 7 Days** Lunch: 11:30-2:30 p.m. Dinner: 4:00 - 9:00 p.m. • Friday & Sat.: Open 'til 9:30pm

**872-9686**

**5600 AUBURN** Corner of Fairfax & Auburn

**Two-Yard Delivery Now Available**

Rock • Sand • Ready-Mix

For More Info. Call  
**E.A. SHIELDS • 325-5969**  
 Open Daily 161 Quantico Ave., Bakersfield

**Keith Chiropractic**

Formerly Graham Chiropractic

Most insurances accepted, easy cash plans available

Practicing In Bakersfield For Over 6 Years

Specializing In:  
 Family Care  
 Sports Related Injuries  
 Total Body Health

Same Great Convenient Location & Hours

Courtland Keith D.C., C.C.S.P. • 1601 New Stine Rd. • 397-3179

**Kern County Golf Courses**

Come Play 18 Holes \$26 per person (Includes 18 Holes & Cart) Mon. - Fri. Excludes Holidays

North Kern 399-0347 northkerngolf.com  
 Kern River 872-5128 kernrivergolf.com  
 Buena Vista 398-9720 bvgoilcourse.com

One coupon up to 4 people - Not valid for tournaments - expires 04/08

**Pain Relief Now Available**

Introducing **Central California Pain Management**

Specialized in Treating  
 Neck Pain/Back Pain  
 Sciatica  
 Chronic Pain  
 Cancer Pain

Ashok M. Parmar, M.D.  
 Fellowship Trained in Interventional Pain Management

2005 17th Street  
 Bakersfield, CA 93301  
**Call 324-PAIN (7246)**

Epidural • Nerve Block • Facet Block  
 Radio Frequency • Spinal Cord Stimulator

**AUGUST Incentives Drop Prices**

<p>'07 Mercury Milan  <b>\$17,645</b>                  Only 1 at this exact cost: 606357                  MSRP \$19,445                  Burke Discount -\$800                  Sale Price \$18,645                  Factory Rebate -\$1,000                  YOUR NET COST \$17,645  <b>\$1,800 SAVINGS OFF MSRP!</b></p>	<p>'07 Mercury Mountaineer  <b>\$24,448</b>                  Only 1 at this exact cost: 113517                  MSRP \$27,995                  Burke Discount -\$500                  Sale Price \$27,495                  Rebate &amp; Bonus -\$3,007                  YOUR NET COST \$22,845  <b>\$3,507 SAVINGS OFF MSRP!</b></p>	<p>'06 Lincoln MKZ AWD  <b>\$31,910</b>                  Only 1 at this exact cost: 600251                  MSRP \$34,410                  Burke Discount -\$1,500                  Sale Price \$32,910                  Factory Rebate -\$1,000                  YOUR NET COST \$31,910  <b>\$2,500 SAVINGS OFF MSRP!</b></p>	<p>'06 Lincoln Town Car Sig  <b>\$34,180</b>                  Only 1 at this exact cost: 619064                  MSRP \$43,180                  Burke Discount -\$2,000                  Sale Price \$41,180                  Factory Rebate -\$7,000                  YOUR NET COST \$34,180  <b>\$9,000 SAVINGS OFF MSRP!</b></p>	<p>'06 Lincoln Mark LT  <b>\$36,565</b>                  Only 1 at this exact cost: 103810                  MSRP \$43,565                  Burke Discount -\$2,000                  Sale Price \$41,565                  Rebates &amp; Bonus -\$5,000                  YOUR NET COST \$36,565  <b>\$7,000 SAVINGS OFF MSRP!</b></p>	<p>'06 Lincoln Navigator  <b>\$51,623</b>                  Only 1 at this exact cost: 2722360                  MSRP \$57,130                  Burke Discount -\$3,000                  Sale Price \$54,130                  Rebates &amp; Bonus -\$2,507                  YOUR NET COST \$51,623  <b>\$5,520 SAVINGS OFF MSRP!</b></p>
--	--	--	---	---	--

**Jim Burke** LINCOLN MERCURY 837-6400 OPEN EVERYDAY WEEKNIGHTS TIL 9PM

Dave Gates Top Salesman Dave Gates Gary Perreira

**AUTOMALL** 5310 GASOLINE ALLEY DRIVE

Skip Cowser Mike Houser On Duty This Weekend

Financing on approved level 0 or 1 Ford Credit & insurance. Prices are plus applicable tax, license, doc & tire fees, plus alarm system if retained by customer. Offers end 8-5-07.