



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**TWO MEMBERS** of the Girl Scouts of Orange County Troop 8288 deliver holiday gift bags to residents as they kick off the season of giving by visiting the Meals on Wheels Orange County Adult Day Health Care Center in Santa Ana on Wednesday.

## Partnership brings holiday cheer early to O.C. seniors

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas at Meals on Wheels Orange County's Adult Day Health Care Center in Santa Ana. The seniors at the center got a visit from Girl Scouts of Orange County on Wednesday afternoon as the girls ushered in the 2023 giving season. Decked out in festive reindeer antlers along with the club's standard green vests, they spent the afternoon handing out holiday gift bags.

"Today we are starting our annual gift program, which brings cheer to our participants," said Gio Corzo, vice president of home and care services at Meals on Wheels O.C.

The Girl Scouts decorated the gift bags and tags to give to Meals on Wheels O.C. as part of their community service project. Meals on Wheels O.C. will use the items for its Holiday Gift



See **Cheer**, page A3 **GIRL SCOUTS** with Troop 1172, including Allie, center, color in holiday illustrations with seniors.



**ENRICO LOPEZ-YAÑEZ** leads the first half of the rehearsal for the Pacific Symphony's "Music of Star Wars" concert at the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa Friday.



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

## Pops maestro Lopez-Yañez joins Pacific Symphony

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

There are many expectations for any new conductor, but donning an Anakin Skywalker costume isn't typically chief among them.

Pacific Symphony's new pops conductor, Enrico Lopez-Yañez, isn't a typical conductor, however. Lopez-Yañez made his debut at Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall over the weekend with a two-night performance of the "Music of Star Wars," which included themes from John Williams and Michael Giacchino.

"On stage in the second half, I dressed up in my Anakin Skywalker outfit and we pulled up audience members from the house and I led them in a lightsaber Jedi training kind of moment," Lopez-Yañez said.

The Pacific Symphony was founded in 1978 as a collaboration between Cal State Fullerton and north Orange County community leaders led by Marcy Mulville. Music director Carl St. Clair has led the Pacific Symphony for the past 34 years, and the organization remains dedicated to performing inspiring, entertaining and diverse programming. Pacific Symphony has been the resident orchestra of the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall since 2009, with a repertoire that includes orchestral master-

See **Pops**, page A3

## Pot retailer sues as permit delayed

Unopened High Seas in Costa Mesa says despite intensive efforts to meet its requirements, city hasn't OK'd final step.

BY SARA CARDINE

For the past two years, the High Seas cannabis boutique has been a dream in the making.

Massive saltwater aquariums in its spacious lobby and showroom lend an oceanic theme to the chic interior, where delicate lighting plays off of empty jars and cases intended to house cannabis flowers and elegantly packaged product.

Orange County real estate investor and developer Rachel Xin, who maintains majority ownership in the business, said she saw possibility in the 7,215-square-foot space at 1921 Harbor Blvd., formerly occupied by a Barbecues Galore and a training gym.

"I understand what piece of property makes sense. And I understand location, location, location, like real estate investors always mention," Xin said in a recent interview. "Through my search and research on the area and also based on the opportuni-

See **Permit**, page A2

## Fountain Valley provides homeless update

City officials support City Net outreach and engagement services as Central Cities Navigation Center gets set to open.

BY ANDREW TURNER

It was about a year ago that Fountain Valley made the decision to join Garden Grove and Westminster in a partnership that would provide dedicated shelter beds for all three cities.

The collaboration is leading to the Central Cities Navigation Center, a \$7.5-million renovation project transforming a property built in 1964 at 13871 West St. in Garden Grove into a homeless shelter with 85 beds. Thirteen of those shelter beds will belong to Fountain Valley. Access will be available via a referral-based system.

A groundbreaking event for the project was held on June 13. Christy Le, a homeless liaison analyst for the city of Garden Grove,

See **Homeless**, page A2

## ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Courtesy of Luciana's Ristorante

**LUCIANA'S RISTORANTE IN DANA POINT CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF NONA'S RECIPES**

PAGE A8

# \$50M gift to establish new brain health center at Hoag

BY LILLY NGUYEN

With what is described to be one of the largest donations in the hospital's history, Hoag announced Monday it will be putting a \$50-million gift from philanthropist Richard H. Pickup toward a brain health center.

The center, which will be named after Pickup, will be located in the lower campus of Hoag. Construction is expected to begin in the spring, and the funds will go toward construction of new facilities, expanding and adding new services

and programs and staffing. The center is proposed to focus on a "whole family" approach that will help with prevention, early detection and care for cognitive impairment and mental health disorders, officials said.

"Alzheimer's is a disease that affects the whole family. When we make a diagnosis, it affects at least two to three other people at a minimum. The tragedy is that the patients don't always accept it. They continue to want to drive and

See **Hoag**, page A5



Courtesy of the Hoag Hospital Foundation

**A RENDERING OF** what the Richard H. Pickup Center for Brain Health will look like on Hoag's lower campus. The center will be established with the \$50-million gift from philanthropist Richard Pickup.

## PERMIT

Continued from page A1

ty zoning for cannabis, we secured this piece of property."

To make the enterprise happen, Xin teamed up with Michael Moussalli and Matteo Tabib, co-founders of Se7enLeaf, a licensed manufacturer, processor and distributor of cannabis products already doing legal business in Costa Mesa under Measure X, passed in 2016.

Together, the trio embarked on a journey with the city's planning department to make High Seas a reality, submitting an application in August 2021.

They sailed through the pre-application process, obtained a business license and were granted a use permit by the Costa Mesa Planning Commission, after submitting security, parking and traffic plans. They secured a state retailer license and got a building inspector to sign off on \$4.5 million in renovations at the site.

By Sept. 26, the dispensary was ready for business. The final leg of the journey involved securing a cannabis business permit (CBP) from the city.

"It should have taken a day or two," Xin recalled. "Everything the city required we submitted."

Instead, all they got was radio silence.

Despite multiple calls, texts and emails to city staff, Xin said she received no communication about what was holding up issuance of the permit.

She, Moussalli and Tabib had hired employees, begun marketing High Seas on social media and were daily fielding questions about an opening. The pressures, and costs, were mounting with each passing day.

After an investment of nearly \$10 million, Xin estimates the business is losing about \$111,000 each month it remains shuttered, including the payment of partial wages to retain employees.

Their hands tied, the business partners on Oct.

18 filed a petition in Orange County Superior Court asking a judge to compel the city to issue the outstanding permit.

"The city has essentially left High Seas' application for a CBP in administrative limbo, as the city has not denied High Seas' application, which would trigger its right to an appeal of that decision," the document reads.

During a Costa Mesa City Council meeting Tuesday, Xin was joined by several High Seas employees and contractors, who asked in public comments for city leaders to intervene.

High Seas' Assistant General Manager Kevin Ferrer was hired to help find, train and support staff but instead just calls employees with weekly updates on the ongoing closure.

"I text or call or talk to them in person and let them know we can't start this week and we don't know why. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't afraid for my future, my family's future and my livelihood," the Costa Mesa resident told the council.

"I'm here to ask tonight, to anyone who has any say here at all to help us. We need answers and we need help opening our doors."

City Atty. Kimberly Hall Barlow at Tuesday's meeting acknowledged a legal complaint was filed.

"There are issues," she said of the application. "I spoke with the attorney for High Seas on Oct. 20 for over 15 minutes, including offering a meeting with him. When I spoke to him again on Oct. 23, he said they were not interested."

Xin acknowledged such a conversation took place but said Barlow offered no explanation for why the city was withholding the permit.

When asked whether there might be any legal or criminal issues causing the delay, not unheard of in an industry where the line between legal and questionable activities is not always clear, she said she was not aware of anything.

"They passed the back-

See **Permit**, page A5

## HOMELESS

Continued from page A1

said the center is expected to be operational in June 2024. It will accommodate men, women and couples, and it will be equipped with a kitchen and dining area, laundry facilities, lockers and outdoor space.

The services to be provided include individualized case management, substance use counseling, mental health support, transportation and assistive efforts to develop life skills and seek employment.

Without its own homeless shelter, Fountain Valley primarily relied on access to the Yale Navigation Center in nearby Santa Ana.

Omar Dadabhoy, deputy city manager and community development director of Fountain Valley, noted the importance in the city having its own beds lies in being able to get unhoused individuals the shelter and services they desire in a

timely manner.

"It's a huge lost opportunity if we don't have a bed available for them," Dadabhoy said. "This would guarantee us a certain amount of beds that we could take our population to and get them services."

Garden Grove will have 50 beds and Westminster's allocation will be 22 beds at the center, which is located in an industrial area of town between Newhope Street and Harbor Boulevard. The shelter will have capacity for 100 beds.

Fountain Valley Mayor Kim Constantine said she was grateful for the three-city partnership to bring about the navigation center.

"There's a lot there that is to do," Constantine said. "They have to get this all remodeled. They have to get the systems up and running, staff, all the resources and everything. We're so very grateful. ... The city of Garden Grove, we were very happy and willing to go in on this with

the city of Westminster. ... I think it's going to be really worth waiting for."

Orange County had an unhoused population of 5,718 in the most recent Point-in-Time count in 2022. Fountain Valley had 38 unsheltered individuals in that report, which represented an increase from 28 in 2019. Garden Grove had a homeless population of 391, while Westminster's stood at 159.

Fountain Valley city officials said 71 homeless individuals have been transitioned into housing since March 2022, when the city contracted the outreach and engagement services of City Net.

Fountain Valley Police Chief Matt Sheppard said he hears from community members about the local population of unhoused individuals.

"They're frustrated with homeless persons on the street corners, they're frustrated with them in front of businesses, they're frustrated with them interfer-

ing with their customers, they're frustrated with just seeing homeless, but we have to be careful how we go about working with our unhoused population," Sheppard said.

"We can't criminalize it, because it's not a crime to be unhoused. The community's frustrated because a lot of the tools have been taken away from us — psychiatric facilities ripped out from underneath our feet years ago, the criminal aspects of what occurs to you when you commit a crime. There's not a lot of penalties that are sticking with people."

Sheppard has advocated for an approach of compassion and outreach, noting that the contracted services with City Net have helped. During a presentation to the City Council on Tuesday, Sheppard shared data that showed a slight decrease in calls for service to the police department from 2022. City Net facilitated 40 street exits last year and 31 so far in 2023.

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Models used for illustrative purposes.



**A BUILDING** at 13871 West St. in Garden Grove is being converted into the Central Cities Navigation Center, which is expected to be operational in June 2024.

File Photo

"When you see that when you have a problem area and you can dedicate and put resources towards it and help facilitate getting people connected with resources, connected with housing, and you clean up that area without criminalizing individuals, I think that's a key to success," Sheppard added. "That's what the city of Fountain Valley has been doing. We try as much as we can to not arrest people."

Garden Grove Mayor Steve Jones said addressing the issue of homelessness "has been a key initiative for the city of Garden Grove

for several years that has been strongly supported by our city council and community. By establishing strong partnerships, we've been able to leverage resources that prove more effective in finding solutions. "Our Central Cities Navigation Center is a collaborative effort with the cities of Fountain Valley and Westminster to offer the stability of permanent housing, employment and personal health and wellness on a broader and more effective scale."

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Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**GIRL SCOUTS** deliver holiday gift bags to seniors at the Adult Day Health Care Center in Santa Ana on Wednesday.

**CHEER**

*Continued from page A1*

Program, “Gifting A Year of Smiles,” which provides a gift donated by generous individuals and a special holiday meal to older adults.

“This service project started back in July, and the girls had the idea to decorate bags because Meals on Wheels has a gift giving program but they need to wrap the gifts,” said Shellie Massick, life skills manager, Girl Scouts of O.C. “So the girls made the bags and they advocated for the gift-giving program out to their friends and family, and we spent the summer stuffing bags and getting ready for this event.”

Many of the seniors who benefit from Meals on Wheels O.C. are isolated at home, and visits to the organization’s Adult Day Health Care Center in Santa Ana is one way the seniors can find friends and activities. The center, which also has locations in Anaheim and Buena Park, offers care for adults living at home who need day-time assistance for health and safety.

“Think of us as a senior center, but with a health-care component,” said program director Yanina Camarillo. “We have a nursing staff here, we have a social work department, we have a therapy department, so they get their exercise every day, and it is all based on a care plan.”

Partnerships with organization like Girl Scouts of O.C. are another way the center helps seniors.

“It takes the stress away and brightens their day,” said Camarillo. “It is bringing the outside in.”

The Girl Scout mission is to build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. Shelley said community service projects are a priority for Girl Scouts and an impactful way to show them they can make a difference in Orange County.

“I think it really taps into their own personal values,” said Massick. “They realize that we are a community, and there are

**“It makes us feel really good that we are helping them and doing something for a really good reason.”**  
— Delaney, 9

some things that we need fixing in our community, and they’re not powerless. They have the ability to make a difference and to advocate for things that they believe in.”

All Girl Scouts aged 5 to 18 are encouraged to “take action” through community service opportunities, and besides passing out holiday gifts, the girls also sang Christmas carols and made holiday crafts with the seniors. Scouts Elsie and Delaney, both 9, also read a special Christmas story aloud to the seniors gathered at the center.

“The story was based on Rudolph, kind of, but it took a twist,” said Elsie.

“The story was basically about reindeers that got sick on Christmas, but the hot cocoa healed them,” Girl Scout Chiara, 9, chimed in.

The girls said they look forward to their own holiday traditions at home and were happy to help bring some early holiday cheer to the seniors.

“It makes us feel really good that we are helping them and doing something for a really good reason,” said Delaney.

The seniors were also happy to have the Girl Scouts, with one gentleman in a wheelchair asking to be wheeled to the front of the room to thank them. Camarillo translated as the man spoke in Spanish.

“We are super appreciative of the Girl Scouts of Orange County for coming out and making it a special day,” Camarillo said. “Any time that we have visitors they really enjoy it.”

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**UCI Health**



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**POPS**

*Continued from page A1*

works and the music of today’s contemporary composers.

So far, Lopez-Yañez said he has felt warmly welcomed in his new role and hopes to balance bringing a fresh take to the Pacific Symphony while continuing to honor its traditions.

“I am very excited that people have been so welcoming in embracing some of my new ideas and my new approach to things while still trying to embrace what has worked so well for so long,” Lopez-Yañez said. “I think that is always a challenge for any new conductor coming into an organization.”

Born in San Diego and a UCLA music student, Lopez-Yañez is also the principal pops conductor for the Nashville and Dallas symphonies. The 34-year-old is an accomplished composer and arranger, with experience conduct-

ing for a wide-range of performers, including Patti LaBelle, Itzhak Perlman, Nas, Kelsea Ballerini, and Portugal the Man. He is the 2023 recipient “Mexicanos Distiguídos Award” for his advocacy for Latin music.

“I have a show coming up this season at Pacific Symphony called ‘Latin Fire,’ and the first half of that show features arrangements that I did along with trumpet player José Sibaja” said Lopez-Yañez.

As the artistic director and co-founder of Symphonica Productions, LLC, Lopez-Yañez creates programs with the intention of reaching new audiences, and he is becoming well known for his unique style of audience engagement and ability to fuse orchestral music and entertainment.

“I think a lot of my ideas that I brought even in the first weekend that were accepted were less traditional than what a lot of orchestras have done or are doing,” said Lopez-Yañez.

Before each performance this past weekend for example, Lopez-Yañez hosted a ‘Cocktails with the Conductor’ event, which gave audience members a chance to connect with Lopez-Yañez and musicians. Lopez-Yañez is determined to bring light-heartedness and joy to orchestral performances, and he set the tone this weekend for his season with the Pacific Symphony.

“Pops is one of the most simple and accessible ways to connect to a vast audience and a less traditional Symphony-going audience, mainly because ‘pops’ is such a catchall term,” said Lopez-Yañez. “All that it really means is every genre of music ... non-classical music, but also sometimes it includes classical music.”

Lopez-Yañez said he is looking forward to being in Orange County with the Pacific Symphony this season, which includes a performance with Latin and jazz trumpeter Arturo Sandoval on Feb. 16 and 17,



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**POPS CONDUCTOR** Enrico Lopez-Yañez leads rehearsal of “Music of Star Wars” concert at the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa Friday.

Lyle Lovett on March 8 and 9 and viral sensations Ben Rector and Cody Fry on May 10 and 11.

“The opportunity for orchestras like the Pacific Symphony is to really serve

the community by representing all styles and genres of music and to serve the musical interests of that particular community,” said Lopez-Yañez. “The most important part of our

mission is serving the community of Orange County.”

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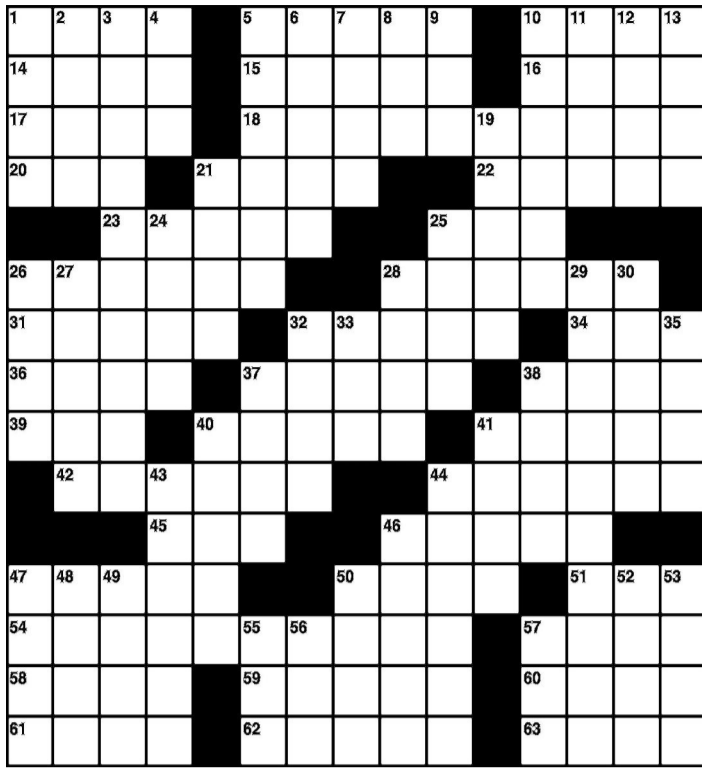
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**THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE**

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

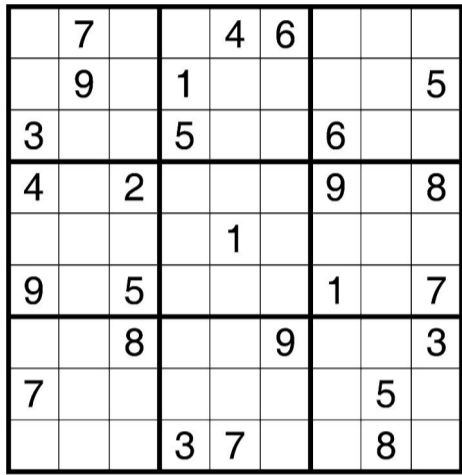
- ACROSS**  
 1 Picked up the tab  
 5 Waterlogged  
 10 “ \_ well that ends well”  
 14 Sherbet flavor  
 15 Grand or upright  
 16 Early boatbuilder  
 17 American \_ ; MA’s state trees  
 18 Light up  
 20 As quick \_ wink  
 21 Patella’s place  
 22 Johnny Cash’s “A Boy \_ Sue”  
 23 Sobber  
 25 Actor/director Gibson  
 26 Oil & vinegar bottles  
 28 Coarse-toothed tool  
 31 Assists  
 32 Forehead beads  
 34 Nickname for Margaret  
 36 Cry of dismay  
 37 Actor James \_  
 38 Game played with mallets  
 39 Peach stone  
 40 Valleys  
 41 Hard to please  
 42 Moderate red shade  
 44 Washington or Stewart  
 45 \_ flash; instantly  
 46 Less adorned  
 47 Superior to  
 50 \_ on balls; walk  
 51 Peculiar  
 54 No matter what  
 57 \_ on; incite  
 58 Rob Reiner’s dad  
 59 Uncanny  
 60 Asian language  
 61 Palette shades  
 62 Helsinki folks  
 63 Business review website
- DOWN**  
 1 \_ bargain;



**SUDOKU**

By the Mephram Group

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [sudoku.org.uk](http://sudoku.org.uk).



**For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A7.**

- |                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| defendant’s deal             | 9 _ Kippur            |
| 2 Feels crummy               | 10 Historical records |
| 3 Spotless                   | 11 Good garden soil   |
| 4 _ Plaines, IL              | 12 Overdue            |
| 5 Backbones                  | 13 Get rid of         |
| 6 Edmonton ice hockey player | 19 Bumbling           |
| 7 Storm or Gordon            | 21 Baby foxes         |
| 8 Wildebeest                 | 24 Elected            |

- officials: abbr.  
 25 Hamm & Kirshner  
 26 Fellow  
 27 Ancient artifact  
 28 National League team  
 29 Part of a contraction  
 30 \_ corgi; small dog  
 32 Shoe part  
 33 Misery  
 35 Artist Francisco  
 37 “There \_ Crooked Man...”; Fonda film  
 38 Untainted  
 40 Eatery  
 41 Charge to ride  
 43 Competitors  
 44 Huge groups of people  
 46 Bathroom feature  
 47 Curved beam overhead  
 48 Actor Bridges  
 49 Shrek, for one  
 50 Most bike-friendly Swiss city  
 52 Twofold  
 53 Faucet problem  
 55 ABC followers  
 56 Garland  
 57 Animal enclosure

Tribune Media Services

**PERMIT**

Continued from page A2

ground check,” she said of Moussalli and Tabib. “As far as the personal relationship with Michael and Matteo, they have my entire confidence to say they have done nothing illegal. Nothing on their record could potentially affect High Seas’ process.”

Barlow said Thursday Gregory Palmer, another attorney from firm Jones & Mayer who handles Costa Mesa legal matters, communicated the reason to the plaintiff’s attorney and was preparing an official notice for delivery Monday.

Electing not to comment on any discovery made by the city, Barlow argued issuing a cannabis business permit is not simply a signing off but one last chance for the city to review applications in their entirety.

“It’s very much a discre-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**RACHEL XIN** outside High Seas cannabis boutique in Costa Mesa, which was ready for business in September but is missing a final permit. The issue is at the center of a lawsuit against the city filed Oct. 18.

tionary decision,” she said. “It’s everything in [the city’s] ordinance, everything in the conditional use permit conditions of approval and everything in its administrative regulations that has set out the basis for the determination of each license at each phase.”

Xin said her only wish is to open High Seas’ doors.

“Every day we don’t open the damage is piling up,” she said. “The sun still rises, it still comes down, but money is bleeding into the water. I want a resolution that can benefit all the parties — the city, our business, the community and our employees.”

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**HOAG**

Continued from page A2

do things, and it’s about getting the family educated and getting them the resources they need to deal with these behaviors but to do it in a dignified way,” Dr. Aaron Ritter, the director of the Memory & Cognitive Disorders Program at the Pickup Family Neurosciences Institute, said in an interview.

Ritter said the significance of being able to establish the Richard H. Pickup Center for Brain Health is that it allows the hospital to put brain health at the forefront.

“Neurology’s often on its own. It’s not usually integrated with the family and internal medicine structure, so it’s about having the family, the internal medicine and the primary care [teams] together on the same page,” he said. “It’s the idea of ‘Do we need to still do a colonoscopy when they have advanced dementia?

Is that the right option?’ or ‘Should we do this orthopedic surgery, but ...’ Hoag has developed into a really comprehensive healthcare system ... that starts with obstetrics all the way to focusing on neurological diseases that affects people later in life.”

Ritter noted that Orange County in particular faces an aging population. The “graying” of the county has been observed for decades and, according to a report by the California Department of Public Health in 2021, those 55 and older with Alzheimer’s will increase by 122%, and people 65 and older with the disease will increase by 136% in Orange County by 2040.

“We know people are living longer because we’re making so many advances in other fields but haven’t really been doing that in neurology and dementia in specific,” Ritter said. “Orange County has an aging population, and we’re starting to see some

breakthroughs in Alzheimer’s. By putting this at the forefront with the resources, we can respond proactively. A gift like this makes that possible.”

In a statement announcing the gift, Hoag confirmed the donation was in part influenced by Pickup’s familial health history. His brother lived with dementia until his passing. Pickup also donated \$15 million to the hospital for the Pickup Family Neurosciences Institute in 2017.

“Hoag is making great strides in the understanding of brain health and Alzheimer’s disease. They are on the cutting edge, but there is still so much that is unknown about the brain,” Pickup said in the announcement. “I trust that the passionate experts at Hoag will advance this area of medicine and give people, beyond Orange County, a place they can turn to and trust.”

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**A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE**

# When a day of the week is next or last

If it's Wednesday and you went to the dentist six days ago, did you go last Thursday? Or just Thursday? What if your appointment is six days in the future? Would you say you're going next Tuesday? And if you're talking in

pointment 11 months ago, would you say that was last November?

Now imagine you're the listener, not the speaker. If your friend says in October she went to the dentist last November, would you



assume it was 11 months prior or 23 months prior? And if she says she has an appointment next Tuesday, would you assume that's the nearest Tuesday or the one after that?

The words "next" and "last" are trouble. Consider this reader email sent to longtime Atlantic and Boston Globe language columnist Barbara Wallraff and published in her 2002 book "Word Court": "I am writing this note on a Wednesday. In my mind, next Tuesday is six days away and next Thursday is eight days away. To my wife, next Thursday is tomorrow."

Before I saw this, I figured there were two ways to interpret "next" when it modifies a day of the week. Either it means the day soonest to come, which would mean that 24 hours after Wednesday is indeed next Thursday, or it means

the one after that — that on Wednesday, tomorrow is this Thursday, six days in the future is this Tuesday and in 13 days comes next Tuesday. But this Wallraff reader apparently had a third take: "next" means a day that follows the beginning of a new week, presumably on Sunday.

So what's right? What do "next" and "last" mean in these contexts? The answer, I regret to inform you, is that there is no answer.

"In 'next' I think I detect the handiwork of the same folks who decided that Sunday should be not only the first day of the week but also half of the week end," writes Wallraff, who acknowledges there's no clear rule. She recommends this way of looking at it: "The 'next' in the phrase typically [refers] to next week. Never, not even on Wednesday, is 'next

See **Word**, page A7

**MAILBAG**

# City's new library book policy calls fascism to mind

Many thanks to Patrice Apodaca for shining a bright light on the dark side of Huntington Beach politics ("No matter what they call it, they're banning books," Daily Pilot, Nov. 5). She rightly points out that librarians are skilled professionals who deserve our respect and appreciation. The majority four of the seven council members continue to push agendas and policies that the vast majority of Huntington Beach citizens vehemently oppose. Apodaca is right that these repressive policies (including this book-banning folly) will only serve to galvanize the majority of citizenry against them. I am confident H.B.'s next election will restore sanity to city governance. In the meantime, we need to publicly call them out on their repressive and unpopular policies.

**James Dowling**  
Huntington Beach

As Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart opined with regard to pornography, "I know it when I see it." And I know a book ban when I see it; that is precisely what we're witnessing with the appointment of 21 Huntington Beach residents, with no required expertise in literature or library science, to review book purchases made by the Huntington Beach Public Library. Let us leave trained professionals — librarians — to make decisions on book purchases and the proper placement of those books.

**Ben Miles**  
Huntington Beach

I have resided in Hunt-

ington Beach for 61 years. Age is a factor that prevents me from running the 10K and 5K races that I used to run. What I do have left is experience. On a trip to Berlin I saw the pit where books were burned. Book banning is the same thing. Over 5,000 books have been banned nationally in this country.

Under the guise of protecting children from sex and other subject matters, books such as "1984," "Animal Farm" and "Fahrenheit 451" have been banned. This is an attempt to force someone else to your way of thinking, which is Fascism. This is what the conservative four members of the Huntington Beach City Council are attempting to do. I doubt if any of these council members have read these books, otherwise, why would they have such objections. The only way to let the con four know that they are out of touch with the majority is to vote no on their proposed charter changes and when the time comes vote them out of office. Fascism was defeated in WWII and there is no need for it to be reestablished here.

**Richard C. Armendariz**  
Huntington Beach

## Banning gun shows is fine

It was two steps forward and now one large step backwards for gun control advocates in Orange County last week (Judge overturns statewide ban on gun shows,

See **Mailbag**, page A7



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<b>Corn Chowder</b> Fresh corn, applewood smoked bacon	<b>Lobster Bisque Soup</b> Northern Australian lobster, sherry wine, diced chives
<b>Caesar Salad</b> Chopped hearts of romaine, herb croutons, shaved manchego	<b>Bungalow Salad</b> Greens, hearts of palm, feta, olives, red onion, bay shrimp, tarragon vinaigrette
<b>Butternut Squash Raviolis</b> Sage brown butter, pistachios	<b>Bungalow Prawns (Five dollar supplement)</b> Spicy cocktail sauce

**ENTRÉE SELECTIONS**

**Tier 1 | Fifty nine dollars per guest**

- Pan Roasted Turkey Breast**  
White & dark meat, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, house made stuffing, turkey gravy
- Blackened Wild King Salmon**  
Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, avocado relish, honey jalapeno beurre blanc
- Pasta Primavera**  
Linguine pasta, roasted fennel, yellow squash, celery, carrots, marinara sauce
- Braised Short Ribs**  
Slow braised in a Cabernet veal stock, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, braising jus

**Tier 2 | Sixty nine dollars per guest**

- Prime Rib of Beef**  
Au jus, creamy horseradish, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, broccolini
- Prime Rib of Beef & Pan Roasted Turkey Breast Combination**  
Whipped Yukon gold mashed potatoes, house made stuffing
- Prime Filet Mignon**  
Eight ounce prime filet mignon, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes
- Miso Marinated Chilean Sea Bass**  
Soy glaze, coconut rice, stir-fried vegetables, mushrooms, lemongrass ginger beurre blanc

**Tier 3 | Seventy nine dollars per guest**

- Prime Bone-In Rib Eye**  
Sixteen ounce prime bone-in rib eye, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes
- Northern Australian Lobster Tail**  
10 ounce tail, drawn butter, grilled lemon, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes

**DESSERT SELECTIONS**

<b>Berries and Ice Cream</b> Fresh seasonal berries, vanilla bean ice cream	<b>Pumpkin Cheesecake</b> House made whipped cream
<b>Vanilla Crème Brûlée</b> Vanilla custard, fresh raspberries	<b>Chocolate Bundt Cake</b> Chocolate cake, vanilla bean ice cream, chocolate sauce

A 3% processing fee will be added to all credit card transactions. For guest that choose to pay with cash, the 3% fee will be waived. 20% Gratuity will be added to parties of eight or more. \*The chef respectfully requests no splits or substitutions please.

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**WORD**

Continued from page A6

Thursday' tomorrow." For all the trouble these words cause, there's a surprising shortage of help to be found in the language guides in my library. Most contain no entry for "next" or "last." The handful that discuss "last" mostly just talk about how to distinguish it from "latest."

For example, Merriam Webster's Dictionary of English Usage says: "Some usage writers make the distinction that 'last' means 'final' and 'latest' means 'most recent.' Other writers admit that both words can mean 'most recent' but insist that only 'latest' conveys this meaning unambiguously."

Merriam's says that this distinction is usually unnecessary because in most cases the meaning is already clear. "Of course, there may be times when, with no help from the larger context, you must make it clear that something is the final one of a series and not just the most recent. In such a case you can simply use 'final' or you can expand the immediate context and say, for example, 'the last book she wrote before she died.'"

But for help knowing which Tuesday is next Tuesday, most of my usage books are useless. Even dictionaries are no help, giving only general definitions for "next" and "last" that contain no clue about how they apply to weeks

and months. The only guide in my library that offers help on "last" and "next" is the Associated Press Stylebook. "Use Monday, Tuesday, etc., for days of the week within seven days before or after the current date," AP advises. "Avoid such redundancies as 'last Tuesday' or 'next Tuesday.' The past, present or future tense used for the verb usually provides adequate indication of which Tuesday is meant: He said he finished the job Tuesday. She will return Tuesday."

**JUNE CASAGRANDE** is the author of "The Joy of Syntax: A Simple Guide to All the Language You Know You Should Know." She can be reached at [JuneTCN@aol.com](mailto:JuneTCN@aol.com).

**MAILBAG**

Continued from page A6

orders O.C. fairgrounds to resume bookings, Daily Pilot, Nov. 2). State Sen. Dave Min in 2021 authored two successful bills that went into effect in 2022 that prohibited gun sales at the Orange County fairgrounds due to a law prohibiting firearm and ammunition sales on state-owned property that then opened the door to a statewide ban.

But in an unpopular decision, U.S. District Court Judge John W. Hol-

comb, a Trump appointee, issued Monday a ruling that granted the plaintiff's motion for a preliminary injunction against the two laws that helped establish California's lead in establishing gun safety laws. Min characterized the injunctions as "federal overreach that conservatives have so long decried."

Despite the fact that a growing number of U.S. adults say gun violence is a very big problem in the country today, the NRA's influence, which comes in the form of millions of dollars spent on political campaigns of senators who

oppose gun-safety legislation, continues to dominate. (In 2019 the NRA spent \$3.22 million to support legislators who oppose gun safety legislation). Not even 2,000 school shootings in the last 50 years can topple the influence of the NRA. The only way to solve this problem which our democratic allies decry, along with a majority of Americans, is to expose and defeat those legislators who are receiving money from the NRA and other pro-gun organizations.

**Lynn Lorenz**  
Newport Beach

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# Celebrating 40 years of Nona's recipes

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

This year, Luciana's Ristorante in Dana Point celebrates its 40th anniversary. Since opening in 1983, the harbor-side restaurant has served the Orange County community for occasions both great and small. Owner Jorge Luhan II said the restaurant's legacy began with handmade pasta.

"We started off doing all the homemade pastas," said Luhan. "At the time, we were the first ones to do homemade gnocchi and homemade pastas with homemade sauces."

Luhan's mother, Lucia "Lucy" Luhan opened What's Cooking? Bistro in Newport Beach in 1976, offering a menu of traditional family recipes made with fresh ingredients with the help of her mother and Luhan's nona, Mary Vallera.

"My mom was always in search of fresh foods, given her strong Italian background," said Luhan.

Luhan said in 1970s there was a lack of understating of what Italian food truly was. While people knew spaghetti, other pasta types were lesser known. Besides spaghetti, Luhan said his nona also oversaw the production of ravioli, tortellini, tortellacci, gnocchi, rigatoni and penne, just to name a few.

"A lot of these products that we know today as being staples weren't really that familiar," said Luhan. "In Orange County at that time, I don't think people were as culturally versed as far as international dining and cuisine. So the whole concept was pretty new."

What's Cooking? Bistro's success prompted Lucia to open What's Cooking Express Cuisine in Costa Mesa in 1982. The following year, she opened Luciana's Ristorante in a historic former home in the Lantern District in Dana Point. Rather than duplicate the bistro concept of the other two locations, Luciana's Ristorante opened as an elevated dinner house.

"It was more bringing the simplicity of Italian cuisine of What's Cooking? but presenting it in a formalized dining room setting," said Luhan. "It was the formal dining venue Mom always visualized having."

In 1985, Lucia purchased an old

Tuscan farmhouse in Italy and turned 18 acres of olive groves into Villa Lucia, home of a bed and breakfast and hand-pressed extra-virgin olive oil business that is used exclusively at Luciana's Ristorante. In 1991, she moved to Italy permanently and left Luciana's in the hands of Luhan, who has been running it ever since.

"I came out of school in 1991, and I jumped in to assist my mother, as she was spending most of her time out of county, and that is how I got involved in the industry and I never turned back," said Luhan.

Luhan is proud of the way the restaurant has played a role in the community through the years and points out that multiple generations of families have frequented his family's establishment.

"We had one family here the other day, and it was the rehearsal dinner for the daughter," said Luhan. "I got pulled to the side, and the mom was ecstatic because she had her rehearsal dinner here."

Luhan credits the restaurant's longevity to adapting with the times.

"One of the big things that has made us successful over the years is the understanding that times change," Luhan said. "A brand has to evolve, and it is a continuation of looking at the brand and asking, 'Where is it today and what does it represent?'"

Luhan said it can be a balancing act, trying to maintain what longtime guests have come to know and love while keeping the concept fresh. Most guests, he said, are looking for a well-rounded dining experience.

"The culinary part is a big factor, but they also want it in an environment with ambiance," Luhan said. "I think Luciana's provides that: a historic venue with great colors and a great feel reminiscent of old Tuscany."

Another way Luciana's has kept current is by investing in its wine program.

In 2023, Luciana's received the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence from Wine Spectator, which recognizes exceptional wine programs and establishments with outstanding wine lists.

Under the direction of general



Courtesy of Luciana's Ristorante

**LUCIANA'S RISTORANTE** offers a menu reflecting Luhan family culinary heritage, like the linguine scampi.



**LUCIANA'S RISTORANTE** owner Jorge Luhan Jr. with his mother, Lucy, also known as Luciana, and his late grandmother in 2013.

Rick Davitt

manager and sommelier, William Blank, Luciana's boasts an extensive wine list of 350 labels from 10 countries as well as a Private Wine Cellar, which is also a popular location for private parties and events.

Luciana's still serves classic Italian dishes, but with modern sensibilities and a what Luhan calls a "California fresh twist."

"If you look at the menu we have some of the dishes that have

been around, like our classic ravioli, but instead of doing a more heavy sauce, we might do a lighter sauce," said Luhan.

Luhan assures, however, the pastas are still handmade the way his nona, who worked in the kitchen into her '90s, made them.

"The foundation of the menu is still homemade pastas," Luhan said.

There are wine dinners and other special events scheduled

for the upcoming holiday season, and Luhan looks forward to celebrating the 40th anniversary through the end of the year with Luciana's loyal guests.

"Without our guests, we are nobody," said Luhan. "Thank you for the 40 years of patronage, and we look forward to 40 more."

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