



Photos by Sarahi Apaez

DONNA STAPLETON, who first presented the idea for the outdoor musical instrument play area to city officials, conducts Thursday while the Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries play instruments outside the Donald Dungan Library.

Dungan Library feature is music to supporters' ears

BY SARA CARDINE

Costa Mesa resident Donna Stapleton was visiting her sister in Wisconsin in the summer of 2017 when she chanced upon something special outside a log cabin library in the tiny town of Cable, population 825.

"We noticed there were these instruments outside, so my sister and I walked over and started playing them," she recalled. "We were having a great time — these instruments sounded so good."

Normally such a story would end there. But Stapleton, a devoted fan of reading and then-president of the non-profit Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries, embarked on a mission to bring a similar outdoor feature to the City of the Arts.

She and fellow "Friends" helped raise enough money in 2019 to purchase a small set for the Mesa Verde Library. City staff installed the set-up, a collection of chimes and percussion instruments visitors could play with rubber mallets.

The feature was so warmly received, the group set their sites on a larger outdoor installment at the county-run Donald Dungan Library. With six separate features, including a metal "harp," contrabass chimes and lily pad cymbals, the assemblage came with a hefty \$30,000 price tag.

In a special dedication ceremony Thursday outside the library near the Lions Park playground, Stapleton explained to library supporters and city

See [Library](#), page A2



ABOVE: Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley presents a certificate of recognition to Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries President Cheryl Fletcher.



LEFT: Mason Kelly plays with the new chime instrument.

Slattery excited to lead L.B. Chamber

The homegrown community member took on the role of president, chief executive of the Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce last month.

BY ANDREW TURNER

Erin Slattery just completed her first month as the president and chief executive of the Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce, but her family has been a part of the community for generations.

A 1994 graduate of Laguna Beach High, Slattery joined the local chamber as an events and marketing manager earlier this year. She has succeeded Paula Hornbuckle-Arnold as president of the organization.

Hornbuckle-Arnold, a member of the chamber's board of directors, had been serving in the role on an interim basis following the resignation of Sandy Morales.

While her time working for the organization has been short, Slattery said prior work experience has helped prepare her for what lies ahead. She learned how to handle a variety of roles while working under Darcy Loveland with the Laguna Beach Community Foundation.

She also worked on large events with the Ocean Institute in Dana Point and the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana.

"We are just trying to let our members know that we are here for them again and that what they have been lacking in support over the past two years in regards to their marketing, we are here again," Slattery said of the

See [Chamber](#), page A7

Accused S.A. pastor enters 'not guilty' plea

YouTubeers posing as a 14-year-old girl set up a meeting with the pastor at a store across the street from Brea police headquarters.

BY ERIC LICAS

A volunteer pastor from Santa Ana suspected of attempting to arrange a sexual encounter with someone posing as a teenage girl remained behind bars Friday afternoon following his arrest over the weekend in Brea.

Elmer Pineda-Molina was arrested Sunday afternoon on the 800 block of East Birch Street and was booked on suspicion of contacting and meeting a minor for sexual purposes, Brea Police Lt. Chris Harvey said.

He was charged Tuesday with one misdemeanor count of arranging to meet a minor for lewd purposes and has pleaded not guilty, according to court records. He is being represented by a deputy public defender and is

See [Pastor](#), page A2



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:

VISUAL ARTIST SQUEEZES MEANING FROM DOUBLE-CHANNEL VIDEO AT GRAND CENTRAL ART CENTER PAGE A5

A NEW RAMEN SPOT IN TUSTIN BRINGS PLANT-BASED RAMEN FROM JAPAN TO ORANGE COUNTY PAGE A6



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

Wilma's Patio Restaurant's still happy to serve after 40 years

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Wilma's Patio Restaurant has been a fixture on Balboa Island's Marine Avenue for four decades, but owner Sheri Drewry will tell you that her mother — Wilma Staudinger — hated the idea of naming it after herself.

"The recommendation from contractors and architects was that you should name it after yourself. That just makes people want to come and feel comfortable and cozy," Drewry said in a recent interview. "So against my mom's wishes — she hated her name — we named it Wilma's."

The restaurant officially opened on Sept. 7, 1982, just a few doors away from its current location. But Wilma's wasn't al-

ways the vision that her parents had for the site. It wasn't even in the cards until almost a decade after they purchased the property at 225 Marine Ave. in the early 1970s.

Drewry said her parents, the late Wilma and Maurice Staudinger, managed A&W Restaurants and created a similar fast-food operation at the site in 1974. After it closed, the property was leased out. When that lease ended, the Staudingers decided to try their hands again at opening a restaurant. They tore down the existing building and remodeled it back to front.

"They realized what [Balboa Island] really wanted was sit-

See [Wilma's](#), page A2



WAITER FERNANDO CABRERA hands a customer her order at Wilma's Patio Restaurant on Tuesday. Cabrera has been working at the Balboa Island restaurant since 1990.

Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

Local representatives back new sheriff's facility

BY CITY NEWS SERVICE

Reps. Mike Levin (D-Dana Point) and Young Kim (R-Placentia) teamed up with Orange County Sheriff Don Barnes Wednesday to tout nearly \$3.5 million in funding for a new sheriff's facility that will help combat terrorism, school shootings and other types of crimes.

The Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center, which is currently housed in a 4,000-square-foot facility in Orange, is expected to be moved into a 120,000-square-foot facility in Tustin sometime next year if the federal funding is approved this fall.

The center has been open

since 2007 and has been effective at combating crimes regionally, Barnes said.

"We've been in the business of counter terrorism efforts before 9/11," Barnes said of the regional approach to crime that evolved into the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center.

"It's the second-highest producing fusion center in the nation," Barnes added. "It's received numerous accolades and awards."

But the center is badly in need of more space and an upgrade in technology to combat cyber threats, Kim said.

"The expansion of the physical facility is going to allow all those stakeholders

to come together," Kim said.

After a visit to the center in Orange, she said, she realized it "does not do justice to the awesome work they're already doing there... I knew immediately we needed to augment the good work they're doing."

Levin said the sheriff turned to his office about a year ago for federal funding for a relocated center.

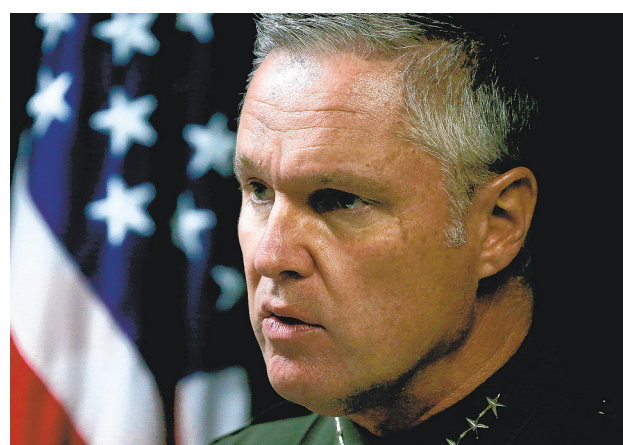
"That's when I turned to Congresswoman Kim," Levin said. "This is what our efforts in Congress should be — working across the aisle to get big things done for the communities we serve ... I know you hear a lot about partisanship in Washington, but I hope to

day's one example of many that really should illustrate we do work together all of the time for the benefit of our constituents."

Kim agreed. "This is a great example of what is being done, despite the very partisan nature of how the media portrays what we do in Washington, D.C.," she said.

Barnes said the newer, bigger facility will allow for more "real-time" risk assessments for all the county's law enforcement agencies. The sheriff's department dispatch center would also be located in the new facility, he said.

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Luis Sinco | Los Angeles Times

THE ORANGE COUNTY Intelligence Assessment Center is expected to be moved into a much larger facility in Tustin sometime next year if the federal funding is approved. O.C. Sheriff Don Barnes said it will allow for more "real time" risk assessments for all the county's law enforcement agencies.

PASTOR

Continued from page A1

scheduled to appear in court on Sept. 9.

Pineda-Molina was identified as a volunteer pastor at Iglesia Ministerios Betesda in Santa Ana, according to a statement issued by the church on Monday.

"We take this with full commitment and complete seriousness," Ronald Vides, senior pastor of Ministerios Betesda, wrote in the statement in both Spanish and English. "We encourage our church family to lift this situation and all involved and affected by this up in prayer. We also pray for the authorities as they continue their investigation."

Pineda-Molina served at Iglesia Ministerios Betesda for six years before resigning from his duties about a month and a half ago, Vides said during a brief interview Wednesday. The volunteer pastor told members of the church he was dealing with family issues and caring for his ailing mother-in-law at the time, Vidas said.

Vides was not aware of any complaints ever made regarding Pineda-Molina, whom he described as a respected member of the church community. He was awarded a plaque recognizing his work for the congregation over the years on Sunday, just hours before he was arrested by Brea police, Vides said.

"He is our brother," Vides said. "We can't turn our back on him, but he has to pay for whatever he has done. We don't want to hide."

The events leading up to Pineda-Molina's arrest were live-streamed by CC Unit, an independent group that identifies and confronts potential child predators.

A representative from the organization told the Daily Pilot they gathered and turned over evidence to police. Harvey declined to comment on whether police relied on potential evidence from the group.

Pineda-Molina was taken into custody without incident. He is being held at the Theo Lacy Facility, Harvey said.

Vides has encouraged any members of his congregation to come forward if they are aware of any potential wrongdoing by Pineda-Molina. He added that he is praying for the former volunteer pastor.

"We all hide some things in our lives," Vides said. "But if you don't work on these things, they will catch you."

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Photos by Sarahi Apaez

FRIENDS OF the Costa Mesa Libraries are joined by Mayor John B. Stephens and Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley to unveil the new outdoor musical instrument play area outside of the Donald Dungan Library in Costa Mesa, part of which is pictured below.



WILMA'S

Continued from page A1

down waitress service. That wasn't something that was familiar to them," said Drewry, who added they had to fire their head chef five days into operation and restructure an extensive menu into something smaller and tighter so they could get their sea legs running a full-service restaurant.

At the time of its opening, Wilma's had 16 tables and a staff of 18, including both of her parents. Forty years later, the business operates with 40 tables and 48 employees.

Maurice Staudinger passed away in 1995, and the family lost the restaurant's namesake, Wilma, in 2014.

Assistant manager Sondi Hensley said generations of families have worked at Wilma's, including her own.

"All of our kids worked there. Sheri's daughters worked there. My daughters worked there. They've all grown up there. We're just like one big family. That's very special about Wilma's," said Hensley, who said she has been with the restaurant for at least 25 years.

"Literally, my daughter, Jessica, started working there when she was 13 and 14 and she would come to work with me. She started learning the register and seating people and before you know it, she was fully working there. It got her through high school and everything else."

Juvenal "Bennie" Martinez remembers back in the early days when his own family worked at Wilma's. His brothers, his cousins have all since left the restaurant's service, but Martinez has remained with Wilma's since the start. He was a dishwasher when

he joined the staff in 1983 and has been a cook since 1985.

"He's been there for 40 years because he loves his job. He says he loves his job because he likes to cook and he doesn't have someone on top of him telling him what to do," said his wife, Fabby, who helped translate for Martinez. "When Sheri's mom and dad were still alive, they were really nice to all the employees. If they needed vacations, she'd give them vacation."

Martinez said he had family back in Mexico and that if anything happened, he felt he could just go and ask either of the Staudingers and they'd help not just him but all their other employees. He said he misses Wilma and Maurice, but also is very thankful to current owners Sheri and her husband, Dave.

Head chef Tomas Guerra said he's stayed with the

restaurant because Wilma's gave him the opportunity to grow. He said he started in 1989 as a chef and was promoted to head chef two years later.

He said Maurice allowed him to put in the produce orders, then Wilma encouraged him to start making the food orders and doing inventory.

"It's how I started and I've been learning a lot. Before, it's not a big difference between then and now. It's kind of the same. Here, we all work like a family. We all get along and that's one of the things. We all get along and Sheri and her mom and her parents are good to us," said Guerra, who even met his wife, Jill, while working at the restaurant. "It was fun to stay and work with them."

With the anniversary of the restaurant's opening just days away, Drewry said they will host an open



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

HEAD CHEF Tomas Guerra, center, and cook Teo Molina prepare meals at Wilma's Patio Restaurant. Guerra has been the head chef here since 1991.

house party for all of their staff. They'll also offer giveaways or special events throughout the year to celebrate Wilma's continued operation.

"It's about all of us,"

Drewry said. "We're celebrating the building, the business; it's about the people."

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LIBRARY

Continued from page A1

officials how community members rose to the challenge to make the funding happen.

Members of the Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries — which supports and raises funds for programs at the Dungan and Mesa Verde libraries — pooled donations and secured a \$15,000 grant from the Orange County Arts Commission, facilitated by 2nd District Supervisor Katrina Foley.

The arts grant helped bring them close to their goal, but they needed one more push to cross the finish line. Stapleton published a plea in a quarterly

Friends newsletter and got a message from longtime member Richard Alexander, who offered up the needed funding.

"We were just blown away," Stapleton recalled, explaining the offer was made in dedication of Alexander's wife, Charlotte, who passed away in 2012 and had loved libraries and the written word.

Foley explained that the instrument installment is just one more addition to a recent series of improvements made at the new library site.

"When we had the opportunity to build this library and to build this playground, I knew we were doing something special for Costa Mesa and for all of Orange County," she said. "We need to put these instruments in all of our libraries across Orange County."

After remarks from Costa Mesa Mayor John Stephens and City Councilwoman Arlis Reynolds, whose 5th Council District the Dungan Library is located in, attendees Thursday were treated to a musical performance.

Library supporter and ad-hoc band leader Cheryl Ooten explained all but one of the instruments have been tuned to produce harmonious tunes in a pentatonic, or five-note, scale. A set of manta ray chimes, which resemble a xylophone suspended by cables, contain seven notes for players who wish to perform a more complete melody.

"If the kids play, it's just a beautiful, gorgeous, wonderful sound," she added.

Ooten said the library plans to create a flier visitors can use to learn more about the instruments and how to create their own music.

After the demonstration, people took turns banging out tunes with the rubber mallets, laughing as the soft sound of chimes lifted upward on the breeze. Alexander watched the festivities from a seat near the library, his lap filled with proclamations commemorating his generous donation.

"The inspiration [for this] is my wife, Charlotte," he said, recalling how she filled countless notebooks with writings he's still reading 10 years later. "She was a lifelong learner and a big advocate of public libraries."

He recounted how "Charlie" helped start a book discussion group at a Newport Beach public library and probably would have had some snide comment about being honored in a ceremony.

"[But] she would smile warmly and be surprised," he added.



KATRINA FOLEY
ORANGE COUNTY SUPERVISOR

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forum

A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE

It's odd using this word when we don't need to

Reader S.A. in Orange County, Calif., wrote recently with an interesting question: "I often hear or read comments where an unneeded 'of' is inserted, such as 'It's not that big of a deal.' Shouldn't it be 'It's not that big a deal'? It seems odd for people to add an extra word."



say we're in. It wouldn't be that difficult of a shot. I agree with S.A.: It is odd. Why do we put that "of" there?

I'm sure I've done so myself countless times, even though the sentence usually works just fine or better without the "of." Consider all these sentences that are correct without "of": How big a negative impact can noise have? It's not that big a deal. I don't care how good a shape economists say we're in. It wouldn't be that difficult a shot.

Here's another thing that's odd about this construction: Normally, when we English speakers create idiomatic uses like this, you can trace their origins back for centuries. Not so with "intrusive of." Merriam's found examples going back to the 1940s, but no earlier. And it's mostly Americans

using it. "What we have here is a fairly recent American idiom that has nearly a fixed form: 'that' or 'how' or 'too,' or sometimes 'as,' followed by an adjective, then 'of' and a noun," writes Merriam's.

I've long suspected that we insert an unneeded "of" because subconsciously we're thinking of the words "much of," as in "too much of a good thing." But Merriam's points out that "sort of" and "kind of" also helped lay the groundwork for unnecessary "of."

"The current idiom is just one of a group of idioms that are characterized by the presence of 'of' as a link between a noun and some sort of preceding qualifier," Merriam's explains. "Perhaps the oldest of these is the 'kind of a' or 'sort of a' construction,

See *Word*, page A7



Lawrence K. Ho | Los Angeles Times

A ROYAL SHAKESPEARE Company production of "King Lear" at Royce Hall, with Sir Ian McKellen as King Lear and William Gaunt as the Earl of Gloucester. William Shakespeare was among the first to use "of" to connect a noun to a preceding qualifier, according to Merriam-Webster's, as in "These kind of leaves I know," from "King Lear."

MAILBAG

Readers weigh in on coming coastal O.C. elections



File Photo

VOTERS LEAVE the Costa Mesa Senior Center after voting in 2020. Daily Pilot readers share their thoughts about upcoming candidate races and issues in their cities.

If you know anyone who was an active citizen in Newport Beach a decade ago, you would learn that the campaign literature could be filled with false claims and innuendo. Fortunately, in the last election, the campaign literature had improved. Let's hope the days of smears and falsehoods have left us.

Unfortunately, the most aggravating tradition of trying to establish a team of council members who vote as a block has not. It has continued and seems to be an issue in this election as well.

"Team Newport," over the last several years, does not have many successes to brag about, particularly this last season. Their handling of the pandemic, particularly in the beginning, left much to be desired. They acted as if it never existed as a health hazard. Fortunately, people in higher places made decisions that prevailed and protected citizens.

Only those who "supported the team" were able to get volunteer positions in city government. It all came down to who you knew. Finally, the team's unsuccessful attempt to change the governmental structure in Newport

to an elected mayorship cost the city thousands upon thousands of dollars.

We are very lucky to have some strong new candidates who are not supported by "Team Newport." And we have a return City Council member Joy Brenner, who represents the epitome of what a Newport Beach representative should be.

Lynn Lorenz
Newport Beach

Reasons to reelect Brenner

Four years ago, the citizens of Newport Beach elected Joy Brenner to the City Council. In response to the faith the voters showed in Joy's leadership and ability the community has been rewarded with her steady and thoughtful representation. The four years of her tenure have shown her honest, practical and transparent approach to the management of our great city. As a longtime resident

See *Mailbag*, page A7



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THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

- 1 Linear measure
- 5 Deadly viper
- 10 Foot part
- 14 Mystical radiance
- 15 Shining
- 16 Bylaw
- 17 Feodor III or Ivan V
- 18 Bodyguard's purpose
- 20 Unit of weight
- 21 Murdered
- 22 Gives temporarily
- 23 Wild winds
- 25 " _ the ramparts we watched"
- 26 Actor Robert
- 28 Athlete
- 31 _ for; chose
- 32 Harpoon
- 34 "To be or _ to"
- 36 Favoritism
- 37 Highly seasoned
- 38 Carve in glass
- 39 Traveler's stop
- 40 Part of the face
- 41 Cold-weather garb
- 42 Shun
- 44 Slap cuffs on
- 45 Jar cover
- 46 Refrain opener
- 47 Bar seat
- 50 Hunter's quarry
- 51 "It Takes _ to Tango"
- 54 Large annual meeting
- 57 Even, as a score
- 58 Poker term
- 59 " _ la vista, Baby"
- 60 Hoe target
- 61 Audience shouts
- 62 Remini & others
- 63 Invites

DOWN

- 1 True statement
- 2 Greek aperitif

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15					16			
17				18					19			
20				21					22			
		23	24					25				
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31					32	33				34		35
36					37					38		
39				40					41			
	42		43						44			
				45					46			
47	48	49					50			51	52	53
54					55	56				57		
58					59					60		
61					62					63		

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.

5	4							
	3	9		2				1
	2			1		6	9	
		6						
1			6		4			3
						9		
		3		4			8	
	7			9		1	3	
				8		5	4	

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A6.

- 3 Great apes
- 4 Feather's partner, in phrase
- 5 Pill form
- 6 Monsters
- 7 Hard hit
- 8 Corrode
- 9 In _ of; floored by
- 10 Aneurysm site
- 11 Sabotage
- 12 Lump of dirt
- 13 Cluckers
- 19 "The coast is _!"
- 21 Toboggan
- 24 Frothy drinks
- 25 Skin lotion brand
- 26 Huge Mongolian desert
- 27 Speak one's mind

- 28 Quick kiss on the cheek
- 29 Pleas
- 30 Geologist's interest
- 32 Erupt, as a volcano
- 33 Dessert choice
- 35 TV's " _ '70s Show"
- 37 Cast off
- 38 Chief Justice Warren
- 40 South American nation
- 41 Priest's advice
- 43 Cooking spices
- 44 Stadiums
- 46 Engagement
- 47 Wound covering
- 48 _ avail; fruitlessly
- 49 Grab _; seize for support
- 50 City with a famous tower
- 52 Half a fortnight
- 53 Horse racing calculations
- 55 Org. for Ducks & Penguins
- 56 Monogram for Edison
- 57 Defunct airline

Tribune Media Services

Art exhibit explores self-care, race tension

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

In 1991, Latasha Harlins walked into Empire Liquor in Los Angeles to buy orange juice. When store owner Soon Ja Du accused the 15-year-old of stealing the orange juice, a confrontation ensued that ended with Du killing Harlins.

“Even though she was trying to pay, they got in an altercation and Latasha Harlins was shot in the back of the head,” said visual artist Larissa Rogers.

Du was later convicted of manslaughter in the killing. The incident contributed to the brewing racial tension in South Central Los Angeles at the time that came to a head with the beating of Rodney King and the five days of riots in 1992 that followed the acquittal of the four police officers involved.

But during the summer of 2020, Harlins and Du were on Rogers’ mind as she processed the cultural climate as the Black Lives Matter movement gained momentum.

It was during this time that Rogers filmed the double-channel video featured in her exhibition, “We’ve Always Been Here, Like Hydrogen, Like Oxygen,” which opened Saturday at Santa Ana’s Grand Central Art Center and runs through Nov. 6.

The videos are projected on two massive walls that come together in a corner. Rogers uses the space to direct the viewer toward the idea of being trapped but also expanding out.

Rogers shot the videos

on the Richmond Slave Trail and the African Burial Ground in Richmond, Va. and said during the early pandemic lockdown, she realized more people were spending time outdoors, in these spaces, without fully understanding them.

“There is about a 2-mile trail up to where the auction block and auction houses were,” said Rogers, “but both of these spaces had been turned into spaces of recreation so people would be boating — there wasn’t much signage of what it was.”

Rogers carefully — and sometimes roughly — washes her body with oranges on one screen and caresses an orange cast of orange juice on the other.

“I started using oranges in my practice in reference to Latasha Harlins’ murder,” said Rogers. “This orange starts to represent a multitude of things.”

Rogers is Afro Asian, born in Charlottesville, Va. to a Korean immigrant mother and an African American father. She explores both identities and how she situates within the narrative of the Harlins killing.

“Latasha Harlins was a 15-year-old Black girl; Soon Ja Du, a Korean immigrant,” said Rogers. “There are so many gaps and separations between being able to understand each other and each other’s experiences. A lot of prejudices are happening, from the murder to even what justice can look like.”

For Rogers, the orange stands in for the erasure of



Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

“WE’VE ALWAYS Been Here, Like Hydrogen, Like Oxygen,” by artist Larissa Rogers, opened Saturday at the Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana. The videos, with the artist pictured, are projected on two walls that meet in the corner.



DOZENS OF oranges placed atop a stack of 10 pallets at Larissa Rogers’ “We’ve Always Been Here, Like Hydrogen, Like Oxygen” show at the Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana.

Black and Brown women, but it is also a hybrid food by nature, native to Asia and brought to the Americas by colonization.

“In the video, you see me at the Richmond Slave Trail and the African Burial Ground, with real oranges

and oranges that I made cast of orange juice, washing my body,” said Rogers. “It is this act of self-care, but also as I am washing my body, these oranges are melting. The washing at sometimes can seem a little aggressive, so thinking

about the relationship between care and violence.”

Part of the text on the video is lifted from Rogers’ own personal journals and a letter she penned to Du that she never sent but wrote as a way to grapple

with the tensions between the Korean and Black communities.

“When I started to do this work, I had to really sit with myself,” said Rogers.

It is also appropriate the show opened in Orange County where the fruit holds its own symbolism.

“This is perfect because this is the first time the work is showing in California and what a perfect location,” said Rogers.

In addition, a sculpture crafted from shipping pallets and 115 pounds of fresh oranges accompanies the video work. Rogers said in Virginia there are many monuments, of Confederate men set in brass that haven’t evolved over the years, physically or symbolically. Rogers’ sculpture will be one that is meant to change.

“This sculpture is a monument for a 15-year-old Black girl,” said Rogers.

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MOMIX

Artistic Director Moses Pendleton

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MOMIX is a company of unbelievable dancer-illusionists known for presenting works of astounding inventiveness and physical beauty that will surprise, delight, and astonish.

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Sept 17 • 7:30 pm

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Image © Momix Inc. & Max Puccinelli

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A	U	R	A		A	G	L	O	W		R	U	L	E	
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7	4	5	2	3	8	9	6	1
2	5	3	1	4	6	7	8	9
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9	6	1	3	8	7	5	2	4



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

GUESTS LINE up for the opening of Rakkkan Ramen at the District at Tustin Legacy. Rakkkan gave away bowls of ramen to 50 customers in the morning and another 50 that afternoon.

New ramen spot has plant-based emphasis

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Orange County has its fair share of delicious ramen shops, but plant-based ramen is slightly harder to come by. Which makes Rakkkan Ramen a welcome addition to O.C.'s ramen rotation.

The Japan-based ramen concept has locations in Downtown L.A. and Long Beach, but the District at Tustin Legacy is its first venture into Orange County. To mark the occasion, on opening day Aug. 29 Rakkkan gave away 100 bowls of free ramen to the first 50 customers at 11 a.m. and the first 50 customers at 5 p.m.

Irvine resident Della Kadili was first in line at



THE GARNET RAMEN bowl is Rakkkan's signature bowl. The eatery's menu also features a variety of appetizers.

the opening. "This is my first time having ramen. It's delicious," she said.

Kadili has been eating a planted-based diet for about a year and is among the many diners who have become more open to vegetarian items on menus.

"I eat chicken still," she said, "but I like plant-based and the Beyond burger."

Rakkkan was launched in Toyko in 2011 by chef Ry-ohsei Ito with a kombu-based vegetarian broth. Its most popular ramen flavors include pearl ramen, flavored with shio, and amber, a soy-based ramen. All the broths are made with a blend of mushrooms and kelp, making them lighter with roughly 40% less fat compared to traditional tonkotsu ramen. The miso-flavored garnet ramen is the restaurant's signature bowl, served with vegetable broth, sesame paste, grilled pork, green onion, bamboo shoots and a seasoned egg. Vegan substitutes, like spinach noodles, shiitake mushrooms, corn and tofu toppings, are available too.

Besides ramen, Rakkkan's menu features appetizers like takoyaki, a battered octopus dish, and shrimp shumai, steamed shrimp dumplings and rice bowls. Meatless appetizer options include the avocado rice bowl and vegan gyoza.

By 11:30 a.m. on opening day the restaurant was full, and the outside patio was filling up quickly despite the heat.

Rakkkan Ramen joins other recently opened Asian concepts with a focus on healthy options at the District at Tustin Legacy. Just a few doors down, Filipino-inspired bakery Baked celebrated its grand opening last month and offers keto, gluten-free and vegan baked goods.

Nearby, Yomie's Rice x Yogurt is soft open, serving drinks made with probiotics and multigrain, which are being hailed as a healthier alternative to boba. The creamy flavored drinks, made with special purple rice grains from northwest China, have found popularity in Australia and offer a selection of unique flavors, like mango sago.

But Rakkkan is the first of the new eateries to draw a line stretching through the center of the courtyard. Huntington Beach residents John Nguyen and Joe Bargas waited patiently to be seated and to receive their free bowls of ramen.

"I heard about it through social media," Bargas said. "I try to eat plant-based but not exclusively. I thought this would be a good opportunity to try it."

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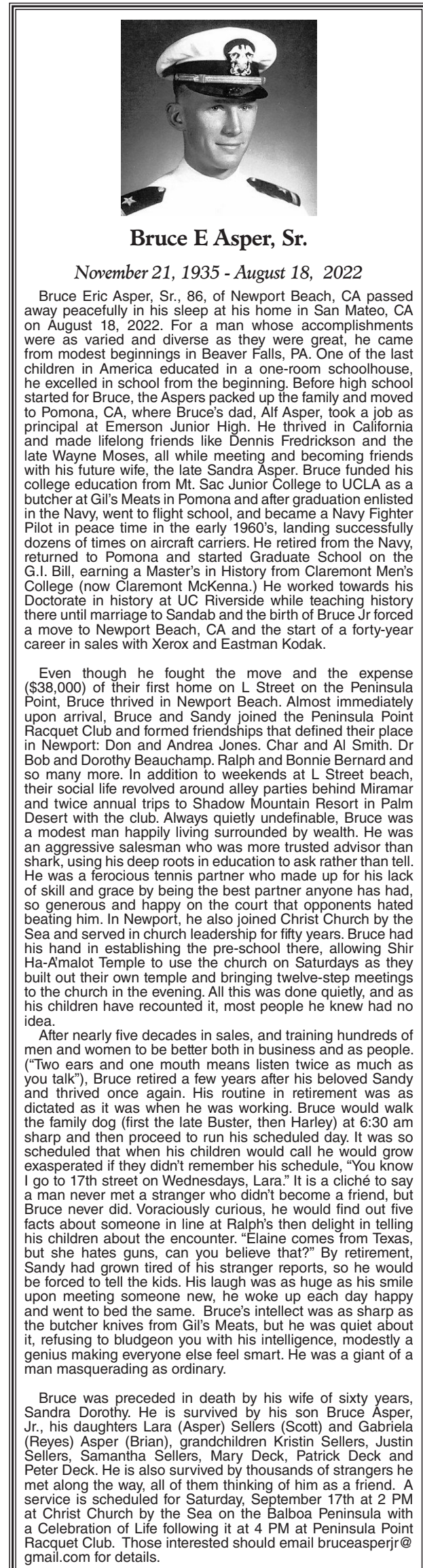
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Bruce E Asper, Sr.

November 21, 1935 - August 18, 2022

Bruce Eric Asper, Sr., 86, of Newport Beach, CA passed away peacefully in his sleep at his home in San Mateo, CA on August 18, 2022. For a man whose accomplishments were as varied and diverse as they were great, he came from modest beginnings in Beaver Falls, PA. One of the last children in America educated in a one-room schoolhouse, he excelled in school from the beginning. Before high school started for Bruce, the Aspers packed up the family and moved to Pomona, CA, where Bruce's dad, Alf Asper, took a job as principal at Emerson Junior High. He thrived in California and made lifelong friends like Dennis Fredrickson and the late Wayne Moses, all while meeting and becoming friends with his future wife, the late Sandra Asper. Bruce funded his college education from Mt. Sac Junior College to UCLA as a butcher at Gil's Meats in Pomona and after graduation enlisted in the Navy, went to flight school, and became a Navy Fighter Pilot in peace time in the early 1960's, landing successfully dozens of times on aircraft carriers. He retired from the Navy, returned to Pomona and started Graduate School on the G.I. Bill, earning a Master's in History from Claremont Men's College (now Claremont McKenna.) He worked towards his Doctorate in history at UC Riverside while teaching history there until marriage to Sandab and the birth of Bruce Jr forced a move to Newport Beach, CA and the start of a forty-year career in sales with Xerox and Eastman Kodak.

Even though he fought the move and the expense (\$38,000) of their first home on L Street on the Peninsula Point, Bruce thrived in Newport Beach. Almost immediately upon arrival, Bruce and Sandy joined the Peninsula Point Racquet Club and formed friendships that defined their place in Newport: Don and Andrea Jones. Char and Al Smith. Dr Bob and Dorothy Beauchamp. Ralph and Bonnie Bernard and so many more. In addition to weekends at L Street beach, their social life revolved around alley parties behind Miramar and twice annual trips to Shadow Mountain Resort in Palm Desert with the club. Always quietly undefinable, Bruce was a modest man happily living surrounded by wealth. He was an aggressive salesman who was more trusted advisor than shark, using his deep roots in education to ask rather than tell. He was a ferocious tennis partner who made up for his lack of skill and grace by being the best partner anyone has had, so generous and happy on the court that opponents hated beating him. In Newport, he also joined Christ Church by the Sea and served in church leadership for fifty years. Bruce had his hand in establishing the pre-school there, allowing Shir Ha-Amalot Temple to use the church on Saturdays as they built out their own temple and bringing twelve-step meetings to the church in the evening. All this was done quietly, and as his children have recounted it, most people he knew had no idea.

After nearly five decades in sales, and training hundreds of men and women to be better both in business and as people. ("Two ears and one mouth means listen twice as much as you talk"). Bruce retired a few years after his beloved Sandy and thrived once again. His routine in retirement was as dictated as it was when he was working. Bruce would walk the family dog (first the late Buster, then Harley) at 6:30 am sharp and then proceed to run his scheduled day. It was so scheduled that when his children would call he would grow exasperated if they didn't remember his schedule. "You know I go to 17th street on Wednesdays, Lara." It is a cliché to say a man never met a stranger who didn't become a friend, but Bruce never did. Voraciously curious, he would find out five facts about someone in line at Ralph's then delight in telling his children about the encounter. "Elaine comes from Texas, but she hates guns, can you believe that?" By retirement, Sandy had grown tired of his stratter reports, so he would be forced to tell the kids. His laugh was as huge as his smile upon meeting someone new, he woke up each day happy and went to bed the same. Bruce's intellect was as sharp as the butcher knives from Gil's Meats, but he was quiet about it, refusing to bludgeon you with his intelligence, modestly a genius making everyone else feel smart. He was a giant of a man masquerading as ordinary.

Bruce was preceded in death by his wife of sixty years, Sandra Dorothy. He is survived by his son Bruce Asper, Jr., his daughters Lara (Asper) Sellers (Scott) and Gabriela (Reyes) Asper (Brian), grandchildren Kristin Sellers, Justin Sellers, Samantha Sellers, Mary Deck, Patrick Deck and Peter Deck. He is also survived by thousands of strangers he met along the way, all of them thinking of him as a friend. A service is scheduled for Saturday, September 17th at 2 PM at Christ Church by the Sea on the Balboa Peninsula with a Celebration of Life following it at 4 PM at Peninsula Point Racquet Club. Those interested should email bruceasperjr@gmail.com for details.

CHAMBER

Continued from page A1

Chamber's activity in emerging from the coronavirus pandemic.

"However, we were very instrumental over COVID in getting a lot of the restaurants their open spaces, like with the Promenade [on Forest], and being able to get those temporary permits in place."

Slattery said it's her responsibility to cultivate relationships with City Council members and city staff and to advocate for the small business owner in Laguna Beach.

There are now close to 300 members in the Chamber, said Slattery, who attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Laguna Canyon Winery Thursday evening.

"I'll definitely be advocating on behalf of our small businesses to keep the outdoor dining," Slattery said,



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

ERIN SLATTERY at the Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce office. Slattery has taken over the role of president and chief executive of the local chamber.

adding that her advocacy will extend beyond those businesses on the Promenade. "Of course, the long-term issue is the parking.

We always have parking problems in Laguna. It's not going to go away just because we're taking away two parking spaces to give some

more outdoor dining.

"That's a much bigger problem that we need to come up with a solution for with parking structures, ei-

ther on the outskirts of town or inside town."

The availability of public restrooms away from the downtown area has also been a concern brought by Chamber membership, Slattery said.

"There were some great candidates [for Chamber president and CEO], but Erin was hungrier," said J.J. Ballesteros, who is in his fourth and final year as the chairman of the board for the Chamber. "She really wanted the position. She was grasping everything that she was doing in her position very well.

"The board got a chance to see Erin work. She was at all of our board meetings and events, and they got a sense and a chance to see her work ethic and her passion. When it was time to decide, I know Paula felt strongly about it, and I was also in the same position, that I think it would probably be in the Chamber's best interest to have [Slat-

tery] take the position."

A couple of additional hires have also been made to provide support staff to Slattery, Ballesteros added.

Lang Park is named after Slattery's grandfather, Frederick Lang, a well-known landscape architect and environmentalist.

"I'm so excited to be able to be part of this community that I grew up in, that I love, and to be able to support the businesses," Slattery said. "It's amazing to be able to be part of this organization and to show the strength that small businesses can have when they work together."

The Chamber is co-sponsoring a forum for Laguna Beach City Council candidates on Sept. 15 at City Hall. The Taste of Laguna food and music festival, a fundraiser featuring food from local restaurants, is coming up on Oct. 13.

andrew.turner@latimes.com
Twitter: @AndrewTurnerTCN

MAILBAG

Continued from page A4

and extensive volunteer in the community, she has continuously demonstrated a concern for all citizens and their points of view. At the same time because she has worked extensively in the community before becoming a council person, she has the necessary institutional knowledge which allows her to weigh the longtime interests of the city.

Joy is seeking reelection. In addition to the qualities that led to her election, she has the additional benefit of four years' council experience. It is accordingly sad to see that Joy has recently been the subject of vicious and personal attacks in her reelection bid. Four years ago, she was similarly attacked but rose above those negative campaign tactics with characteristic demonstration of grace and integrity.

Joy is a person whose concern is always what is best for the city and its residents, and she never places her own interests above that. Elected to a second term, she will do her utmost to steadfastly improve and preserve the city we call Newport Beach. That is why we are supporting Joy Brenner for City Council.

**Clarence J. Turner,
Thomas C. Edwards,
Nancy Gardner**

Former mayors of Newport Beach

Support for C.M.'s Mayor Stephens

I support Costa Mesa Mayor John Stephens, who is running in the 2022 November election to continue his service as mayor.

Stephens has the right professional (attorney) and

personal skill set, level of personal involvement, collaborative nature, accessibility and motivation to deal with the simplest to the most complex issues the city faces. He has created a tone of civility at City Hall and has led, in collaboration with council members and city staff, numerous accomplishments that have benefitted Costa Mesa.

Under Stephens' leadership, funding and staffing of police and firefighters are the highest they have been in years. Stephens will continue to place a high priority on public safety.

Stephens has supported the city's remarkable progress on reducing homelessness by permanently housing 215 individuals through Costa Mesa's Bridge Shelter and outreach and reducing street homelessness by 20%, according to numbers from the county in May. He has supported affordable permanent supportive housing units for veterans and seniors as well as rent relief for our most needy families and a first-time homebuyer's program.

Under the mayor's guidance, the city has successfully defended our sober living ordinances in two federal trials.

Stephens has also focused on infrastructure such as upgrading parks and sports fields, constructing protected bike lanes, rebuilding streets and alleyways and installing streetlights and medians for driver safety. The infrastructure work also promotes energy efficiency by installing nine electric vehicle charging stations at City Hall.

Stephens knows the tendency of residents is to request more services, rather than fewer, and these additional services cost more money.

Stephens balances the need for new services with fiscal constraints. As such, the city has a balanced budget, over \$50 million in reserves and an AA+ credit rating from Standard & Poor's.

I encourage all Costa Mesans to vote for Stephens in November.

Charles Mooney
Costa Mesa

Vote 'no' on Measure K

On Aug. 2, the majority of the Costa Mesa City Council voted to put a measure on the November ballot that will put Measure Y. ("Will Costa Mesans vote to reduce their say on large-scale projects? Officials hope so," Daily Pilot, Aug. 3).

During that chaotic meeting, Councilman Jeffrey Harlan made a last-minute substitution for the measure staff had prepared, which befuddled Mayor John Stephens and other council members and required multiple breaks in the proceedings.

Costa Mesa residents will recall that Measure Y, aka An Initiative to Give the People of Costa Mesa Control of Their Future, was voted into law in 2016 by nearly 70% of the voters. It gave us the right to have a say in approving major changes to our existing zoning and General Plan, including the Housing Element that the city is currently revising to satisfy state requirements.

Now the politicians we elected to represent us are trying to take that right away. The council members who proposed deceptive Measure K say they are doing so because the state is requiring the city to plan for housing, but if you read Measure K and look at its map, you will see that the code amendment:

Expands the scope. The areas covered by the measure are on almost all the major corridors of Costa Mesa, versus the few parcels identified on the revised Housing Element's proposed map scattered around town. Measure K targets large swaths of properties along Newport Harbor, West 17th, 18th and 19th, Baker, Bristol, and the area North of the 405 freeway for redevelopment but excludes your vote on those projects. On many of those parcels are successful businesses.

Lacks a housing requirement. There is no requirement in Measure K to build housing (affordable or not) for seniors, disabled persons, veterans, or our workforce. Any new development could be high-density, high-cost housing, but it also may be large commercial, office or industrial buildings.

Ignores impacts. There is no provision in Measure K that protects residential neighborhoods from traffic, noise or pollution generated by development.

Will this traffic require road widening? What will developments mean for public safety?

Does not protect the environment. There is no requirement that new developments include building new parks, bike lanes or walking paths.

Costa Mesans voted for the right to decide whether a major land use change is worth the impacts on our daily lives. It is going to take another David vs. Goliath effort to battle this measure. The city and developers will outspend our citizen grassroots group, Costa Mesa First, but we intend to fight!

Please talk to your friends, relatives, neighbors and the owners of businesses targeted by the city. Most importantly, when you vote this fall, vote "no" on Measure K!

Cynthia McDonald
Costa Mesa

Textbook's claims raise eyebrows

According to a FOX

News report, a textbook ordered by the Newport-Mesa Unified School District claims there are 10 sexual orientations, some I personally never heard of. "Comprehensive Health Skills for High School" also claims there are eight different gender identities.

How did we get here? What school administrators are pushing this on our kids?

Clearly our kids are being exploited, and I, along with countless other parents, will not sit idle and let this ideology continue in our schools. Our tax dollars were never intended to pay for this useless garbage!

To those school board members and administrators, stand up and defend your logic.

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Newport Beach

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WORD

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which is used by Shakespeare and is even older than that."

"These kind of leaves I know," the Bard wrote in "King Lear."

But just because "much," "sort" and "kind" sometimes require "of" doesn't mean "big," "good" and "difficult" do. What sets these two groups apart? They're different parts of speech.

"Good," "big," "talented" and "difficult" are adjectives. An adjective can go right in front of a noun, no linking "of" required: good shape, big deal, talented player, difficult shot. An added "of" would make all these examples into nonsense. The car is in good of shape. Their engagement was a big of deal. He's a talented of singer.

"Much," "kind" and "sort" are nouns in the expressions we're talking about. Unlike adjectives, nouns can't usually go right before another noun. What sort man is he? I really like this kind cheese. She gave away much what she owned. The nouns "sort," "kind" and "much" often need an "of" to make sense.

That's why it's a mistake to let "much of" or "kind of" inform how you use an

adjective.

"The word 'of' often intrudes where it doesn't idiomatically belong, as in 'not that big of a deal' (read 'not that big a deal'), 'not too smart of a student' (read 'not too smart a student')," warns Garner's Modern American Usage.

When in doubt, there's a simple test you can use to

decide whether your phrasing needs "of." Try taking it out. If your sentence works without it, leave it out.

JUNE CASAGRANDE is the author of "The Joy of Syntax: A Simple Guide to All the Grammar You Know You Should Know." She can be reached at JuneTCN@aol.com.

Daily Pilot

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