

Daily Pilot

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Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR Diana Abruscato hangs a banner for the annual Surf City Pickleball Tournament at Murdy Park in Huntington Beach. The returning tournament, skipped last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, takes place Friday through Sunday.

172 players ready as Surf City Pickleball Tournament returns

The annual event, which wasn't held last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, will be at Murdy Park this weekend.

BY MATT SZABO

Diana Abruscato was the first one at Murdy Park in Huntington Beach on Thursday afternoon, which wouldn't surprise anyone who knows her.

Abruscato, the president and founder of the Surf City Pickleball Society, was there setting up for this weekend's Surf City Pickleball Tournament. Matches start Friday at 8 a.m. and continue through Sunday.

Abruscato unloaded banners from out of the back of her sport-utility vehicle. One box was marked "court numbers," and another read "tape measures."

She is the director of the popular annual tournament, which started in 2016, and an ambassador for the sport. Pickleball has been gaining popularity in recent years, and plenty of stories have been written about that, but Abruscato isn't really buying the narrative that it's a novel sport.



ABRUSCATO, right, instructs Karl Rodriguez, 12, a Scouts Troop 319B member, on where to place supplies.

"We're here," she said. "We're not new anymore."

There are 172 registered players for this year's Surf City Pickleball Tournament, in men's, women's and mixed doubles. It's a double-elimination format, and the skill levels range from 3.0 to 4.0. A social is planned for Saturday night at Duke's.

The registration number is down a bit

from previous iterations, but Abruscato is happy the tournament is back. It was canceled last year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

By design, the pickleball tournament has traditionally taken place concurrently with the U.S. Open of Surfing, although this year

See **Pickleball**, page A2

Charter school gets OK to open Aug. 23

The Orange County Board of Education gives the green light to Costa Mesa's ISSAC, which had been flagged for alleged violations.

BY SARA CARDINE

Costa Mesa's International School for Science and Culture — a charter recently called out by county officials for noncompliance issues — has been given a green light to resume teaching by the Orange County Board of Education, just weeks before classes begin.

Newly hired ISSAC Principal Kimberly Saguilan appeared before board members Tuesday to explain how officials worked with a team of consultants to resolve issues that had placed the charter school at risk of receiving a notice of violation.

"We're going to use every moment as a teachable moment," Saguilan said. "We're going to be operating as effectively and efficiently as possible, and we're going to be building great relationships as a community partner — we're here to work together."

On Aug. 23, the school will open the doors of a leased 18th Street facility to more than 200 students enrolled for the 2021-22 school year, officials confirmed. Previous plans to open a second facility for younger grade students at the Boys and Girls Club of Costa Mesa, where ISSAC was operating without a proper permit during the pandemic, have been put on hold until 2022.

Orange County Department of Education staff in June recommended board members issue a notice of violation to the charter school, due to discrepancies in budgets submitted by ISSAC and at least one parent's complaint that teachers were charging families a fee for on-site instruction, describing activities as child-care.

Staff further claimed budgeting and enrollment documents sent to the California Department of Education misreported student attendance, which led to overfunding that had to be corrected.

Saguilan assured board members Tuesday all incorrectly collected fees had been returned to families and

See **Charter**, page A2

Lyft driver is convicted in 2019 rape of passenger after she left an H.B. bar

BY CITY NEWS SERVICE

A 45-year-old Lyft driver is scheduled to be sentenced in October for raping a woman he was driving home nearly two years ago, according to court records obtained Monday.

Jorge Tapiacastro was convicted July 28 of rape by use of drugs, rape, sexual battery and false imprisonment, all felonies. He is scheduled to be sentenced

Oct. 1.

The victim was dropped off by her husband at a friend's home in Costa Mesa on Aug. 31, 2019, where she drank four or five vodka sodas with a handful of friends, according to a trial brief from prosecutors.

About 9:30 p.m. that night she and two of her friends took an Uber ride to the Bungalow bar in Huntington Beach where she drank three to five more vodka

sodas, prosecutors said.

About 12:30 a.m., Sept. 1, she used the Lyft app to call for a ride home, prosecutors said. She was picked up about 12:50 a.m. by the defendant, who pulled over about a half mile from her residence in Orange, got out and then got into the backseat with the victim, who said she had passed out,

See **Lyft**, page A2

2 charged in Fountain Valley killing

BY ANDREW TURNER

Two suspects were charged with murder on Thursday in connection with the death of a 26-year-old Long Beach woman in Fountain Valley last month.

Oliver Reynaldo Leon, 27, and Mary Dieder Chavez, 25, have both been charged with murder and conspiracy to commit a crime, court records show.

Fountain Valley police responded to a call concerning a traffic incident near the intersection of Slater Avenue and Tradewinds Street at 6:11 p.m. on July 19.

Authorities then found Phia Marie Albanese, 26, of Long Beach in the driver's seat of her car, which had come to a stop along the curb on the south side



of the residential street Amberwood Circle.

Albanese was pronounced dead at the scene. Fountain Valley police opened a homicide investigation after discovering that Albanese had sustained a gunshot wound.

Fountain Valley police spokesman Sgt. Donald Farmer said the homicide investigation marks the first for the department since 2015.

A criminal complaint detailing

See **Charged**, page A2

A WOMAN was found dead in her car near Slater Avenue and Tradewinds Street in Fountain Valley July 19.

Scott Smeltzer



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

A MIXED-USE PROJECT proposed for Mariners Mile finally received the go-ahead from the Newport Beach City Council after much contention from residents concerned about its impact on the area.

Mixed-use project gets green light from the Newport City Council

BY LILLY NGUYEN

After months of delay, the mixed-use 2510 W. Coast Highway project got the go-ahead from the Newport Beach City Council late last month, much to the chagrin of residents opposed to the development.

Members of the council unanimously voted to uphold the Planning Commission decision to approve the project in February, with council members Noah Blom and Duffy Duffield recusing themselves from the vote and discussion. In March,

the project was pulled for review by the City Council by Mayor Brad Avery, who did so on behalf of residents that objected to the decision.

The project was, at the time of its February approval, proposed to replace an existing marine facility at 2510 and 2530 W. Coast Highway with a mixed-use development that would include both residential units and a boutique auto showroom.

The project has since seen significant revision since.

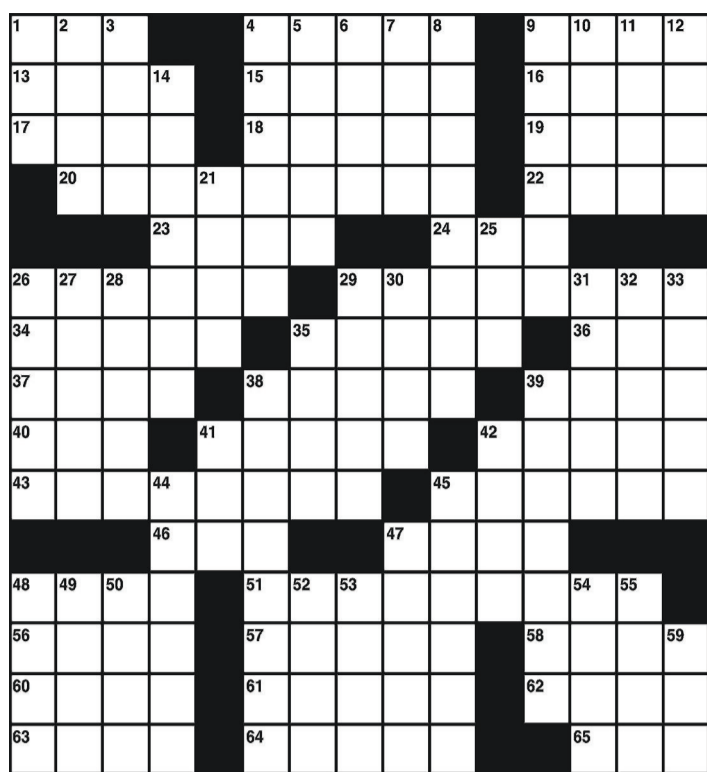
See **Project**, page A4

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

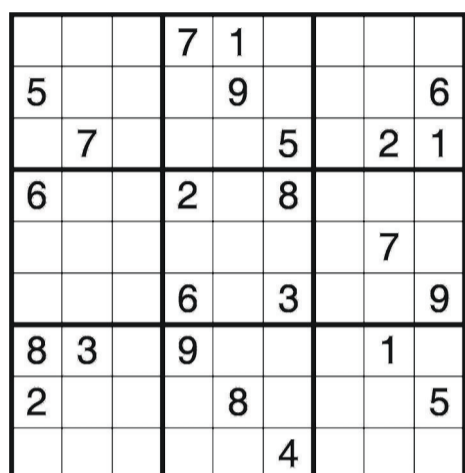
- 1 Continual noise
- 4 _ throat;
- bacterial infection
- 9 TV's "Dr. _"
- 13 Give off, as fumes
- 15 Goody-goody
- 16 Track-and-field event
- 17 Source of misery
- 18 Heeds the alarm clock
- 19 Change for a five
- 20 Glee
- 22 Probability
- 23 Floor coverings
- 24 Leprechaun's cousin
- 26 Competitors
- 29 Umbrellas
- 34 Linda Lavin role
- 35 Became furious
- 36 Actress Ming-Na _
- 37 Use the teeth
- 38 Challenged
- 39 Wave movement
- 40 Sheep's comment
- 41 Encouraged
- 42 Add a slight bit of color
- 43 Couch potato's forte
- 45 Account book
- 46 _ Padres National Forest
- 47 Skimpy skirt
- 48 "Now hold on a minute!"
- 51 Woodworker's woes
- 56 Whole bunch
- 57 Make joyous
- 58 Polio vaccine developer
- 60 Aggravates
- 61 Wanderer
- 62 "To thine own self be _" ("Hamlet")



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.



For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A4.

- 63 Sit for an artist
- 64 Little night lights
- 65 _ on; incite

DOWN

- 1 Winger, to friends
- 2 Mosque leader
- 3 Morning hour

- 4 Bits of holly
- 5 Shortens slightly
- 6 Trick
- 7 Actress Barbara
- 8 Bugged
- 9 _ of purchase; receipts
- 10 Palm's location
- 11 _ tea

- 12 Not as expensive
- 14 Sundeck
- 21 As a _; usually
- 25 Boy
- 26 Temple leader
- 27 Epic by Homer
- 28 Extremely important
- 29 Scrapes potatoes
- 30 Elderly
- 31 _ to; because of
- 32 Windowsill
- 33 Look of scorn
- 35 Dustcloths
- 38 Bureaus
- 39 Neatest
- 41 Family card game
- 42 Camp shelter
- 44 Pass, as time
- 45 Ocean _; passenger ships
- 47 Bishop's hat
- 48 Mixer speed
- 49 Long sandwich
- 50 Thousand _ CA
- 52 Cemetery purchase
- 53 Volcanic output
- 54 Hard to find
- 55 Snail's cousin
- 59 Beer container

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STARTS TOMORROW!

South Coast Repertory Theatre Conservatory presents **The Summer Players** in



Peter Pan

a musical based on the play by **SIR JAMES M. BARRIE**

lyrics by **CAROLYN LEIGH** music by **MORRIS (MOOSE) CHARLAP**

additional lyrics by **BETTY COMDEM & ADOLF GREEN** additional music by **JULE STYNE**

originally directed, choreographed & adapted by **JEROME ROBBINS**

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Because *Peter Pan* has children on stage and in attendance, all audience members are required to wear masks, regardless of their vaccination status.

Peter Pan is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTL. www.mtishows.com

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