

Daily Pilot

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2020 IN REVIEW



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

A WOMAN PRAYS at a makeshift memorial for Lakers legend Kobe Bryant outside Pelican Crest, the gated community in Newport Coast where Bryant lived with his family. His daughter Gianna, 13, and seven other people died with him in a helicopter crash in Calabasas on Jan. 26.

Top stories of the year in Newport Beach

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Like other cities in Orange County and around the world, Newport Beach is not alone in its experiences in a year shaped largely by the ongoing pandemic and sweeping shutdown orders.

The city saw beach closures, tragedy, new members of its City Council, a presidential visit, an agreement for a homeless shelter and the cancellation of a time-honored Christmas tradition as part of a number of events that rocked 2020.

Here are some of the top stories of Newport Beach in 2020:

KOBE BRYANT, NEWPORT BEACH RESIDENTS DIE IN HELICOPTER CRASH

In January, Kobe Bryant, 41; his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna; John, Keri and Alyssa

Altobelli; Sarah and Payton Chester; Christina Mauser and Ara Zobayan died in a helicopter crash in Calabasas in late January.

The helicopter had been en route to a game at Bryant's Mamba Sports Academy in Thousand Oaks.

But as Los Angeles and the world mourned the loss of the Lakers superstar, so too did Orange County, who, along with Bryant who residents said they knew as the father of four that lived just up the street, and Gianna, a strong leader who looked out for the underdog, lost also the young athletes and their parents aboard the aircraft.

Seven of the victims lived in Newport Beach and two lived in neighboring Huntington Beach.

See *Newport*, page A2



Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

ABOVE: President Donald Trump arrives at John Wayne Airport on Oct. 18. Trump was in Orange County for a fundraiser in Newport Beach weeks before the presidential election.



LEFT: Protesters including Marcia Brown march from the Fashion Island entrance during a Black Lives Matter demonstration which began at MacArthur Boulevard and East Coast Highway in Newport Beach in June.

Don Leach | Staff Photographer

Newport Beach fire gets first dose of vaccine

About 45 employees were vaccinated over Christmas week on a voluntary and first-come, first-serve basis.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

The first doses of the Moderna vaccine against the coronavirus have arrived as another single-day case count has been broken in Orange County.

The city of Newport Beach announced Tuesday that about 45 Newport Beach Fire Department employees received the first dose of the Moderna vaccine, which was approved by the Food and Drug Administration on Dec. 18. The vaccine requires two doses, administered intramuscularly 28 days apart.

Officials said that they expect the number of vaccinated staff to increase to 65 by the end of Wednesday.

There are about 115 full-time employees in the Newport Beach Fire Department, according to Newport Beach Fire Chief Jeff Boyles.

The vaccinations were administered at the Central Net Joint Powers Training Center in Huntington Beach, which is one of the sites authorized by the Orange County Health Care Agency to distribute the vaccines to the fire agencies in Fountain Valley, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Costa Mesa and Laguna Beach. Two other such sites exist in Irvine and Anaheim.

The arrival of the Moderna vaccine comes as part of the state's first wave of distribution, which health officials said would go to healthcare workers, residents of long-term care facilities and first responders.

Some healthcare workers were vaccinated earlier this month with the arrival of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

See *Vaccine*, page A4

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

2020 DAILY PILOT PHOTOS OF THE YEAR: THE PANDEMIC
PAGE A3

Jim Trenton to ride his radio morning show wave into the New Year

BY ANDREW TURNER

If you wanted to go somewhere you had never gone before, 2020 might not have been the year to do so.

The coronavirus pandemic is unlike anything most of us have seen in our lives, and one local radio personality is set to embark on what might be a once-in-a-lifetime broadcast.

Jim "Poorman" Trenton of KOCI 101.5 FM Radio has plans to put on a 28-hour show to ring in the new year.

The show will begin at 7 a.m. on New Year's Eve and concludes at 11 a.m. on New Year's Day.

Trenton said he has had a fascination with being on the air for an extended period of time, and with traditions like watching the ball drop in front of a sea of revelers in Times Square scrapped, this is a year to be different.

"I just thought, 'OK, if I do something like this during the pandemic year and get some

charities in there and stuff, I thought this could be really kind of cool to do and it would be kind of a once-in-a-lifetime thing,'" Trenton said. "I honestly don't even think I'm going to want to ever do this again."

Some of the charities that Trenton is expected to highlight with public service announcements to his listeners include Working Wardrobes, the Illumination Foundation, Someone Cares Soup Kitchen, Friends of Newport Beach Animal Shelter and Newport Beach Arts Foundation.

Listeners are also invited to call in and share their favorite charity on the air, and of course, make song requests.

Often, Trenton enjoys walking into the studio with a word of the day or a theme in mind. Listeners then call in with a request that contains the word in the title or lyrics of the song or in the name of the artist.

It can also be a nexus, so if the word is "rain," one might call in

the stormy AC/DC single "Thunderstruck."

"There's no music playlist when I walk in," Trenton said. "I just give them the theme, and people every day are like mini music directors. They call in or they text me or social media, all these different songs that relate to the theme, and it works because everything is related to the theme, even though the music is different and diverse."

The audience will hear from Newport Beach Councilman Will O'Neill twice during the 28-hour show, as the city's former mayor is a regular on the morning show. His segment debuted as "The Mayor's Minute" in April.

"It usually lasts about 10 minutes, but the general idea here is to provide information to his listeners about what is going on in both the state and county and local levels — rarely at the national level — but it's an opportunity to provide more transparency to issues that people care about,"



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

JIM TRENTON is a KOCI 101.5 FM Radio personality whose show, Poorman's Morning Rush, plays Monday through Friday, will be doing a 28-hour show from 7 a.m. New Year's Eve to 11 a.m. New Year's Day.

O'Neill said.

O'Neill is a fan of country music, but he said he makes such a song request once per week to accommodate a wider audience.

Asked what song he might select

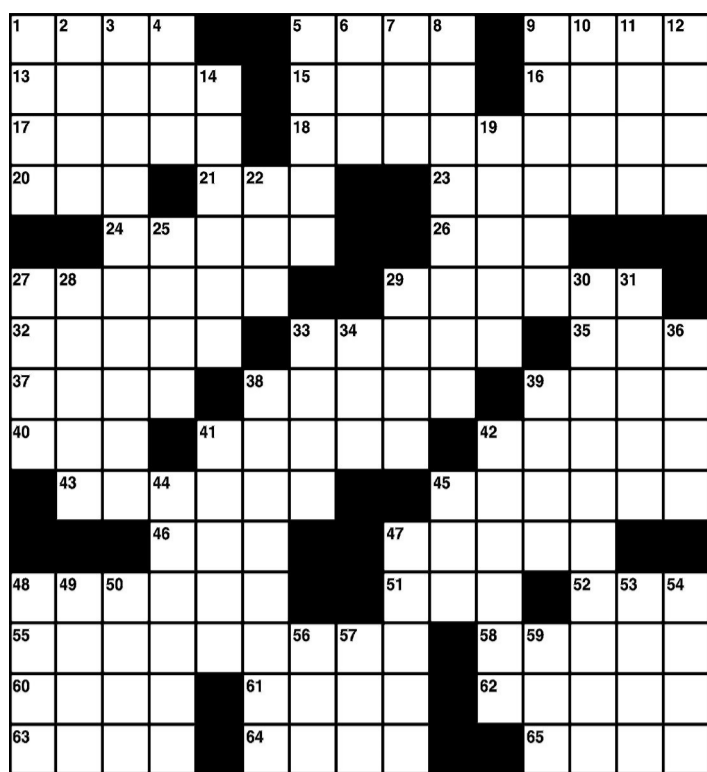
See *Trenton*, page A3

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

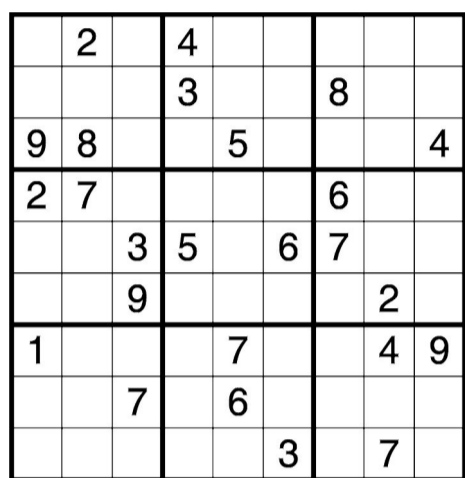
- 1 Baseball great Ty
- 5 On the _ of the moment
- 9 _ at; continues to bother
- 13 Needed a doctor
- 15 Dwindle
- 16 Hold tightly
- 17 Woodwind instrument
- 18 Plato's famous pupil
- 20 Facial feature
- 21 Fellow
- 23 Self-assured
- 24 _ on; select with a mouse
- 26 Sullivan & O'Neill
- 27 Shocked
- 29 Rascals
- 32 _ paper; tissue for streamers
- 33 Soiled
- 35 American _; MA's state tree
- 37 Palette array
- 38 Expenses
- 39 Wiesbaden wife
- 40 Word of agreement
- 41 Religious tenet
- 42 Allure; entice
- 43 Memorizes
- 45 Extol
- 46 New York athlete
- 47 _ at; derides
- 48 Point the finger at
- 51 On one's _; independent
- 52 Barron, to Melania
- 55 Kid in the next desk
- 58 Actor Sir Michael _
- 60 Massive
- 61 Seek divine guidance
- 62 Homes for bees
- 63 _ red; becomes furious
- 64 Casual shirts
- 65 Sit for a spell



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 A3.

DOWN

- 1 Eatery
- 2 Like hair that needs washing
- 3 Dressing choice
- 4 Wager
- 5 Actress Hilary
- 6 Golfing term
- 7 Prefix for cycle
- 8 Esteems
- 9 Narcissist's problem
- 10 Fine _; music, film, painting, etc.
- 11 Flooring piece
- 12 Drove too fast
- 14 Tragic end

- 19 Currently
- 22 Read the riot _ to; berate
- 25 Drinks like a dog
- 27 Sore
- 28 Oliver's dinner
- 29 Peruvian miss: abbr.
- 30 Too lenient
- 31 Smacks
- 33 Bone lovers
- 34 Suffix for hero or vandal
- 36 DVD remote button
- 38 Disdain
- 39 Dread
- 41 Girl's attire
- 42 Wartime ditch
- 44 Entertains
- 45 Parishioner's seat
- 47 Baby kangaroos
- 48 German exclamations
- 49 Telltale sign
- 50 Actor Nicolas
- 53 Snake eyes, in craps
- 54 Cozy home
- 56 TV's "Who Do You Think You _?"
- 57 Monogram for Edison
- 59 Up in the _; not yet settled

Tribune Media Services

4 suspects charged with allegedly stealing motor vehicle parts in F.V.

BY ANDREW TURNER

Four people have been charged after allegedly being involved in the grand theft of auto parts in Fountain Valley early Saturday morning, authorities said. Miguel Rodriguez, 39, Lorena Castillo, 39, and Marcelle Coleman, 30, all of Los Angeles, and Felipe Batalla, 50, a transient of Fountain Valley, have been charged with conspiracy to commit a crime, receiving stolen property and grand theft. Each also faces misdemeanor counts for possession of burglary tools and possession of methamphetamine. Coleman and Rodriguez also face misdemeanor counts of suspicion of resisting an officer, and Coleman and Batalla face one count of possession of

controlled substance paraphernalia. Officers had responded to a call reporting the potential theft of motor vehicle parts in the 18000 block of Mt. Langley at 3:20 a.m. on Saturday, Farmer said. A containment area was set up and police stopped a dark blue Chrysler 300 as it was leaving the area. The four suspects were arrested after police searched their vehicle and found various motor vehicle parts. The items found included five cut catalytic converters and one cut muffler, police said. Officers also found three reciprocating saws and additional tools used for burglary, as well as methamphetamine and narcotics. Officers conducted an inspection of vehicles in the area and found two

cars that had allegedly had their catalytic converters stolen, one with a catalytic converter that had been partially cut off, and another car that had been broken into. Coleman is on probation for robbery in Los Angeles County, Farmer said. Orange County jail records show that Coleman is being held on \$20,000 bail. A video from late November shared by a member of the public on the Fountain Valley Police Department Facebook page on Monday appears to show four suspects stealing catalytic converters in the area. It is unclear whether the suspects charged Saturday were involved.

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Don Leach | Staff Photographer

BEACHGOERS ENJOY a warm day north of the Newport Beach pier in April just as Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a "hard close" of state and local beaches in Orange County.

NEWPORT

Continued from page A1

RESTRICTIONS ON VACATION RENTALS IMPLEMENTED

Newport Beach placed a six-week moratorium on vacation rentals in the city in an effort to tamp down on visitors early on in the pandemic.

Councilwoman Diane Dixon said in April that market forces drove down about 95% of local short-term rental business in the city, but that Newport remained an "attractive nuisance."

The moratorium was approved unanimously, with Muldoon absent, and was to run through May 20 or through the duration of the city's local emergency.

More than 1,500 homes in Newport Beach held short-term lodging permits, concentrated on the Balboa Peninsula and Balboa Island and in Corona del Mar neighborhoods.

Restrictions were eventually relaxed in May. Rentals resumed on May 20, provided that visitors remained for at least three days.

On Newport Island, the moratorium was rescinded in June and required four-night stays.

The minimum-stay requirement will lift when the city rescinds its locally declared emergency.

NEWPORT, ORANGE COUNTY TARGETED IN BEACH CLOSURES

After an April heatwave brought tens of thousands of people to Orange County beaches, Gov. Gavin Newsom targeted them for a "hard closure," which he argued threatened state efforts to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus.

Cities complied with the order but weren't happy about it.

Newport Beach and Huntington Beach had already implemented crowd control measures such as closures of their respective boardwalks, piers and parking restrictions.

Some city and county officials considered the beach closures an overreach of Newsom's power as governor.

Newport filed a court brief in support of neighboring Huntington Beach. Newport Beach Councilman Kevin Muldoon — now mayor pro tem — filed his own lawsuit against Newsom's order.



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

VOTERS MAKE their ballot selections on Nov. 3, Election Day 2020 at the Newport Beach Civic Center.

BLM PROTESTERS DEMONSTRATE IN NEWPORT BEACH

Demonstrations against institutional racism and police brutality emerged across the nation during the summer after George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, died in Minneapolis while being restrained by white police Officer Derek Chauvin.

These demonstrations also appeared in Newport Beach, where hundreds of protesters chanted the names of Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery.

On June 3, four protests were organized in Newport Beach.

The protests were peaceful with the exception of an aggressive driver who allegedly grazed several marchers as he sped down Balboa Boulevard and another man who allegedly pulled a handgun from his backpack following a verbal altercation with protesters.

ROBICHEAUX CASE HEADS TO STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Orange County District Atty. Todd Spitzer announced in February that he intended to drop all charges made in 2018 against a Newport Beach surgeon and his girlfriend, whom then-District Attorney Tony Rackauckas had portrayed as a predatory team who lured, drugged and raped multiple women.

When the charges were filed against orthopedic surgeon and one-time reality TV personality Grant Robicheaux and girlfriend Cerissa Riley, Rackauckas claimed investigators had "thousands of videos" in evidence that showed there could be "hundreds" or "more than a thousand" victims.

Citing a thorough review of evidence since he took office last year,

Spitzer said there were no photos or videos that depict women being sexually violated.

Robicheaux and Riley have denied all allegations of nonconsensual sex. The decision on whether or not the case would head to trial or be dismissed was delayed to April.

Orange County Superior Court Judge Gregory Jones declined to dismiss the charges in June, but attorneys for Robicheaux and Riley argued that Jones should step down from the case because of a bias for an alleged victim's attorney.

The case was later handed off to the state attorney general's office for prosecution in August.

PRESIDENT TRUMP VISITS NEWPORT FOR PRIVATE FUNDRAISER

President Donald Trump visited Newport Beach in October to attend a private fundraiser at the Lido Isle mansion of tech mogul Palmer Luckey.

The fundraiser managed to raise \$10 million for Trump's reelection efforts. Thousands of people both in support of and against Trump lined the streets of Newport Beach that weekend. There were no arrests related to the president's visit, police said.

The fundraiser was initially scheduled for Oct. 6, but was delayed after Trump contracted COVID-19. Trump later lost in his bid for reelection to President-elect Joe Biden.

AVERY, O'NEILL REELECTED, BLOM WINS COUNCIL SEAT

In what was a presidential election season, Councilman Brad Avery and Will O'Neill were reelected to the

See Newport, page A3

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