

County supes boost veterans cemetery project

The board approves \$20 million to help move the controversial proposal forward after years of delays.

BY BEN BRAZIL

The Orange County Board of Supervisors approved \$20 million this week toward a controversial veterans cemetery in Anaheim Hills that has sat in limbo for about a decade.

The funds are expected to help move the project forward after veterans fought for years to have the cemetery constructed in Irvine. Despite their advocacy, local politicians couldn't agree on where the cemetery should be placed.

"This gives us a fighting opportunity to get a veteran cemetery that we have been trying for years to get elsewhere," said Supervisor Don Wagner, who proposed the item with board Chairman Andrew Do.

The proposal to build the cemetery in the Gypsum Canyon area on county land in Anaheim Hills has gathered support from a host of politicians, including the supervisors, Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer and Rep. Lou Correa, among other supporters.

"We just need to get a final resting place for people — men and women and their families — who have served and sacrificed for our great country," Supervisor Katrina Foley said at the board meeting.

The Anaheim City Council showed unanimous support last week for the Anaheim Hills proposal.

The Veterans Alliance of Orange County, which has advocated for the cemetery, is in support of the Anaheim Hills site, as are all Veterans of Foreign Wars posts in the county and several American Legion posts.

"We've been trying to get a veterans cemetery, and we've been stuck in the quagmire of Irvine all of this century," said Bill Cook, chair of the Orange County Veterans Memorial Park Foundation. "Your contribution will move this cemetery forward."

It appears to be a long shot for the cemetery to ever be built in Irvine.

After several officials held an event at the Anaheim Hills site earlier this month, state Sen. Tom Umberg pulled a bill that would have required the cemetery to be located in Irvine.

Veterans had grown tired of local politicians' inability to decide where the cemetery should be built.

VALOR President Nick Bernardino said at the board meeting that veterans were mistreated and disrespected over the years while

See **Veterans**, page R5



Photos by Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

STATE SEN. Dave Min takes a tour of Mary's Kitchen, a homeless service provider, in Orange. The city is threatening to close the service provider.

State officials come to aid of homeless nonprofit in Orange



ABOVE: A volunteer prepares meals as, in the background, Mary's Kitchen President and CEO Gloria Suess, right, speaks with California assembly member Sharon Quirk-Silva, second from right, during a tour of the homeless service provider. The city is threatening to close Mary's Kitchen.

RIGHT: Homeless and others who need assistance enter Mary's Kitchen.



The city sent Mary's Kitchen a letter last month threatening to terminate its lease.

BY BEN BRAZIL

When the city of Orange sent Mary's Kitchen a letter prematurely terminating its lease last month, many of the hundreds of homeless people the nonprofit serves were left wondering what they will do next.

Many of them rely on the various services that Mary's Kitchen offers, which includes three meals, six days a week, to anyone who seeks them out. There are also showers and laundry facilities available, and the nonprofit receives mail for hundreds of people.

But the nonprofit is not giving up on its clients.

Mary's Kitchen has been fighting back, hiring an attorney to represent them against the city and now amassing the support of state officials.

See **Homeless**, page R4

Plaque to mark historic spot where outlaws killed sheriff



A 2016 PHOTO of a berm near where Barton Mound once stood in Irvine.

Chris Jepsen

BY BEN BRAZIL

An important piece of California history that was likely destroyed during the creation of the 405 Freeway in Irvine may finally be commemorated with a plaque after being on the state's historic register for more than eight decades.

The Irvine City Council voted this week in favor of installing a marker at Barton Mound, the famed site where L.A. County Sheriff James Barton and three of his men were shot to death in 1857 by outlaw Juan Flores and his gang.

Flores, a convicted horse thief, had escaped from San Quentin prison and was heading south with his gang, "Las Manillas," or the Handcuffs. Some media reports have said that about 150 outlaws and prison escapees rode

with Flores, but local historian Eric Plunkett said there were only eight or nine members of the Flores gang.

They arrived in San Juan Capistrano, where they stole supplies and killed shopkeeper George Pluggart. In response, Barton and a posse of five men rode south in pursuit of Flores and his gang.

Chris Jepsen, assistant archivist of the Orange County Archives and president of the Orange County Historical Society, said that Barton was told that he didn't have enough men to confront Flores, but he didn't heed the warning.

After Barton and his men were killed, locals organized a posse of at least 120 to bring Flores to justice. Flores escaped capture several times, including leaping over

See **Plaque**, page R5



Photos by Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

EMPLOYEES HOLD signs during a walkout to protest alleged sexual harassment and discrimination at Activision Blizzard.

Activision Blizzard workers walk out against alleged sexual harassment, discrimination

About 150 workers at Activision Blizzard's Irvine location staged a walkout Wednesday in protest of alleged sexual harassment and discrimination at the video game giant.

In late July, the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing filed a lawsuit alleging unfair pay and reduced promotional opportunities for female employees as well as unchecked harassment at the publicly traded company, which is known for its "Warcraft" and "Candy Crush" games, among other popular titles.

An organizer at the walkout who declined to give her name said the protest was held "in solidarity with the victims who have stood up, who have made their voices heard. And we are looking to amplify those voices as well as to create a



call to action on the demands that we listed."

A company statement sent via email by employee Christy Um read, "We are fully committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and rewarding environment for all of our employees around the world. We support their right to express their opinions and concerns in a safe and

respectful manner, without fear of retaliation.

The company does not retaliate for any such decision, should employees choose to participate or not. The company will not require employees to take time off to participate in this walkout."

The walkout began at 10 a.m. and continued until 2 p.m.

No further actions were planned, according to walkout representatives.

— Raul Roa and TCN reports

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Coalition comes out against board's ethnic studies forum

BY BEN BRAZIL

A community coalition held a news conference on Tuesday to voice opposition to the Orange County Board of Education's controversial forums on ethnic studies and critical race theory.

The event was held just a few hours before the first forum, but for weeks the heavily conservative board has faced criticism for organizing a one-sided panel of speakers for their two forums on Tuesday night and Aug. 24.

The gathering was organized by the Truth in Education coalition, which is made up of parents, students, religious leaders and educators from Orange County.

The coalition organized the news conference with Cal State Northridge professor Theresa Montaño, who resigned from the panel earlier this week.

Each of the five board members invited one guest for the panel. The board's only Democrat, Beckie Gomez, invited Montaño.

Montaño said in an interview at the news conference that she considered that there wouldn't be a pro-ethnic studies voice at the forum without her appearance, but she ultimately chose to not attend because it seemed like the event would be slanted and lack room for meaningful dialogue.

Activists and scholars also warned her that the event could be unsafe, she said.

The forums were originally planned to be held at a venue in Rossmoor, but trustees determined the security costs would be too high. The board instead opted to hold the meetings at its Costa Mesa location.

"If I had felt that tonight was going to open the door to meaningful dialogue, and a meaningful exchange of how to implement ethnic studies, whether I was the only voice, or more than one voice, I would have attended," said Montaño, who teaches Chicana and Chicano studies.

More than a dozen people gathered in front of Eastbluff Elementary School in



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

DR. THERESA MONTAÑO, a CSUN Chicano Studies professor, speaks during a Truth in Education news conference at Eastbluff Elementary School in Newport Beach.

Newport Beach for the demonstration against the board, just a few minutes away from where the first forum was held.

While the speakers took turns at the microphone, a few people stood behind them with signs saying "With Justice and Equity for All" and "Stop the Hate Educate."

"I'd like to state publicly that the so-called expert panel of people who will be speaking at the O.C. Board of Education hearing later today are not speaking from the experience of ethnic studies," said Jose Paolo Magcalas, a trustee for the Anaheim Elementary School District and assistant professor at Cal State Los Angeles.

"They want to spread misinformation, they want to spread lies. Shame on them and shame on the organizers of this public hearing. I highly urge the public to seek the truth, empirical research from the actual researchers who study ethnic studies in schools, and of course the educators who've actually taught these amazing classes."

The state approved the ethnic studies model curriculum in March after almost two years of discussion. It's meant to provide students with an opportunity to learn about the history, cultures, struggles and contributions of historically marginalized groups of people.

"I can tell you that there was a great deal of work and care that goes into creating

a welcoming and safe environment for all students, whether they are white or students of color," Santa Ana teacher Roselinn Lee, who was on the 2020 ethnic studies model curriculum advisory committee, said at the news conference. "No one is made to feel that they are responsible for the ills of the past but, rather, are inspired to address the ways to move forward in the future."

The O.C. Board of Education has regularly stirred controversy. Last year, the board sparked outrage when members voted to re-open schools in the fall without mandatory masks or increased social distancing. The vote came as COVID-19 cases surged and as a large contingent of anti-maskers emerged in Orange County.

Members of the board, who are elected to four-year terms, approve charter schools and hear inter-district transfer and expulsion appeals.

The board also approves the annual budget of the Orange County Department of Education, which is distinct from the board.

The department held its own forum last week to dispel rumors about ethnic studies and critical race theory.

Experts, university researchers and superintendents shared the benefits of the curriculum.

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O.C. Board of Ed forum panelists warn of the dangers of teaching critical race theory in schools

BY SARA CARDINE

California's new ethnic studies curriculum — a set of guidelines for introducing concepts of racism, equity and justice in K-12 classrooms — has drawn fierce opposition by some in Orange County who fear such instruction will further divide students based on race.

A discussion Tuesday hosted by the county's Board of Education aimed to provide a forum for parents to express concerns and questions about the curriculum and hear from a panel of scholars and experts on the curriculum and whether it would incorporate tenets of critical race theory.

"In the Orange County community, interest and inquiries into the subject matter and its possible ties with critical race theory are growing exponentially," board President Mari Barke said in a news conference before the forum. "Our community members and taxpayers deserve an open, transparent dialog on these two important topics."

The event created some controversy Monday, however, after one scheduled speaker, Cal State Northridge professor Theresa Montaño, resigned after discovering her fellow panelists mainly had anti-ethnic-studies leanings.

"If I had felt that tonight was going to open the door to meaningful dialogue, and a meaningful exchange of how to implement ethnic studies ... I would have attended," she said Tuesday.

Inside the boardroom, passions ran high as parents expressed their concern at the notion of young children learning about white privilege, oppression and system racism. None of them defended ethnic studies in the classroom.

Linda Padilla-Smyth,

mother of two biracial daughters, worried the curriculum would divide students by teaching them to cast white people as oppressors and people of color as victims.

"I do not want my children to hate either side of their heritage," she said. "Sacramento [officials have] taken it upon themselves to indoctrinate our children to areas that are sensitive and require deep thought and care."

Catherine DeCeglie, whose two children attend school in Huntington Beach, called critical race theory an "evil ideology" that would only wither kids' confidence and motivation to do well in school.

"But maybe that's the objective," she continued. "You don't want our Black, brown and biracial students to succeed, and you want to kick the white students in the teeth for something they have no control over."

Walter H. Myers III, adjunct faculty member for Biola University's Master of Arts in Science & Religion program, spoke on how critical theory began as an idea that drew from previous philosophies, including Marxism, to explain societal structures of privilege and power.

By the 1970s, academics began looking at American legal systems and racial inequality through a similar lens, considering systems built and maintained by oppressors and leveraged against the oppressed.

Such theorists, he continued, rejected equal opportunity, merit and color blindness as myths perpetuated by those in power and were antithetical to the civil rights movement.

"CRT argues that America's legal, economic and political systems are inextricably racist," Myers said. "It is no longer an academic exercise, but it is a philoso-

phy with real-life consequences."

Maimon Schwarzschild, a law professor at the University of San Diego, discussed how school districts who expose students and teachers to racist or racially abusive lessons and curricula may be legally liable under certain federal and state anti-discrimination statutes, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

"I urge the board, at the very least, to ascertain as fully and accurately as possible what is being taught and inculcated and in what ways in the county public's school systems, and to ensure that parents and citizens have a full opportunity to be informed of the education — or possible mis-education — being provided in Orange County."

Speaker Wenyuan Wu, invited to the panel after Montaño's resignation, is executive director of the Californians for Equal Rights Foundation which, in part, helps parents analyze policies and programs being considered by local school boards.

She advised residents to learn more about what's being adopted by school boards and being taught in local classrooms and advocate for programs they wish to see.

"It is time that ordinary people stand up and demand a public education system to meet the expectations of our communities and the 21st-century global society. We're facing a well-funded and well-organized battlefield of ideologues, activists, corporate elites, political establishments and unions. However, we are on the right side of history."

Tuesday's forum was the first of two — another panel discussion is scheduled for Aug. 24.

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HOMELESS

Continued from page R1

On Thursday morning, state Sen. Dave Min and Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva took a tour of Mary's Kitchen and voiced their support for the nonprofit.

Quirk-Silva said she's known about Mary's Kitchen for years but heard about the lease termination about six weeks ago. Mary's Kitchen has been operating in Orange since the mid-1980s and it's been at its current location, at 517 W. Struck Ave., since 1994.

Mary's Kitchen is a humble nonprofit driven by donations and volunteers, some of whom are themselves homeless.

Quirk-Silva said that some cities in Orange County, like Santa Ana and Fullerton, have taken an active role in working to alleviate homelessness in the county. However, there are other cities that aren't doing much, she said, adding that Orange has a responsibility to help fix the homeless crisis.

"So here, Orange has this one example that we can clearly see is being used, and now they're going to push this out," Quirk-Silva said.

"What's their strategy for closing this and how are they going to respond? The truth is, they don't want to. They want to just close this down and then let somebody else deal with the problem."

Min said he heard about the potential closure of Mary's Kitchen about three weeks ago.

"My immediate reaction was, 'Why is the city of Orange trying to get rid of one of the few service providers in its city?'" Min said.

Min said it's an attempt to sweep the problem of homelessness under the rug. Yet he said that closing Mary's Kitchen would only exacerbate the issue, as the homeless individuals who frequent the nonprofit will then spread into the wider community.

"They're not going to disappear," Min said. "They're going to still be in Orange County, still in this area.



Photos by Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

ASSEMBLYWOMAN Sharon Quirk-Silva speaks to Mary's Kitchen client Gilberto Ventrura during a tour of the nonprofit.



MARY'S KITCHEN President and CEO Gloria Suess said she hopes that the backing of the state officials will keep the nonprofit open. "I am just so hopeful now," Suess said.

They're just going to move to the streets. They're going to move to bus shelters. They're going to get less care. They're going to be sicker and it will cost us more, as far as our services.

"Homelessness is not a city-by-city problem, it's a regional problem. As someone who represents Orange but also a number of other cities that are impacted by homelessness, if Orange shuts this place down, that will overall have detrimental impacts to the region I represent. So I think it's totally appropriate for me to weigh in here as a state representative."

Michael Sean Wright, founder of Wound Walk OC — which provides first-aid treatment to the homeless, echoed Min's remarks on Thursday.

"People here are accustomed to know that they can come here to get help," Wright said. "If we were to shut down this community resource, where are these folks going to go?"

Orange city spokesman Paul Sitkoff said in an email on Thursday that he couldn't comment on the closure of Mary's Kitchen due to potential pending litigation.

Gloria Suess, who leads the nonprofit, said that having the backing of the state officials gives her more faith that Mary's Kitchen will be able to stay open.

"I am just so hopeful now," Suess said. "I just know that with all this continued support and all the prayers, that the city will have a change of heart. I truly believe that. And we can continue keeping people alive long enough for miracles to happen."

On June 18, the city sent Mary's Kitchen a demand letter terminating its lease three years early. The city is giving the nonprofit until Sept. 18 to move out of the property, and it asked Mary's Kitchen to provide the city with a move-out plan within two weeks.

While the letter, signed by City Manager Rick Otto, commends Mary's Kitchen, it goes on to state that the nonprofit's actions only serve "to enable homelessness and can no longer be supported by the city."

The letter says there has been an increase in crime and calls for police stemming from Mary's Kitchen. The city says this has created an "unreasonable demand on city services."

The letter also says that the city recently approved an affordable housing project nearby, which is "incompatible" with Mary's Kitchen, and is located at the end of an industrial cul de sac. An Orange Police Department headquarters is on the street, but there aren't any homes.

In response to the city's letter, the nonprofit hired attorney Brooke Weitzman, who sent the city a letter on July 9 contending that the city's demand letter doesn't include a substantive reason for prematurely ending a lease agreement. It asks the city to rescind its letter. "The notice fails to meet both substantive and procedural standards for early termination of agreement," the letter says.

"The only reference to

the lease in the notice states that the city may terminate the agreement however, it fails to detail any reason supported by the terms of the agreement.

"Despite acknowledgment of the critical support Mary's has over the years, the letter draws baseless conclusions that are simply not supported by facts, effectively blaming Mary's Kitchen for the city's failure to address the housing crisis, healthcare needs of its most impoverished residents, and any and all other issues in the public space outside of Mary's Kitchen property. Surely no term in the lease puts the burden on Mary's Kitchen to redress the city's failures to meet the needs of low-income and unhoused individuals."

Weitzman's letter also calls for the city to determine the environmental impact of closing Mary's Kitchen to keep in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

The letter says that water and soil can be contaminated from the loss of Mary's Kitchen's hygiene facilities, and other public areas could be impacted as homeless people are forced to relocate.

Weitzman also argues that the lease termination violates the city's housing element, which requires the city to consider homeless people, low-income people, seniors and disabled people — all of whom frequent Mary's Kitchen.

On Thursday, Weitzman said during an interview at Mary's Kitchen that they're hoping the city responds to the growing support behind the nonprofit and rescinds the lease termination before any lawsuit has to be filed. Weitzman said she will be working on sending another legal letter to the city over the next couple weeks.

"We haven't filed anything yet because we're still hoping that as there's more and more attention to it, the city realizes that the voters overwhelmingly support Mary's and will reconsider," Weitzman said.

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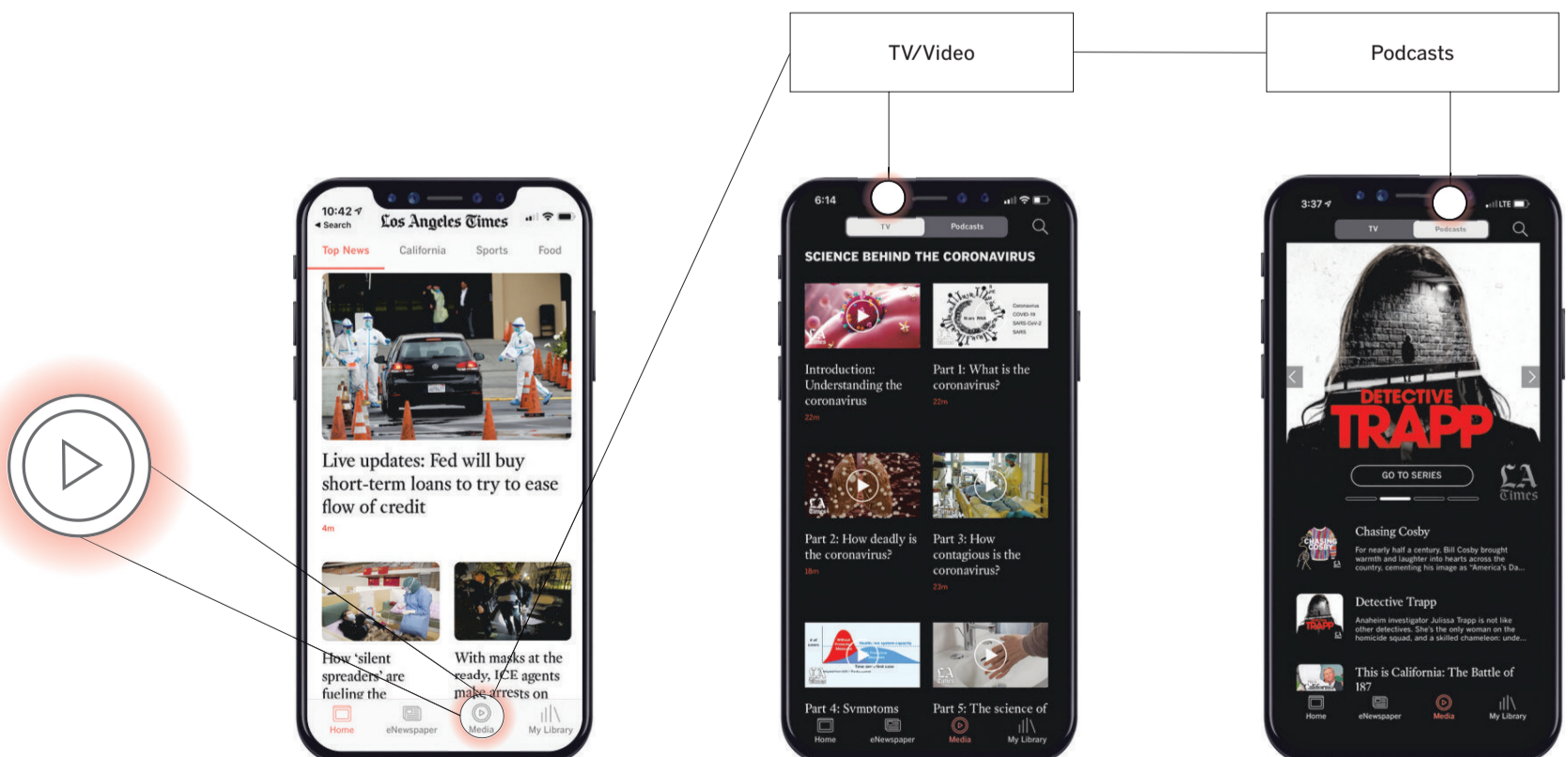
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Contemporary art across mediums takes over Brea Gallery till Sept. 10

Brea Gallery's "Applied Practice" focuses on contemporary art made from craft media such as ceramics, glass, metal working, fabric, neon lights and more.

The 16 exhibiting artists include Dani Bonnet, Ashoke Chhabra, Austin Fields, John Flores, Alex Gano, Annette Heully, Erin Hupp, Nadim Kurani, Cecilia Lee, Diana Markessinis, Beatriz Mora-Hussar, Sheila Noseworthy, Aya Oki, Hannah Pierce, Anna-lena Sauer and Nao Yamamoto.

Chhabra's sculptural pieces on display are lamps made of wood and glass. They're highly textured and have fantastical visual elements. Some look like set pieces belonging to a fairy tale production while others would've fit into Tim Burton's "Beetlejuice."

"[My work] takes its cue from the natural world but is rarely faithful in nature," Chhabra wrote on his website. "Many are essentially riffs on forms found in the plant and animal kingdom, or better yet strange artifacts brought back from imagined worlds. The more bizarre the better."

Flores, who graduated from Cal State Fullerton in 2019, also incorporates nature in his ceramic pieces. In work like "Mother Barrel" a humanistic face emerges from a plant. His sculptures deal with themes of life, death and ephemerality.

Pierce's ceramic sculptures, plates and mugs are surreal in aesthetic. She portrays characters in urban and domestic environments. In "Drooling Over You," 2018, the head of a girl wearing pigtailed sucks on a



OCTO LAMPS, 2016, left, and **Bent Lily Floor Lamp**, 2007, far right, by Ashoke Chhabra at the "Applied Practice" art exhibit.



MOTHER BARREL, 2021, by John Flores.



LIFE CYCLES, 2019, by John Flores.

Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

IF YOU GO

What: "Applied Practice"
When: Through Sept. 10; Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.
Where: Brea Gallery, 1 Civic Center Circle, Brea
Cost: General admission \$3
Info: breartgallery.com



STAR GAZERS, 2019, by John Flores.

lollipop while drool spills over a melting tall and distorted apartment complex.

"I sarcastically pair dismal scenes with pleasurable pops of color, playful perspectives, figure distortion and an abundance of childlike references," she wrote in her artist statement.

"In my most recent works, there is an obvious focus on addictions and habits, with an emphasis on oral fixations. Although these are adult issues, I draw attention to childlike qualities when pertaining to concepts of excess, lack of self-control and escapism."

— From staff reports

Art that aims to point toward a sustainable future

As a record-breaking heatwave that's been attributed to climate change hits the West Coast, a group of artists explore the topic in a Santa Ana art gallery.

The Orange County Center for Contemporary Art put an international call out for "The Anthropocene Epiphany: Art and Climate Change" exhibit.

The show is centered on Anthropocene, a time period in which humans have a significant impact on Earth's geology and ecosystems. Artists responded with work across all mediums — painting, drawing, collage, photography, sculpture, video, installations and fashion pieces.

Some depict the effects of pollution like artist Fatima Franks, who works with digital mixed media collages. In "Pink Sky and the



Courtesy OCCCA

SUMMER IN HADES, Catherine Bennaton, 2020

Flying Fish," the Cal State Fullerton graduate illustrates the idea of how capitalism and consumerism thrives while the planet suf-

fers. Two headless men in corporate suits and ties sit on Victorian-style chairs in the forefront of the collage.

While factories in the background pump away waste and industrial smog, Franks describes the flying fish as a symbol of resolve, hope and the discovery of better outcomes.

Los Angeles-based artist Catherine Bennaton also considers the apocalyptic aesthetic of landscape in "Summer in Hades," in which she paints an image of a California fire.

Beverly Jacobs started out as a scientist. The now Irvine-based artist creates ceramic sculptures. "Topsy Turvy" is a sculpture composed of stacked ceramic pieces in a totem structure. It's topped with a ceramic piece that appears to be a house. In the sculpture's description, Jacobs wrote, "Humans have devastated our environment, resulting in grave climate changes ...

What hit these houses? A hurricane? Cyclone? Failure of rain soaked, oversaturated soil?"

Artist Pallavi Sharma, located in San Ramon, explores geopolitical issues in her work often focusing on Asian American women's cultural production and activism.

"Beyond Rituals" is an installation of five rolls of toilet paper suspended above five lotas (brass pots) used by villagers to carry water for early morning rituals in India.

In the description, Sharma wrote, "As the paper scrolls down into the lotas, it resembles flowing water; intends to start a discourse on interrelationship of cultural practices and its impact on ecology and consciously think about our lifestyle choices and hab-

IF YOU GO

What: "The Anthropocene Epiphany: Art and Climate Change"
When: Through Aug. 21; Monday through Wednesday by appointment or Friday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.
Where: OCCCA, 117 N. Sycamore, Santa Ana
Cost: Free
Info: occca.org

its."

Other artists capture ideas on mundane human experiences, nostalgia for nature or environmentally sustainable art practices like the use of recycled materials.

— From staff reports

VETERANS

Continued from page R1

advocating for the cemetery in Irvine.

"We suffered in Irvine," Bernardino said. "... We got booed. We got hissed. Just like we came home from the airport in Vietnam, it was really reliving that experience. One of the most disgusting experiences."

One of the areas considered in Irvine, called the ARDA site, was backed by some residents and former Irvine mayor and current Councilman Larry Agran.

Other officials, residents and veterans groups favored the construction of the cemetery on a piece of

land in the Great Park that was once destined to be a golf course.

Both sites were part of the now-defunct El Toro Marine Corps Air Station.

The ARDA site was chosen by officials in 2014. But in 2017, another site was proposed, with FivePoint offering a land swap deal that was eventually voted down by Irvine residents in the 2018 primary elections.

Later, the council voted to build the cemetery on land that was slated to be a golf course in the Great Park.

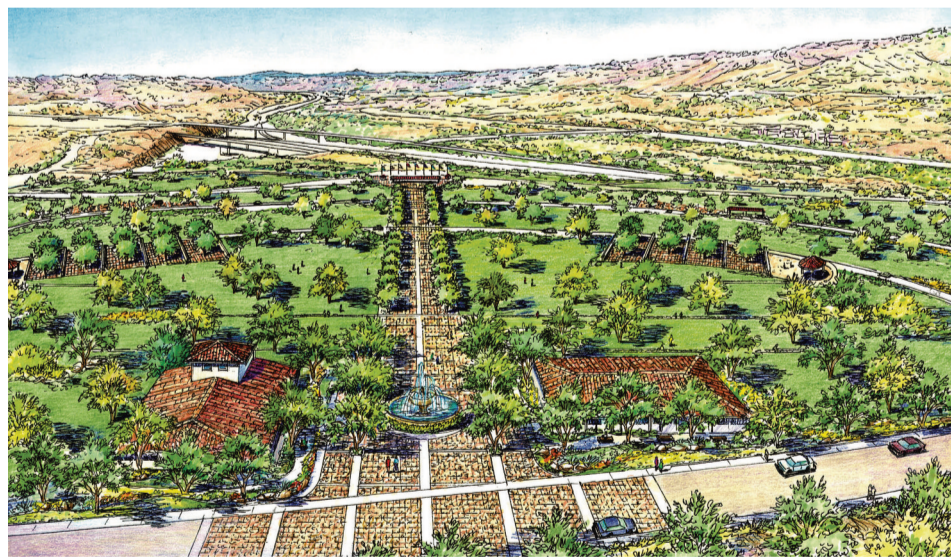
Last year, the council then decided to support a citizens' initiative to zone the 125-acre ARDA site for the cemetery.

But after an election and a mayoral change, sentiments shifted on the council. Late last month, all hope of an Irvine-based cemetery seemed lost after the Irvine City Council could not come to an agreement on a site after a lengthy meeting.

On Tuesday, Wagner took aim at supporters of the ARDA site.

"That is the site that is least acceptable to the state," Wagner said. "It is the site that is least acceptable to the feds. It is the site that is least likely to get us a veteran cemetery any time soon."

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Courtesy of Orange County Cemetery District

A RENDERING of the proposed veterans cemetery in Anaheim Hills.

PLAQUE

Continued from page R1

a 200-foot drop between Modjeska and Harding canyons in Orange County. He was finally captured, and on Feb. 14, 1857, Flores was hanged after a group of residents in Los Angeles voted for his execution.

"I'm very excited to help honor this important marker in the city, given our recent growth and place among the largest and great cities of our state," said Councilman Mike Carroll, who proposed the item along with Councilman Anthony Kuo.

"To commemorate a very important part of our state's history and our local his-

tory here in Irvine, it's an honor to be able to support this."

Following direction from the City Council, city staff will now determine where the plaque should be placed along the San Diego Creek Trail, on the side of the 405 Freeway with the Los Olivos marketplace and residential community.

Staff will also return to the council with various recommendations for the design of the plaque.

The city estimates that the installation of the plaque will cost about \$15,000.

Jepsen said Barton Mound is one of the few historic landmarks around that doesn't have a plaque. The site was added to Cali-

fornia's register of historical landmarks in 1935. The site is also identified as a historical landmark by the county and in Irvine's general plan, according to the city.

It's believed that the mound was destroyed when the 405 Freeway was constructed. Jepsen said it's not unusual for historic sites in Orange County to have been razed by development.

"We have a lot of those in Orange County — there's a lot of folks who just think old is bad in the world," Jepsen said.

Jepsen said it's still important to commemorate the site even if it's been destroyed because it gets people thinking and talking about local history.

He mentioned that many people seem to think that Orange County is void of significant history, and these sites help disprove that notion.

"When, for whatever reason, we haven't saved the site itself, it's nice that it's still commemorated in some way," Jepsen said. "If I had a nickel for every time somebody told me, 'Well, there was no history here before Walt Disney came down and built Disneyland, and then all the people went to build their tract homes.' No, no, no — 1769, that's when we started recording the history around here."

Jepsen said there are a number of historic sites related to the Flores jail

break. Another is Flores Peak in Modjeska Canyon, where Flores famously escaped capture.

"It was a major event at the time, involving a man-hunt, multiple crimes and the murder of one of the most prominent citizens in Southern California, the sheriff of Los Angeles," Jepsen said.

Jepsen said the site is interesting to people because it lends itself to the "wild west" caricature of California that many have come to idealize.

There was a much smaller community in Orange County in the 1850s, and some joined in the posse, including a group of men called the "Rangers" from San Juan Capistrano.

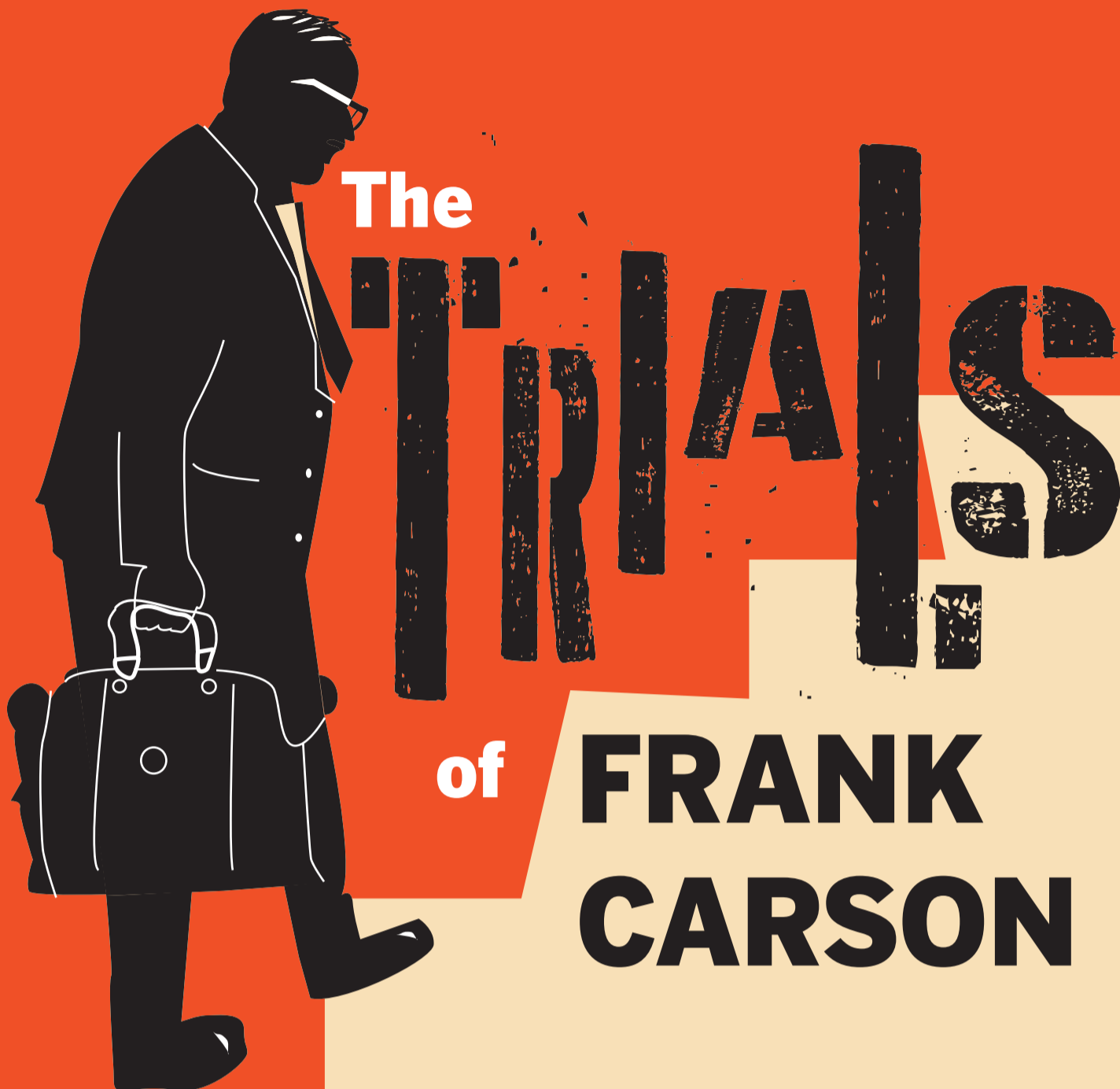
Jepsen said it's unclear if the men were deputized or that was just what they were called.

"People have an interest in crime stories, they always have," Jepsen said. "These kinds of things, I think it takes on an element of legend ... This was obviously an exception, this was not how life normally went in California at that time."

"I don't know that it necessarily speaks to modern Irvine's history, in terms of the history of developing it into a suburban community ... But I think it's good that there are reminders that this was a very different place once."

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