

Ready for her next challenge

Champion Jessa Khan, who trains locally at Art of Jiu Jitsu Academy, will fight at ONE Fight Night 14 on Friday in Singapore.

BY MATT SZABO

The gym at Art of Jiu Jitsu Academy in Costa Mesa is packed on this Thursday morning, with dozens of athletes on the mat.

Music from Green Day plays over the sound system, but belts of just about every color can be seen.

The song gets to the chorus, and lead singer Billie Joe Armstrong wails that “everybody is a star.” On this morning that seems to be true. One of the studio’s brightest stars, world champion Jessa Khan, seems to fit right in, though maybe her black belt gives her away.

Khan, 21, is preparing for a big opportunity. She will fight Danielle Kelly on the ONE Fight Night 14 card that takes place Friday in



JESSA KHAN, an MMA fighter in jiu-jitsu, stands in the Art of Jiu Jitsu academy in Costa Mesa on Thursday. She will take on competitor Danielle Kelly on the ONE Fight Night 14 card this Friday in Singapore.

Don Leach
Staff
Photographer

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Soccer returns to Costa Mesa park as Latino residents enjoy civic emergence

BY SARA CARDINE

Costa Mesa Councilman Loren Gamaros was meeting with constituents of his 2nd Council District earlier this month when he encountered a troubling situation at the city’s Paularino Park.

Latino residents, who’d invited the elected official to accompany them on a walk through the neighborhood, drew his attention to the site’s 2-acre field space.

“They said they feel like they can’t use their own park,” he recalled Thursday. “There’s a sign saying you can’t play any sports

here. Boulders were put in the middle of the park, specifically to stop kids from playing soccer.”

It seemed counterintuitive to Gamaros, 52, who’s lived in Costa Mesa for four decades and is known for his advocacy of youth sports.

But the city’s municipal code, referenced in the prohibitive signs near the park’s entrance, couldn’t be any clearer — in a passive park, people are simply not allowed to “participate in any games such as baseball, football, hockey, and the like.”

The shift toward passive use was made in 2007 by a conserva-

tive-majority city council, who claimed large groups brought noise, trash and other disruptive impacts to the neighborhood. To drive the point home, large boulders were intentionally placed in the playing fields.

Now, more than 15 years later, many see the move as a means of keeping Latinos — who represent 36% of the city’s population, according to U.S. Census data — away from public spaces.

“They didn’t want to have the Latino community playing soccer,” said Gamaros, a Latino

See **Soccer**, page A2

“There’s a sign saying you can’t play any sports here. Boulders were put in the middle of the park, specifically to stop kids from playing soccer.”

— Costa Mesa Councilman Loren Gamaros

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



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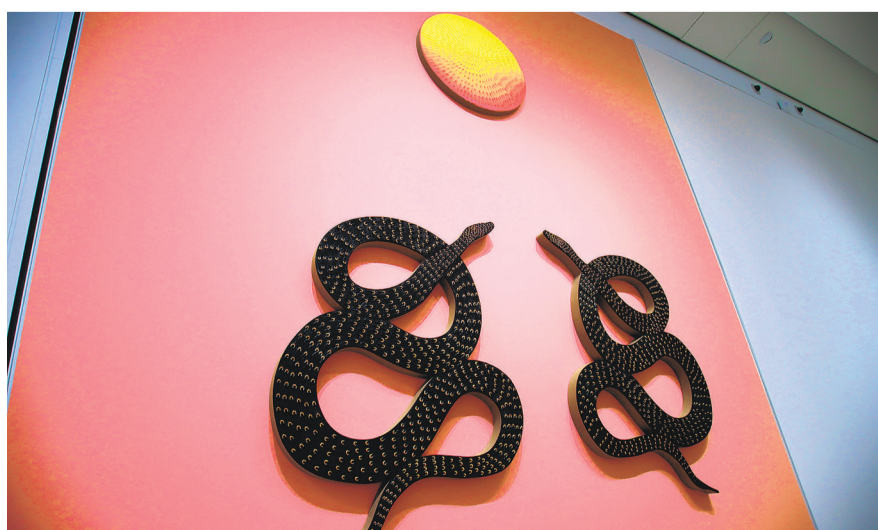
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ABOVE: Heidi Zuckerman, the CEO and director of the Orange County Museum of Art, right, discusses the piece “As I Drove you Stretched” by Jennifer Guidi on display at the Costa Mesa museum.

RIGHT: “Keeping Balance So You Can Shine,” made with natural sand painted with hot pink, orange, yellow and black.

Photos by James Carbone



‘Jennifer Guidi: And so it is’ explores meaning, mysticism at OCMA

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

COSTA MESA — Heidi Zuckerman, chief executive officer and director of the Orange County Museum of Art, has had an exhibition from artist Jennifer Guidi in mind for the Costa Mesa art destination for a while.

“When I was appointed here in February of 2021, I started thinking about the exhibition program and the artists that I was interested in working with, and she was right at the top of my list,” Zuckerman said.

Zuckerman said Guidi was among the first she invited to show at the new OCMA location on the campus of Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

Initially, Zuckerman imagined Guidi would do a painting exhib-

ition, but the Los Angeles-based artist had expanded her medium to include sculpture, and the new work features prominently in OCMA’s latest multimedia exhibition, “Jennifer Guidi: And so it is.”

“As I was thinking about where her exhibition should fit on the exhibition schedule, when I saw that she was making sculpture it gave me some more insight,” Zuckerman said. “I wanted the show open at a time when we could also show the sculpture.”

Striking a balance within the exhibition schedule is important to Zuckerman, and she believed Guidi’s work was the appropriate choice to fit with the museum’s other current exhibitions.

“I really loved the relationship

See **OCMA**, page A4

“These works keep on giving the longer you look at them. And that is another tie back to mediation — you can kind of sit or stand or breath.”

— Heidi Zuckerman

Chief executive officer and director of the Orange County Museum of Art

Spinal cord injury confronted with fighting spirit

BY ANDREW TURNER

Life after her accident will never be the same.

Taran Nolan, not unlike so many spinal cord injury victims, faced myriad mental and physical hurdles ahead of her.

In addition to that, she would have to forge forward with the knowledge that the unthinkable had happened. The accident that had left her body broken had taken the life of her 3-year-old daughter.

Local residents may remember Nolan as the wife of a local high school football coach. Her husband, Jimmy, spent stints at Laguna Beach, Fountain Valley and Costa Mesa, among other stops. The couple's children often played on the field before and after games.

On Sept. 10, 2020, Nolan was involved in a head-on collision in South Carolina that took the life of her youngest daughter, Micki, and Glendora Holmes, the driver of the other car.

From her earliest victories in the recovery process, Nolan, who now resides in Mission Viejo, refused to accept the script for those who suffer spinal cord injuries.

"They said, 'You might get a little movement back in your feet,' and then I got it back right away," Nolan said. "Even though it was like a little flicker, I was like, '[Nope],' and it was so funny because we have it

on recording. Everybody's clapping and hooting and hollering and having a big party, and I'm like, 'Show me the video,' because I can't feel anything. I can't look down. I can't see anything.

"They said, 'See, a little flicker.' I'm like, 'That's the stupidest thing I've ever seen. I can do so much better.'"

Nolan eventually connected with Walking With Anthony, a nonprofit organization that aids spinal cord injury patients in life after rehab. Micki Purcell, whose maiden name is Nolan, started the organization after her son, Anthony, suffered a spinal cord injury in a diving accident in Miami in 2010.

Purcell said she felt compelled to act after witnessing the struggles of families to afford care for their own loved ones with such injuries after insurance would no longer pay the bills.

"Luckily, we had the funds to get Anthony what he needed," Purcell said. "Seeing everybody else in rehab struggling and parents crying and selling houses and trying to do everything they can to help their kids, that's why I started this charity."

Nolan, who received a \$10,000 grant from Walking With Anthony previously, was an honored guest of the organization at its fundraising event at the New Port Theater in Co-

rona del Mar on Sept. 14. Purcell said the event netted \$150,000, enough for 15 additional grants.

Given that Purcell and Nolan's late daughter share a first and last name, Nolan believes their paths crossing did not happen by chance. She now tries to carry herself with the strength of two.

Nolan said she enjoyed being at the event, where she could hear others' stories. She hopes to raise awareness that traumatic events impact not just the person experiencing them but those around them.

"When a traumatic thing happens to one person in the family, the whole family loses a sibling, or the whole family's mom gets handicapped and can't be mom anymore," Nolan said. "I used to call myself just a head sitting in a wheelchair because I could boss people around, but I couldn't do anything about it. Now, I can push my hand and actually move a wheelchair. That's a long way from being able to do nothing."

The long-term goals for Nolan include gaining full independence within the next couple of years. While not there yet, the 39-year-old has milestones to speak of. She bragged that she was able to put her makeup on by herself. A nurse did her hair.

"[These are] big steps," said Nolan, who was a yoga instructor before the accident. "I eat by myself. I



Joseph Gillespie Courtesy of Joseph Gillespie

TARAN NOLAN smiles with Anthony Purcell, the namesake of Walking With Anthony, at a fundraiser for the nonprofit organization held at the New Port Theater on Sept. 14.

brush my teeth by myself. Yes, I use an electric toothbrush, so that makes sure I get two minutes of solid joy in my mouth. I sit at the sink. I can stand up. I just want more victories."

Josh Salic, a physical therapist who has worked with both Anthony Purcell and Nolan, said learning to walk again is often the least of an individual's worries after suffering a spinal cord injury. The journey back

begins with relearning basics, such as breathing and eating.

Additional issues include bowel and bladder function and working out through pain.

"She's made a ton of progress," Salic said of Nolan. "... She's walking now. She's walking in a walker without any assistance. She's able to stand on her own, transfer. She's become so much more inde-

pendent.

"Every time when you start working with a spinal cord injury, you really aren't focused on walking again. You're just focused on all the little things that can help them be independent, as independent as possible, because that's huge in life, being able to do things for yourself."

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SOCCER

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elected in 2020. "Imagine living in a country speaking [English] as a second language and this is all you see. It might as well have said 'No Mexicans.'"

With a few phone calls and a trip to City Hall, the councilman requested the boulders be removed and, on Sept. 5, a work crew obliged. The following day, during a District 2 community outreach event, kids happily played soccer on the field for the first time in over a decade.

"PD was out kicking the ball around with kids playing soccer," Gameros said. "It was probably one of the most successful community engagement events we've had so far."

The removal of the Paularino Park boulders is a civic gesture that represents a seismic shift from anti-immigrant stances and policies that predominated in the early 2000s toward greater representation of Latinos in the Costa Mesa community and on the council dais.

Today, with four of seven members on the Costa Mesa City Council claiming some Hispanic heritage and with Latinas serving as city manager and deputy city manager, the city is taking decisive steps to engage with its Spanish-speaking residents.

Council meeting agendas are posted in English and Spanish, while headsets provide a live translation of what's being discussed and translators assist Spanish speakers in providing public comment.

Many events, such as recent legal aid and rental assistance workshops, now take place twice, in both English and Spanish. And on Saturday, in conjunction with OC Public Libraries, Costa Mesa held its first city-sponsored Hispanic Heritage celebration at Lions Park.

Councilman Manuel Chavez, who represents the city's largely Latino 4th Council District, attributes part of the shift to the city's move toward districted elections in 2016, which led to his being sworn in in 2018 as the city's first Latino council member.

"Before, we were an at-large city, so areas that had a higher intensity of voters or had more votes in their area received more attention," he said. "Now, residents knowing who their council representative is and which per-



Courtesy of Loren Gameros

A SIGN AT Costa Mesa's Paularino Park declares the spot's passive use, a move many believe was taken years ago to prohibit large groups, particularly Latinos, from congregating.

son they should go to has been a big benefit to residents living in west-side Costa Mesa."

Chavez recalled growing up in the shadow of policy decisions and practices that seemed to shut out minorities, particularly those from immigrant families.

"There was a perception our part of town didn't matter as much as others" the 28-year-old recalled Wednesday. "There were also a lot of actions taken that affected residents in my area."

A conservative-led council in 2004 voted to abolish Costa Mesa's human relations committee and shut down a day-laborer center that had operated for 17 years. Soon after, the city grabbed headlines for being the first in the nation to begin training local police officers in immigration enforcement, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Former Councilman Allan Mansoor, who served on the dais from 2002 to 2010, before returning again in 2016 for a final term, ran on an anti-immigrant platform.

"It takes time to remove the

welcome mat," he told a Times reporter in 2006. "When you have job centers, soup kitchens and a high concentration of downscale rental units, it drives the city down."

Four years later, at Mansoor's behest, leaders passed a resolution declaring Costa Mesa a "Rule of Law" city, a gesture intended to communicate illegal immigrants would find no safe harbor in the city. At the time, police officers were authorized to check residents' legal status and report them to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Geoff West, a 50-year Costa Mesa resident and owner of the long-running political blog "A Bubbling Cauldron," said much of the historic antagonism directed at Latinos can be traced back to a core group of conservatives, including a local real estate developer with known ties to hate groups who supported Mansoor's council race.

"He was influential among some of the people who didn't like what they saw with Latinos in town but didn't know how to ex-



City of Costa Mesa

COSTA MESA Councilman Loren Gameros stands Thursday in Paularino Park, where large boulders installed on the playing field to keep people from playing team sports were recently removed.



Courtesy of Manuel Chavez

COSTA MESA Councilman Manuel Chavez, right, with Vanguard University students in Save Our Youth's College Corps program, in City Hall. Chavez partly attributes his 2018 election to the council to districted voting, which allowed for greater representation of the Latino west side.

press it — he was their voice," West said Thursday.

"One of his complaints was 'these darned Mexican kids' were kicking a soccer ball around Paularino Park and were taking up all of the space. So he complained and complained and found a sympathetic ear, and the boulders went up in Paularino Park."

Costa Mayor John Stephens acknowledged Thursday the city's conflicted past.

"ICE was in the jails, and we were really viewed as an anti-Hispanic, anti-Mexican council. That did a lot of damage for a long time," said Stephens, first elected to the City Council in 2016. "And somewhere along the line stopped. The openness and the attitude changed."

Like Chavez, he credits the shift toward council district elections for the sea change that altered the demographic makeup of officials

and their ability to represent a wider, more diverse populace.

Beyond removal of the Paularino Park boulders, council members these days are working with Newport-Mesa Unified School District to open up school playing fields for after-hours public use and collaborating with legislators to enhance the availability of open space on the city's west side.

Elected officials are also advocating for rental protections and more affordable housing, two issues consistently raised by Spanish-speaking residents who now regularly attend council meetings.

"We're really focusing on serving communities that haven't gotten attention in the past," Stephens said. "There's still a lot of work to do, but we've made a whole lot of progress since the 2000s."

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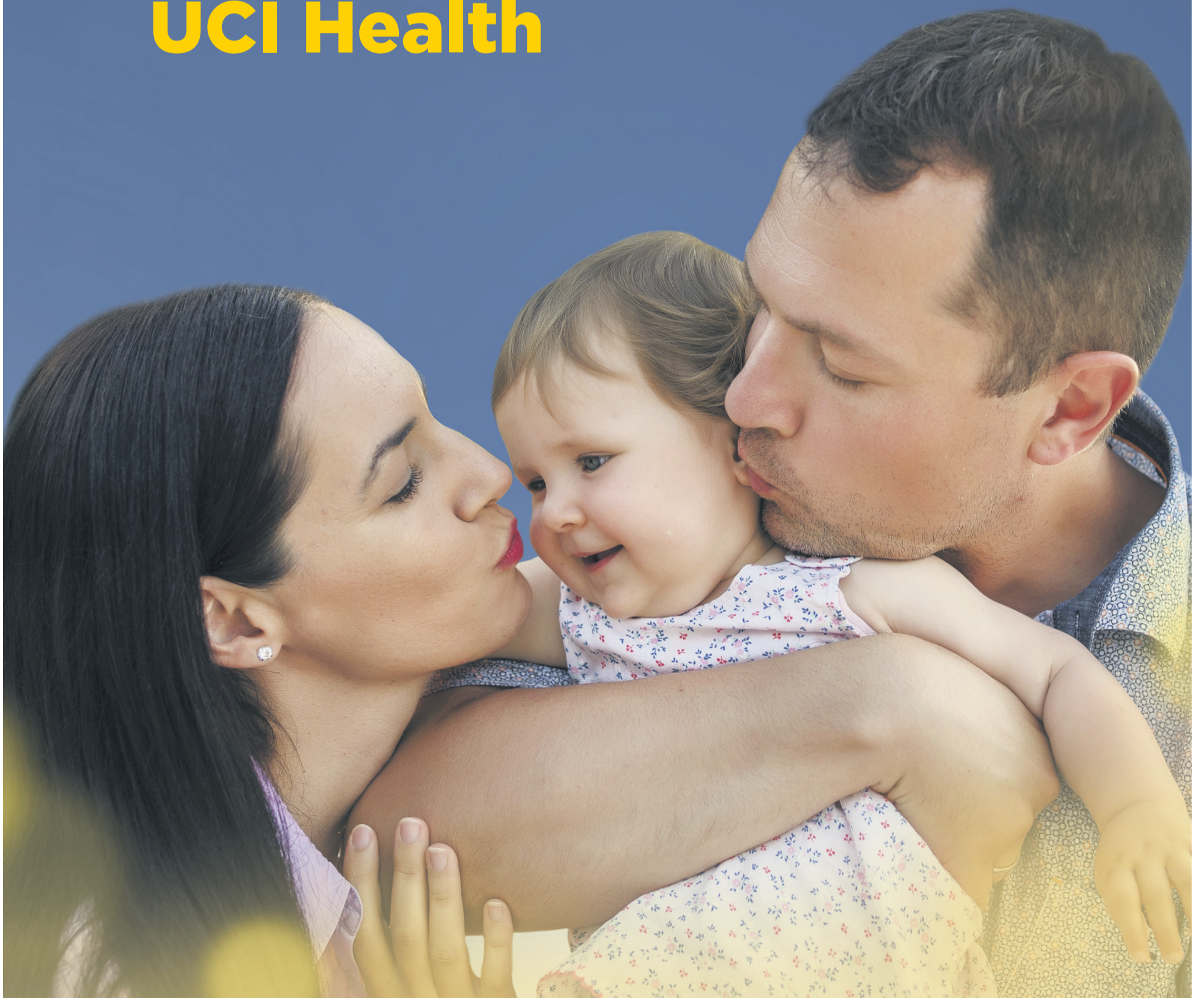
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OCMA

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between the Alice Neel exhibition and Jen Guidi," said Zuckerman. "I wanted to have two female painters from two different time periods, two different generations, with two different approaches to painting at the same time."

"And so it is" is Guidi's first solo museum exhibition in the United States, and her creations build on the practices of artists such as Agnes Martin and Georgia O'Keefe. The show includes what have come to be the six segments of the artist's practice; sand mandalas, universe mandalas, landscapes, shapes, drawings and sculpture. The works are expansive, technicolor dreams layered with meaning and mysticism.

Using sand, acrylic and a hand-carved dowel, Guidi presses divots into her work that appear to grow from a central focal point. The gradient colors, repetitive patterns and ritualistic procedures conjure the

methodical practice of Tibetan monks making sand mandalas that inspired Guidi during a trip to Morocco.

"These works keep on giving the longer you look at them," said Zuckerman. "And that is another tie back to meditation — you can kind of sit or stand or breathe."

The show takes its name from a the affirmative meditation phrase "And so it is" which is the period at the end of a manifestation prayer.

"And so it is" makes it true, and that becomes a mantra for the exhibition as you are walking through," Zuckerman said.

Guidi's rock sculptures greet museum-goers at the door, each like brightly colored geodes on the inside with equally precious metallic pieces on the outside.

The exhibition contains a piece commissioned specifically for the show: "Keeping Balance So You Can Shine" (2022-23) showcases a hot pink sunset with a fiery orange sun and two

symmetrical serpents in striking black.

"It has a way of rounding the whole show and pulling people in," Zuckerman said.

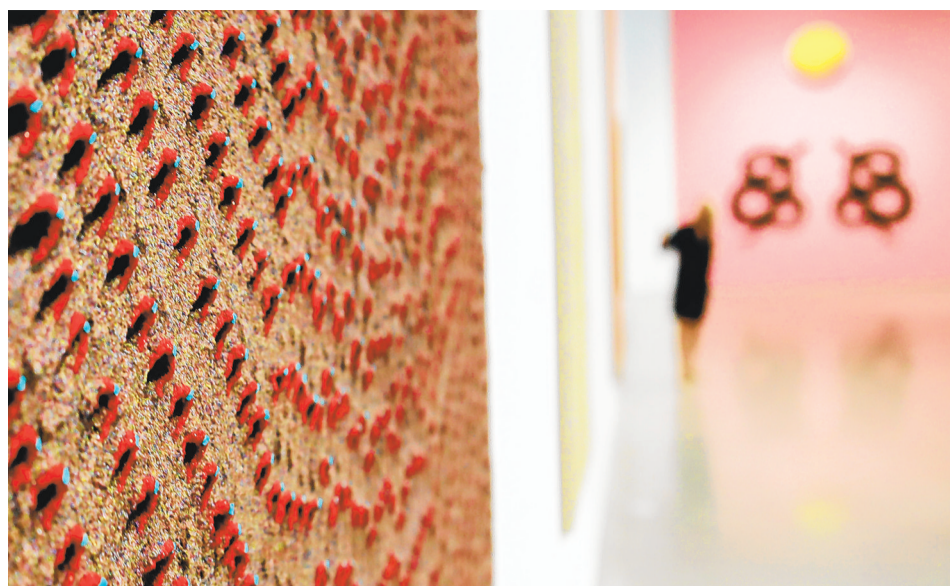
An outdoor sculpture on the museum's third floor titled "Kundalini Rising" (2023) also features a serpent and combines Guidi's practices of painting, sculpting and mandala-making.

"This sculpture really communicates the ways the artist works with surfaces," said Zuckerman. "You have the cross hatch markings on the front and a more solid surface with the paint laid on top as you move along."

It also has the distinction of being the largest sculpture the artist has created to date.

Zuckerman's choice to invite Guidi to exhibit at OCMA isn't entirely unexpected, considering Zuckerman has made a point of featuring female artists since the museum opened in 2022.

What has come as more of surprise is the attendance the OCMA has seen as



James Carbone

"INVESTIGATION OF VIBRATION," left, painted red and turquoise on sand by Jennifer Guidi, is included in her exhibition at the Orange County Museum of Art in Costa Mesa through Jan. 7. It is the first U.S. museum solo exhibition for the Los Angeles-based artist.

it approaches its first anniversary in its new location.

"On Sept. 8 we were open for 11 months, and on that day we welcomed our 250,000th visitor," said Zuckerman. "We have served more than a quarter million people in 11

months."

The number is staggering considering the former location in Newport Beach never served more than 20,000 people in a year.

"We are serving so many people," said Zuckerman, "and we are so grateful for

that opportunity."

"Jennifer Guidi: And so it is" is open at the Orange County Museum of Art through Jan. 7.

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CHALLENGE

Continued from page A1

Singapore.

The Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu bout is for the inaugural ONE Women's Atomweight Submission Grappling World Championship.

Khan, a Costa Mesa resident, has been signed with ONE Championship for about a year now, but this is her first fight with the organization. The 10-fight card will be broadcast live on Amazon Prime, starting at 5 p.m. Pacific time.

Khan is excited for the chance to make history in her fight against Kelly, who she previously beat via decision in 2021. But she also appreciates the fact that this is an all-female card.

"It's a bunch of different girls doing a bunch of different martial arts, and I think that's really cool," she said. "I'm happy that I can



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

MMA FIGHTER in jiu jitsu Jessa Khan trains with a partner at the Art of Jiu Jitsu Academy in Costa Mesa on Thursday.

represent women's jiu-jitsu on that card ... We need more platforms like this, more organizations and events that promote women in jiu-jitsu and sports."

The enthusiasm makes sense, especially when Khan starts talking about the fact that she never had a strong female presence early in her martial arts

career.

Now, she is that role model for the girls at Art of Jiu Jitsu (AOJ), where she coaches the 5-to-7-year-old program, as well as the 8-to-13-year-old program. Khan herself started the sport at age 8, while living in Hawaii as a self-described "Navy brat" who moved often due to her

father's service.

A decade later, Khan earned her black belt under her AOJ professor Guilherme Mendes in 2020. She laughs that her goal was to be a black belt by age 18, and she just met that deadline, getting it two days before her 19th birthday.

It hasn't always been easy sledding after that.

"Something that I wasn't used to was the challenge," Khan said. "During all of the colored belts, I never had anyone challenging me. I never got to experience how it was to lose, and tough situations. When I got to black belt, I guess it kind of threw me off. Everyone's really good, there are people that are world champions that you're going against. Every fight that you do, you're not fighting anyone easy. It was a lot for me to handle."

Khan said she started having negative thoughts, even questioning if the sport was really for her. She

took three months off from competition in the summer of 2022, working on training and boosting her confidence.

"Every athlete has their ups and downs, but most people don't talk about it," she said. "I think it's better if you do, because then people can relate to you."

Well, 2023 has definitely been an "up" year for the standout. Khan competed at the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation World Championship in Long Beach in June, and she won a gold medal in the light-featherweight division.

Khan said the moment was special, as she proved that she belongs. She added that she was proud of herself for sticking to it.

Now comes this opportunity for another world title. When she gets back from Asia, Khan said she wants to devote even more time to coaching at AOJ.

"We have a bunch of

other girls that also coach, but I want to make it known that I'm the face of the women's program and the head instructor," she said. "Even now, most jiu-jitsu schools don't have that still. I feel like AOJ is pretty well-known with having a good women's program, so I want to continue growing that."

None of her students will look back and say that they didn't have that female presence growing up in the sport, that presence Khan herself lacked.

Individual accolades are nice, but building that community also has meaning.

"You know, it's different having a male presence versus a female presence and connection," Khan said. "Now, I kind of get to be that person for these other little girls that are trying to grow in the sport."

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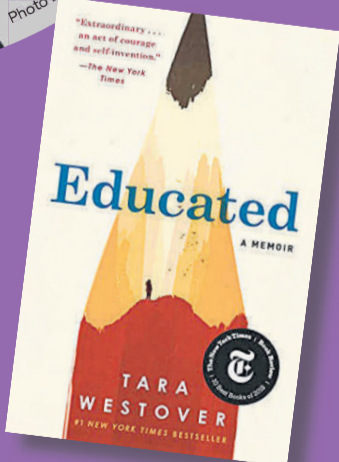
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forum

MAILBAG

E-bikes are a hazard on our streets

Re: Huntington Beach to amend municipal code on bicycle regulations, Daily Pilot, Sept. 21: E-bikes ugh! One of the worst ideas/inventions ever. Can we get any more lazy than not pedaling our bicycles? I've seen kids that look to be 12 or not much older, riding without helmets at or above the speed limit here in east-side Costa Mesa blowing right through stop signs. To be honest, I see more children than adults riding these iron horses (well, probably aluminum or composite) zipping along our streets. I don't know how bad the problem is in Huntington Beach or Newport Beach, especially down by the ocean, but it is a problem elsewhere. Very surprised the H.B. council was unanimous in their vote to regulate.

Mike Aguilar
Costa Mesa

We're worse off without local news coverage

Regarding columnist Patrice Apodaca's lament about the loss of local news, when I joined the Irvine Co. as director of public relations in 1973, the



Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

KEN MONTGOMERY, of Irvine, shows off his E-Spirit foldable electric bike in September 2016.

Daily Pilot, the Orange County Register and the Los Angeles Times each had a reporter covering Newport Beach, a reporter covering Irvine and a reporter covering the Irvine Co.

The result was a continuous flow of news from those cities (and others in Orange County) and from the Irvine Co. Without that coverage today, does that mean there is no news? Of course there is, but unfortunately the public does not know what is happening. Does that matter? Of course it does.

The once-mighty news-

papers have shrunk or disappeared with the loss of advertising and subscribers to the electronic media. As I take my morning walk, mine is the only driveway in our neighborhood with two or even one daily newspapers in the driveway. We, our children, and our children's children are worse off as a result.

Martin A. Brower
Corona del Mar

Let's get serious about gun reform

Re: "Cook's Corner, Anaheim Hills and Irvine tragedies highlight urgent need for national gun reform," Daily Pilot, Sept. 22, I applaud Supervisor Katrina Foley and Grace McNeill for their comprehensive report on the pandemic sweeping across this country. No, not COVID-19. I'm referring to the out-of-control number of gun deaths that occur

virtually every day in America.

Beginning in 2016, I have asked Presidents Barack Obama, Donald Trump and Joe Biden to convene a gun summit at Camp David with leaders of the NRA, 2nd Amendment proponents, law enforcement officials and families of victims in attendance. Today, more than 50 of my friends in Laguna Beach, along with 1,000 people coast to coast, have a clear message for the president: Because "thoughts and prayers" haven't prevented any mass shootings from occurring, we need a new, national gun-safety strategy.

Foley and McNeill concluded their commentary by saying, "We encourage you to call your local Congress member and urge them to demand Speaker McCarthy bring the Background Check Expansion Act to the House floor for a vote of the United States House of Representatives."

This is one of many steps Daily Pilot readers can take. Join with the good people of Laguna and the 1,000 people around the country who are sending a message directly to the White House. Sign up now at chng.it/GPbQNjxzzh.

Denny Freidenrich
Laguna Beach

Charter tweaks an abuse of power

Re: Huntington Beach City Council hears negative public input on char-

ter amendments, Daily Pilot, Sept. 15: Mayor Tony Strickland would like everyone to accept his explanation that there was a miscommunication on the agenda and that they were not going to be discussing possible charter amendments at Thursday night's meeting; however, another possible explanation is that one of their cohorts was not present to vote in lockstep.

Thirty-three of the thirty-nine speakers spoke against charter amendments; however, the majority in the City Council adhere to the Archie Bunker syndrome, "Don't confuse me with facts, my mind is made up." Nothing is going to change with this majority, they will make whatever charter amendments they have always intended to make and will disregard public opinion.

If this charter amendment is denied, it will only be if sufficient public interest becomes aroused to prevent this abuse of power and votes in next year's primary.

Richard C. Armendariz
Huntington Beach

Vaccines and masks save lives

The Huntington Beach City Council resolution to ban mandates for masks and vaccines makes the council and us look selfish and ignorant.

I was in Hong Kong when on Jan. 28, 2020

everyone started wearing a mask. COVID-19 aerosol transmission had just been confirmed. I dropped my travel plans for Guangzhou. I continued into Vietnam ahead of the border lockdown. In Vietnam there were signs everywhere telling people how to wear masks, to distance and sanitize hands. And everyone, every hotel, every public space complied.

I flew home in late March. At LAX, no masks, no COVID signs, no sanitizers. The White House was talking total COVID nonsense. Within four months, U.S. COVID-19 deaths had passed 100,000.

The U.S. went on to lead the world in the rate of COVID deaths, and the count is currently past 1,175,000.

Masks and vaccines played a role in reducing COVID. Like X-rays, cell-phones and chemotherapy, that's a scientific fact we can rely on. While masking is complicated, if a person wears a correct mask the correct way her chance of passing the coronavirus to a loved one is greatly reduced. Her chance of receiving it is also reduced.

If the council must bluster, then resolve to make H.B. an intelligent mask and vaccine city. The "no mandates" policy is narrow-minded and unnecessary. And it's dumb.

Buzz McCord
Huntington Beach
Irvine Valley College

Daily Pilot

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A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE

We understand you believing this is a grammatical error

I saw you working hard. I appreciate you working hard.

At a glance, these sentences seem grammatically identical. But in fact, the grammar of the second one is wildly controversial, with some experts insisting it's an



error called a "fused participle."

The fused participle concept comes up most often in the sentence: "I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me." Critics of this form say it should be: "I appreciate your taking the time to meet with me." And that one-letter variation, "your" replacing "you," makes all the difference in the world. But to understand how that changes the grammar, you need to zoom in on how all the parts work together in the sentence.

In "I saw you working hard," the object of the verb "saw" is "you." I saw you. The next word, "working," is a verb participle functioning as a modifier — essentially an adjective. It may seem odd to classify a verb form as an adjective, but we use verb participles this way all the time: a cooking class, a walking stick, your thinking cap, growing pains, a hiking excursion. In all these examples, a verb participle is modifying a noun, meaning it's working like an adjective. The participle in "you working" has the same role, even though it comes after the noun.

So when you say, "I saw you working," you get a grammatical sentence with a verb (saw), followed by its object (you), followed by a modifier of that object (working).

But in "I appreciate you driving him home," the object of the verb "appreciate" isn't really "you." You're not saying, "I appreciate you as a person" or "I appreciate that you exist." It's the driving that you really appreciate. So "driving" is the true object of the verb "appreciate." Yet the first word after "appreciate" isn't "driving." It's "you." Between the verb and its true object, there's another word — "you" — just sitting there with no grammatical job to do. The participle "driving" is just kind of fused to "you" with no clear role. From a standpoint of pure grammar, it's nonsensical.

"From the middle of the 18th century to the present time," writes Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage, "grammarians and other commentators have been baffled by the construction. They cannot parse it, they cannot explain it."

If this is truly a problem, as some say it is, there's an easy way to fix it: Change "you" to "your." With the added R, the noun "you" becomes the modifier "your." Once it's a modifier, there's no longer any controversy about which word is the object of your appre-

ciation: It's "driving." Sometimes this form is called the "possessive with gerund," because "your" is possessive and "driving" is a gerund, which is the -ing form of a verb when it's used as a noun.

Naturally, not every sentence in this structure involves the word "you" or "your." Almost any noun or pronoun can come into play: "He would not object to them trying" fuses the participle "trying" with the pronoun "them."

In every case, you can avoid controversy by changing the pronoun or noun into a possessive. "He would not object to them trying" could be changed to "His trying" or "Mary's trying." "There is also the issue of Mary refusing to testify" could be changed to "... Mary's refusing to testify." "The company closing will cost jobs in the community" could be changed to "The company's closing ..."

But the truth is, you don't have to change "them" to "their" or "Mary" to "Mary's" if you don't want to. Most modern authorities on grammar, including Merriam's, Garner's Modern American Usage and Fowler's Modern English Usage, agree that sometimes the possessive may not be the most natural choice. In those cases, all these experts say, fuse away.

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.

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

Crossword grid with answers: OTT, SCIFI, CUBA, WOOS, THORN, APEX, LATE, ROWED, SORE, DOCTORATE, INNS, RAKE, BAN, SCHEME, RATIONAL, PRATE, RACER, IRA, ROTS, DARED, STEM, EWE, OIZES, THESE, ENDANGER, TERROR, MAE, THAI, ROME, AGREEMENT, EVIL, REALM, KOOK, DESI, EAGLE, SAFE, SRTA, DRESS, HUG

Sudoku grid with numbers: 5 4 6 2 8 1 9 7 3, 1 3 8 7 9 6 2 5 4, 2 7 9 4 5 3 6 8 1, 4 8 5 3 2 7 1 9 6, 9 2 3 1 6 8 5 4 7, 6 1 7 9 4 5 8 3 2, 3 9 2 5 1 4 7 6 8, 7 6 1 8 3 9 4 2 5, 8 5 4 6 7 2 3 1 9

Cabinet Factories Outlet advertisement featuring kitchen and bath images, award logos (Best of OC 2019, Finalist LA Times 2023, Best of the Southland LA Times 2023), and contact information: 714.538.9100, www.cabinetoutlet.com, 1201 W. Katella Ave. Orange.

Mark's Painting & Handyman Service advertisement: 714-222-3055, Wood Restoration Specialist, Licensed & Bonded C-33-#967860

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MERCHANDISE 800 advertisement: Miscellaneous Merchandise, Vinyl Records Wanted \$55 Top cash paid 4 all or part of collection. Jazz, Classical, Psychedelic, Blues 949-933-6777 Mike

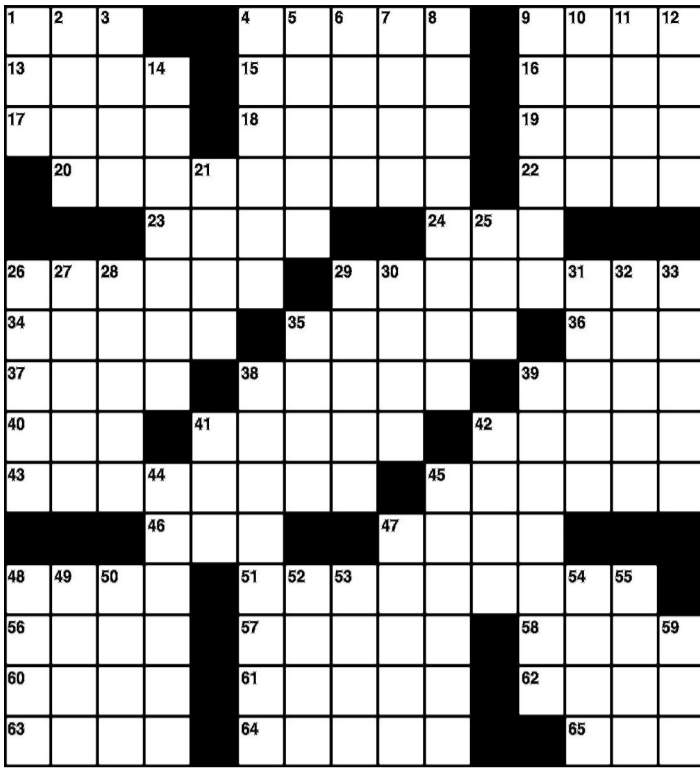
EMPLOYMENT 1500 advertisement: Employment, Office Assistant - High school Diploma Req. \$36,816/yr, F/T, Resume to Yohan Lee Law Offices of Yohan Lee, 5681 Beach Blvd, Ste 200, Buena Park, CA 90621

Classified is CONVENIENT advertisement: whether you're buying, selling, or just looking, classified has what you need! To advertise in CLASSIFIED go to timescommunityadvertising.com Sell your Car in Classified!

NOTE TO READERS advertisement: The art and wine event set for today in Modjeska canyon has been canceled due to a parking conflict with another event. No plans for another date have been announced.

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

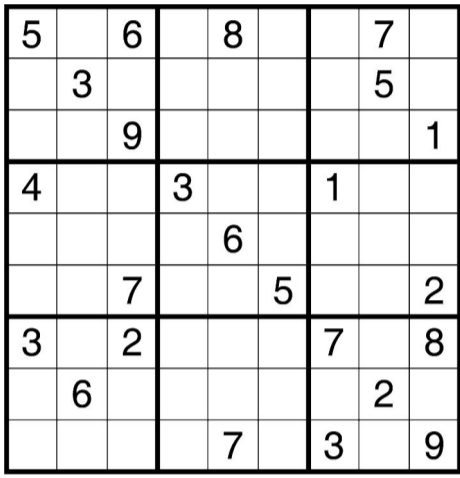


- ACROSS**
 1 Baseball's Mel
 4 Bookstore section
 9 Gloria Estefan's birthplace
 13 Courts
 15 Rosebush barb
 16 Highest point
 17 Overdue
 18 Joined the crew
 19 Ticked off
 20 Advanced degree
 22 Hostels
 23 Womanizer
 24 Outlaw
 26 Willy plot
 29 Making sense
 34 Yak
 35 Indy 500 car
 36 Lyricist Gershwin
 37 Decays
 38 Showed courage
 39 Wineglass part
 40 Farm femme
 41 Seeps
 42 The ones here
 43 Put in jeopardy
 45 Great fright
 46 Daisy __; Li'l Abner's pursuer
 47 Asian language
 48 Most-visited city in Italy
 51 Consensus
 56 Wicked
 57 Kingdom
 58 Nut
 60 Lucie's dad
 61 Two strokes under par
 62 Sound's partner, in phrase
 63 Málaga miss: abbr.
 64 Do a morning chore
 65 Embrace
- DOWN**
 1 Wise as an __
 2 Frog's cousin

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 A6.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3 Oz visitor | 10 "Once __ a time" |
| 4 High blood pressure danger | 11 European capital city |
| 5 To-do list item | 12 Wood choppers |
| 6 Midwest state | 14 Whispered confidences |
| 7 Worry | 21 Gentle |
| 8 Was __ to; owed | 25 Breather's need |
| 9 Gambler's spot | |

- 26 Shopper's frenzy
 27 King topper
 28 Despised
 29 Not as common
 30 Highest pair
 31 Fertilizer component
 32 "You __ Beautiful"; 1974 hit song
 33 Debussy work
 35 Level; bulldoze
 38 Like a worn book's pages
 39 High-pitched screams
 41 Stop __ dime
 42 Reds or Browns
 44 Aviator Earhart
 45 Motifs
 47 __ off; berates
 48 Burgundy & maroon
 49 Done
 50 Light fog
 52 Toothed wheel
 53 Violent anger
 54 Actor Wyle
 55 Health nut's lunch, perhaps
 59 Beer barrel
- Tribune Media Services

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Artist digs into the reality of immigrant labor

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

The rev of the lawn mower isn't always a welcome sound, especially when it's disrupting the quiet of an Orange County neighborhood on a Saturday morning.

For Jesus Cortez, a writer and photographer who began working with his family's gardening business at a young age, the sound is a familiar one that punctuates the start of the day just as the phrase '¿Ya Mero?' does. The phrase is in the title of his latest multimedia exhibition, '¿Ya Mero Compa?' at Crear Studio on W 5th St. in Santa Ana.

"The show is called '¿Ya Mero Compa?', in reference to workers, not just gardeners," said Cortez. "In the morning it can mean just a greeting, a playful greeting because people like to joke around even though we are still stressed about the work that lies ahead. In the afternoon, I take it as, it's almost over. It's almost time to go home and rest."

The slang expression can be translated as 'almost' or 'very soon' and, as Cortez said, can be used to express when something is close to being finished or about to start.

Cortez is an award-winning poet, writer and photographer who also works as a gardener, a part of his undocumented reality and the center of his new show, which opened on the evening of Sept. 16 with a special reception and artist talk. On opening day, 110 guests visited the show, the largest turnout the studio outside of openings during Santa Ana's monthly art walk.

"From what I see, whenever people take photos of workers, they want a reaction. Like pity or sympathy or something of the sort from the viewer," said Cortez. "I am trying not to do that. I am just trying to show you what it is, and people as they are."

Cortez photographed his family for this project beginning a few years ago, when he convinced them to allow him to take pictures while they worked. It's a choice that creates an intimacy that isn't always found in art that deals with the subject of immigrant labor.

"I feel like this particular project offers a vulnerability that



Lizeth Martinez

JESUS CORTEZ speaks in front of one of his art pieces, titled "Nuestro Señor de los Jardines."



Spencer Grant

CREAR STUDIO visitors observe the photographs by Jesus Cortez.

many people don't consider of day laborers," said Sarah Rafael García, gallery director at Crear Studio.

The show begins with a portrait of Cortez's father-in-law leaning against the flatbed of a truck full of equipment. Audio of a lawn mower and Cortez reciting his poem "And Give Us Your Daily Death" accompanies the show.

"I think the key that I am trying to get across is dignity," Cortez said. "Dignified human beings that work every day and struggle every day but are still sticking around."

Yard work is hard work, and it is not without its risks. In a series of images called "Morning Preparations," we see hands with injuries and scars.

"Even injured or hurt, there is no stopping work," said Cortez.

Cortez said he isn't inviting the viewer to feel sorry but instead challenging them to examine their own relationship with cheap labor. Along the same wall, we also see an image titled "The House of Chava," with Cortez's family standing regally around two rakes crossed like a family crest.

"That's my brother and his son, but I wanted to capture them with a sense of royalty," said Cortez. "But I also wanted to focus on the boot he is wearing because he got injured two weeks prior but he still had to go to work."

There is also humor within the show, reflecting the notion that work isn't always serious. A large image of Cortez's 17-year-old nephew, titled "Theft Prevention," shows him using a leaf loader as a shield and a rake as a sword to guard the equipment in the truck.

"I also wanted to focus on other aspects of work," said Cortez. "I wanted to take photos of my nephew and told him to be playful, but show me some-

thing different. My idea was to make him look like a superhero."

An installation titled "Nuestro Señor de los Jardines" features Cortez's brother. A rake and gardening hoe form a crucifix over a black and white photo of his brother's arms, outstretched.

"My brother is the one that brought us to this country, and he is the one that gave a lot of us our first job, so I wanted to present him as dignified as possible."

Cortez also wanted to place emphasis on his brother's sacrifice.

"I am not a religious person any more, but I understand religious iconography," said Cortez. "The crucified Jesus to me always signified sacrifice. When I see people working every day and sacrificing their well-being and their health to make ends meet, what is a bigger sacrifice than that?"

Cortez also created fliers with pull tabs like the ones typically found in laundromats and other public places offering cheap labor. But rather than a phone number to call and haggle over a price, Cortez included a short poem that reads "1-800-Dial-A-Beaner. Call, anytime of day, our lines are never busy."

"I wanted to turn it on to the viewer to make you question what it is you see," said Cortez.

García said the show also allows laborers and workers to see themselves represented reverently in art.

"For us as a space, as Crear Studio, I think it is really important that people that walk by or people that clean our streets see themselves in these spaces. Not just as objects but as humans that are being celebrated," García said. "And for me, that is what this show does."

Cortez hopes it changes the way everyone views low-wage workers and thinks about their own relationship to the early morning lawn mower.

"You should treat us with dignity because we are human beings; that's it," said Cortez.

'¿Ya Mero Compa?' is open at Crear Studio now through Nov. 18.

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