



James Carbone

KIDS ENJOY opening day of Adventure Playground in Huntington Beach in 2023 after a four-year closure. The city-run facility, first opened in an abandoned sand quarry in 1974, is part of a beloved tradition among local residents who wish to keep it going.

Down-and-dirty fun

Adventure Playground in Huntington Beach turns 50

BY SARA CARDINE

Summertime must certainly be near, as Huntington Beach's Adventure Playground — a paradise for fearless and intrepid youth who don't mind getting a little down and dirty in their playtime pursuits — readies for a June 22 reopening.

A 1.5-acre place where kids can float rafts

and inner tubes across a lagoon, slide down a mud hill and construct forts navigable by rope bridge, the city-owned amenity has beckoned generations of adventurers since it first opened in 1974 in an abandoned sand quarry.

Eric Barraza, a city staffer overseeing this year's operations, has been combing through photo archives that give a peek at Adventure

Playground's rough and ready origins.

"Honestly, it just looks like a Mad Max wasteland," he said of black and white images of a youth sitting atop a busted recliner, or burning T-shirts over an open fire pit. "Kids brought hammers and nails and plywood boards and just built shanties — I had

See **Fun**, page A7

O.C. Music & Dance finds new home in Irvine

BY JESSICA PERALTA

Orange County Music & Dance has made a big impact on Rudy Xool's life. The 18-year-old trumpeter is now attending Cal State Fullerton on a full scholarship studying music.

Xool, who attended the non-profit community music and dance school in Irvine for about eight years, said the program has helped prepare him for college.

"Being here at the school has given me and my parents a bigger perspective on what music is," Xool said. "Also, in terms of opportunity getting me out there and into performance groups has shown me what it feels like to be in a bigger orchestra and to

study and practice.

"They have pushed me beyond what I thought I could do so that I am prepared, way more than I thought I could."

OCMD recently celebrated a groundbreaking at the Cultural Terrace at Irvine's Great Park. The site will be the new home to the school's 70,000-square-foot campus and 15,000-square-foot performing arts center, which will help it double the number of people it serves to more than 500 K-12 students and veterans per week with arts education and performance programs. It's part of a larger collaboration the city of Irvine has with nonprofits

See **OCMD**, page A2



Courtesy of O.C. Music & Dance

INSIDE HANGAR 244 in Irvine's Great Park, Rudy Xool plays the trumpet with others during the groundbreaking of the Orange County Music & Dance campus at the Cultural Terrace in Irvine's Great Park.



Courtesy UFCW Local 324

DANIEL RODRIGUEZ, a Disneyland custodian, holds the union button that got him a warning at work.

See **Buttons**, page A2

Goats in Laguna graze a path to safety

BY ANDREW TURNER

Laguna Beach residents and visitors alike have spotted dozens of goats near the village entrance over the past month, a welcomed sight, albeit a fleeting one.

Even during this period of extended visibility, the herd has progressed deeper into the canyon, navigating steep hills most people wouldn't dare to climb — nor should they.

The goats have a job to do, after all, a most important one to all that want to preserve the little

piece of paradise that is Laguna Beach. The town's goat grazing program has been in place for nearly three decades, one of several mitigation efforts in place against the threat of wildfire.

"It's a great program," Fire Marshal Robert Montaghani said. "I recommend it to any community that has the topography challenges. It's a very cost-effective way of reducing the fuel and the hazard out there in our community. We are protecting our community, essentially. I recommend that. There are limitations, of

course, and you have to manage it very well, but once you get into a routine of this program, it really is very beneficial."

Timing matters in this operation. Local fire officials have increasingly favored the term "fire year" over that of "fire season," although the city still attempts to complete its goat grazing program between the rainy season and October, Montaghani said.

Longtime residents remember the October 1993 fire as a major

See **Goats**, page A3



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

A FIRE MITIGATION goat herd munch on the underbrush on a hillside near the Laguna Art-A-Fair in Laguna Beach on May 29.

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DINING



SERVICES

Amy Phan West has the summer to avoid censure

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

After nearly five hours of discussion, a bitterly divided Westminster City Council this week decided to give one of its own members a reprieve before being censured.

Councilwoman Amy Phan West, who narrowly won her seat by 21 votes in 2022, has quickly become a polarizing figure on the dais.

"No one wants to censure anyone but it's been a long time coming," Councilwoman Kimberly Ho said. "I believe we owe it to the people."

A laundry list of Phan West's alleged misdeeds — ranging from accusing city staff of taking bribes to taking long breaks during council meetings to divulging closed session discussions — set the stage for Wednesday's lengthy

debate.

Ho pointed to a May 3 special meeting when council members passed a resolution denouncing the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors' move to declare April 30 "Jane Fonda Day" as the date is observed as "Black April" by the Vietnamese community to mark the fall of Saigon during the Vietnam War.

Fonda visited North Vietnam in 1972 as part of her anti-war activism, which was described in Westminster's staff report as "unpatriotic."

Ho requested the resolution, but Phan West wanted to include language calling the L.A. County Supervisors' declaration "despicable."

When a majority of Westminster council members declined, Ho alleged that Phan West called her colleagues "weak" in citing the

comment as a "verbal attack" in violation of the city's code of ethics.

L.A. County supervisors ultimately moved Jane Fonda Day to April 8.

An incident that occurred between Phan West and Councilman Carlos Manzo during that same special meeting also became a point of contention.

Phan West claimed that Manzo waited for her with a "physical, intimidating posture" after the meeting adjourned and blocked her exit from the dais. She filed a police report against Manzo.

At Wednesday's council meeting, Phan West held a printed screenshot up to council chambers of the encounter. "What's wrong with me filing a police report because I feel intimidated?" she said.

Manzo denied he intimidated or blocked Phan

West's path when speaking in favor of censure. "Each and every one of us up here has made an attempt to work with Councilmember [Phan] West," he said. "This is not something that just out of the blue we decided to do. She just has to have her way no matter what."

Phan West, a vocal supporter of former President Donald Trump, has run for Congress multiple times on an "America First" platform. She most recently placed a distant third during the 2022 primary election for the 47th Congressional District.

Phan West's City Council biography lists censorship by "Big Tech" among her chief concerns.

Phan West's council critics alleged she takes every opportunity to "grandstand" and insisted on putting her name on the resolution opposing Jane



Screenshot

AMY PHAN WEST makes her case against censure during the June 12 Westminster City Council meeting.

Fonda Day in addition to other cover letters.

In a nearly hour and a half defense of herself, Phan West denied all allegations. "This is politically motivated," she said. "That's the reason ... when you know you have the power of three votes."

At a May 22 council meeting, Phan West tried to

pass a resolution reaffirming the city's code of ethics and conduct, which council members already signed off on when taking office. It failed for a lack of a third vote.

At Wednesday's meeting, Phan West pointed to Mayor Chi Charlie Nguyen's

See **Censure**, page A8

CHLOE ZHAO

and Phoebe Lee pose in front of a vintage biplane inside Hangar 244 in Irvine's Great Park.



Courtesy of O.C. Music & Dance

OCMD

Continued from page A1

building new facilities in the Cultural Terrace, including Pretend City Children's Museum and the Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum.

"We opened the doors in 2017. Today we have a little bit under 300 students — 40% of them are on financial aid," said Douglas Freeman, co-founder, executive chair and chief executive officer of OCMD. "I have a \$3.6-million endowment restricted to scholarships. We're raising another \$1.4 million. We're going to get to \$5 million. And that will allow us when we move to the Great Park, we're going to be a much bigger institution, to double our student body and to double the number of kids that receive financial assistance."

Serving the community through music is at the heart of OCMD. Freeman said Charlie Zhang — founder of Pick Up Stix restaurant chain — founded OCMD in 2016.

"He's a Chinese immigrant," Freeman said. "He came here when he was about 23 years old. He had 20 bucks and a rusty clarinet, and all he wanted to really do was be a professional musician. He had spent seven years in a Chinese labor camp during the Cultural Revolution. And his father spent 20 years in a labor camp."

Zhang worked as a dishwasher at a Chinese restaurant in the United States and moved his way up. After seven years he had enough money to buy his first restaurant.

"The thing that made him so special is that on his

way up and once he had reached this enormous success, he felt so grateful to this country that he felt compelled to try to help other families and other kids," Freeman said. "In 2016, he decided he wanted to start a music school for kids, who like himself, couldn't afford to come."

The move to the Great Park was approved in March 2024, with the city of Irvine giving OCMD a \$1-per-year ground lease for its site for 50 years, with optional extensions totaling 75 years. Construction is set to begin in January 2025 and is expected to be finished in fall 2026.

"As a school, our focus is on ensuring that our kids are proficient with their art form, whether it's music or dance or voice," Freeman said. "And that they are creative. That is that they can interpret the music that they're playing. That they can play a wide range of genres. So diversity is incredibly important. We want our kids then to be proficient, creative and diverse in their art forms. So you can learn classical music, but I know you like to play pop and maybe hip-hop. You need to be able to do all those things. That's our goal."

OCMD serves children ages 5 to 18, adults, veterans and those with neurological conditions like dementia. It also offers an early childhood program for children 18 months to 5 years old.

Freeman said when COVID-19 hit, both children and veterans suffered from isolation. OCMD created programs outside its building in a covered parking lot

See **OCMD**, page A3

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BUTTONS

Continued from page A1

which is comprised of four major Disney unions, to file an unfair labor practice charge on Monday with the National Labor Relations Board.

The union coalition, which represents 13,000 theme park ride operators, candy makers, custodians and cashiers, claimed that more than 500 workers have faced similar instances of unlawful intimidation, surveillance and disciplinary threats, all for wearing the same buttons to work as Rodriguez did.

"Disneyland Resort cast members may only wear buttons and pins that are a part of their costumes while at work so that the show is maintained for our guests," said Jessica Good, a Disneyland Resort spokeswoman.

To date, only a handful of disciplinary actions have been taken against workers who have repeatedly worn union buttons

after being told it's in violation of the Disney Look dress code, according to the company.

Board agents will be tasked with investigating the charges.

The battle over buttons comes amid a pivotal contract campaign where wages remain a top concern, especially as inflation, while cooling off, continues to hit wallets hard at the grocery store and gas pump.

Rodriguez lives with his girlfriend, who is on disability, and his retired mother.

"I'm the only one in my household working at the moment," he said. "Trying to help support my family, in that sense, I need to be paid a fairer wage than what I'm earning right now."

An internal union survey of Master Services Council workers showed that 64% are "rent burdened," meaning they spend more than half of their paychecks on housing.

Roughly three out of 10



Gabriel San Román

DISNEY UNION workers raise their fists in demanding better pay from Orange County's largest employer during an April 16 press conference.

workers report experiencing either food or housing insecurity.

The campaign, which kicked off with an April rally just outside of Disney's California Adventure, is also the first major union fight to follow Disney's court loss in a case over an Anaheim minimum wage law passed in 2018.

Hourly wages for the lowest-paid Disney workers have already been adjusted to \$19.90 an hour, but a looming court date in November will start the process of assessing how much back pay is owed dating back to 2019, when the wage law first took effect.

The current contract campaign also isn't the first

to push Disney's buttons on union buttons.

Back in 1988, Disney imposed a dress code that forbade any "unauthorized insignia, pins and buttons."

Betty Findley, a Disneyland Hotel waitress and union shop steward, challenged the ban the following year by turning her union lapels into earrings. As reported by the Los Angeles Times, a company rep claimed her earrings were no loophole and still violated the dress code.

Like the current flap, the dispute went before the National Labor Relations Board.

This time around, the Master Services Council argues that case law is on their side.

The union coalition points to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1945 that held workers have the right to display union insignia on the job.

More recently, companies can ban union insignia only if they prove "special circumstances," a

standard that includes safety concerns.

Last year, a federal appeals court overturned an NLRB ruling and said that Telsa could lawfully bar its factory workers from wearing union shirts, as the company otherwise allowed them to sport union stickers.

Disney's dress code guidelines do allow for a U.S. flag pin or a pin of the flag in the shape of Mickey Mouse's head to be worn.

Rodriguez hopes that the Disney Look will clearly include union buttons by way of an NLRB ruling upholding the right to wear them.

"We want to wear these buttons to show Disney that we are united when it comes to contract negotiations," Rodriguez said. "It should be clear to them that we should be able to wear these buttons on the clock, especially to show our solidarity."

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Delegation visits Okazaki to mark 40 years of friendship

BY LILLY NGUYEN

A cross-cultural exchange across the Pacific Ocean marks a significant milestone this year as the Newport Beach Sister City Assn. celebrates its 40th anniversary of affiliation with Okazaki, Japan.

The occasion was marked this week by a four-day visit of a 15-member delegation that included Newport Beach City Council members Robyn Grant and Erik Weigand.

The visit included the presentation of an original artwork by Pierce Mehan the nonprofit organization commissioned for both cities. The companion Newport Beach piece is expected to be presented at a

public ceremony with the City Council in July.

Along with Antibes, France, and Ensenada, Mexico, Okazaki is one of three sister cities affiliated with Newport Beach.

Grant and Weigand said the Newport Beach delegation met with Mayor Yasuhiro Nakane and a number of other Okazaki elected officials in ceremonial events around the city. Both described Okazaki as being very similar to Newport Beach — especially when comparing its public library to Newport's.

"Their central library ... was almost a mirror image of our central library architecturally, and they had a music room," said Grant, adding that she and New-

port Beach Sister City Assn. President Truly Gold Boring were discussing adding the local library as a stop when the Okazaki delegation visits later this summer.

Grant said the relationship between the two cities and the relevance of the Sister Cities program transcends more than just a visit.

"It is about an exchange of ideas and friendship, but there's a bigger picture. This Sister Cities organization is part of a worldwide network of Sister City organizations. This was a program that was started under Dwight Eisenhower and it was to promote international understanding and friendship and extend alliances around the world

by one of our presidents. What we're doing today, and what Truly's leading today, is something that has deep roots in our country's history and deep roots in our city's history," Grant said.

Gold Boring said her family has been involved with the organization for a number of years. Her grandfather, in fact, was one of its founders. Her mother was also a part of the organization. Gold Boring runs the organization now, and her daughter is also involved.

"At the [start], it was a delegation of adults that went back and forth. Then, eventually, we started send-

See **Okasaki**, page A7



Courtesy of Robyn Grant

NEWPORT BEACH Councilwoman Robyn Grant and Councilman Erik Weigand pose for a photo in the Okazaki City Council chambers in Japan.



Dr. Maheswari Senthil is a nationally recognized surgical oncologist who specializes in the management of advanced abdominal cancers.

GOATS

Continued from page A1

blaze that burned more than 400 homes and 16,000 acres. In fact, the disaster is still taught in schools. Laguna Beach High freshmen presented projects that had them research the fire, both through written accounts and interviews, to school staff, fire officials, and local media in February.

History has informed the fire safety measures taken by Laguna Beach. The goat grazing program became a staple of the community's mitigation efforts under former City Manager Ken Frank.

"We learn lessons throughout history with every fire, and we try to change our methods of prevention, and safety mechanisms, according to the lessons that we learn," Montaghani said. "I think the community of Laguna Beach and the safety that we have provided since 1993 is evidence of the lessons that we have



LAGUNA BEACH uses a goat grazing program to cover 10 of its 27 fuel modification zones.

Don Leach
Staff
Photographer

learned and the investment the city has made into these preventive programs."

Councilman Bob Whalen penned a letter to the community when the 30th anniversary of the 1993 fire came up last year, during his most recent mayoral term.

"The number of goats we utilize fluctuates depending on the amount of growth we have off the rainy season," Whalen said. "This year, I know we have two herds of goats working, and there are 200 goats in a herd, so we've got 400 goats out there eating their fill."

Wildfire mitigation requires a collective effort. In addition to fuel modifica-

tion, Fire Chief Niko King said he regards home hardening as a major factor in saving structures. Roofing, vegetation surrounding the home and nonflammable patio furniture can make a difference, King said.

"It's been known and seen in the last major fires that we've had in the state of California that the homes are catching on fire not by direct flame contact, but by the ember cast that comes from the fire," King added. "It's the wind. Those small embers get caught on flammable roofs, they get caught into the attic spaces. The vents, ... if they're three-eighths [of an inch]

or less, it prevents those embers from getting into those confined spaces in the homes."

The wildfire mitigation and fire safety plan, a \$23-million commitment by the City Council in 2019, introduced more than 40 recommendations. Notable developments from this have included the installation of two helicopter water refilling stations, which were put to use in fighting the Aliso fire in May 2022.

Multiple neighborhoods have also opted in to undergrounding utility lines, including a 380-parcel district for Woods Cove in December.

Laguna Beach has various programs working in concert to protect the community from wildfire, Montaghani added. The goats chew away indiscriminately at 10 fuel modification zones, or areas where properties interface with open space. Fuel modification aims to clear a 100-foot buffer from structures. The total acreage assigned to the goat grazing program

amounts to approximately 280 acres.

Dave Kiff, who was brought on as Laguna Beach city manager in May, said the annual cost for the goat grazing program amounts to \$183,000, or one pass at \$650 per acre.

In addition, hand crews manage 17 zones, with much of the land they work on containing protected vegetation and wildlife. Beyond that, the city has a weed abatement program. Fire officials are also available to conduct inspections.

The hand crews cost \$1.3 million annually and make three passes at \$12,600 per acre, Kiff added.

"It's not necessarily something that's going to stop a fire, but it's going to take the energy out of the fire, and it gives the best opportunity for firefighters to go put themselves in a position to protect the property," King said of the fuel modification program providing for defensible space.

Kiff said he has an open ear to the ideas of those in

gave me stage experience, too."

Vivienne Follman-Otta, 14, has attended OCMD for one year as a singer and for some piano lessons.

"I have learned how to manage my nerves in front of an audience, overcome stage fright and improve my communication skills," Follman-Otta said. "I am not sure if I will have a career in the arts, but I want to continue studying and participating in the performing arts throughout high school and college because it brings joy to my life."

THE CULTURAL TERRACE

Irvine Councilman and Great Park chairman Mike Carroll said the Cultural Terrace dates back to the master plan created in 2007 to form the municipal park that would become the Great Park.

He said the Cultural Terrace was envisioned as "a place that would have these vibrant museums and cultural attractions. And we had an aviation museum in the plans and then we had the Pretend City organization join us."

More recently OCMD joined in.

"I think that it will provide a cultural hub. It's a meeting place for people of all ages and all interests to explore history, science, technology and math," he

See **OCMD**, page A8



Courtesy of O.C. Music & Dance

DOUG FREEMAN, Irvine Councilman Larry Agran, Councilwoman Tammy Kim, Executive Director of South Coast Chinese Cultural Center Yulan Chung and Councilman Mike Carroll join together in the groundbreaking of the new Orange County Music & Dance facilities at the Cultural Terrace of Irvine's Great Park.

OCMD

Continued from page A2

for the children. For veterans, OCMD got permission from Great Park neighborhoods to have lessons and create bands at different parks in the Great Park.

"We brought the vets who wanted to play in a band to the Great Park, and we had our teachers as coaches," Freeman said. "And they had eight weeks of free gigs. And then we did a concert at the end of it. ... It was incredible, it was just incredible."

Freeman said OCMD currently has 25 teachers in a 21,000-square-foot building it owns in Irvine. It also places its teachers in some area public schools to offer additional support to school music programs. They currently teach Western and Chinese music, but Freeman said OCMD plans to expand to become a world-music school.

Madison Nguyen, 12, has attended OCMD since 2023.

"I first started going to OCMD with very little music knowledge and no idea what I had coming," Nguyen said. "However, in just a year, I learned how to read notes, play violin and singing techniques. Also, I've never performed on a stage before any of these lessons, so preparing and performing at recitals taught me how to be confident and

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Looking back: Museum offers nostalgic 'Views of Orange County'

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

At the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University in Orange, two paintings with sailboats hang in the north gallery wing. The scenes are similar, with boats on the water, white sails aloft.

One painting is from Barse Miller, titled "Regatta (aka Sails)," from the 1930s, depicting the Balboa Pavilion in Newport Harbor. The other is a painting from the 1940s from Phil Dike, "Entrance to the Harbor," depicting Corona Del Mar. Both artists chose boats on the coastal waters of Orange County as subjects, and yet the two works couldn't be more different.

"Barse was a really important artist who recorded, with very great skill, what it looked like at the time," said California and Orange County art historian Jean Stern. "He was a very good artist with a beautiful sense of depth and perspective."

Miller was an American watercolorist, muralist and illustrator who also became an art educator and founding member of the California Watercolor Society. Miller's boats stand tall and precise, huddling around the pavilion. Dike, on the other hand, drew boats that are more fluid. While also an American painter and art teacher, Dike was more of a modernist, Stern said.

"He is much more suggestive as to the forms, whereas Barse is very exact," said Stern. "Dike is doing it more as work of modern art, where you, the viewer, know what it is, but he doesn't have to go to the extreme detail to



Photos courtesy of the Hilbert Collection

"CALIFORNIA GOLD," by Kerne Erickson, born in 1946, shows an iconic California agricultural scene in an orange orchard in Villa Park.



"REGATTA" (aka Sails), by Barse Miller (1904-73), depicts Newport Harbor and the Balboa Pavilion in the 1930s.

tell you that. He also creates a very vivid sense of movement."

Dike's boats buzz with activity, not strictly outlined but loosely interpreted and hovering on the outskirts of a scene that contains fisherman, rocks and more.

The two pieces are part of the Hilbert's exhibition, "Same Place, Another Time: Views of Orange County," which explores what Orange County might have looked like 20 to 100 years ago through

the eyes of many different local artists. Curated by Gordon McClelland, the paintings in the collection are not just included for their beauty but for the artists' ability to capture specific moments in Orange County history. The two sailboat paintings are an example of how different artists can interpret those moments.

"It's two different approaches to art, and Orange County really ben-

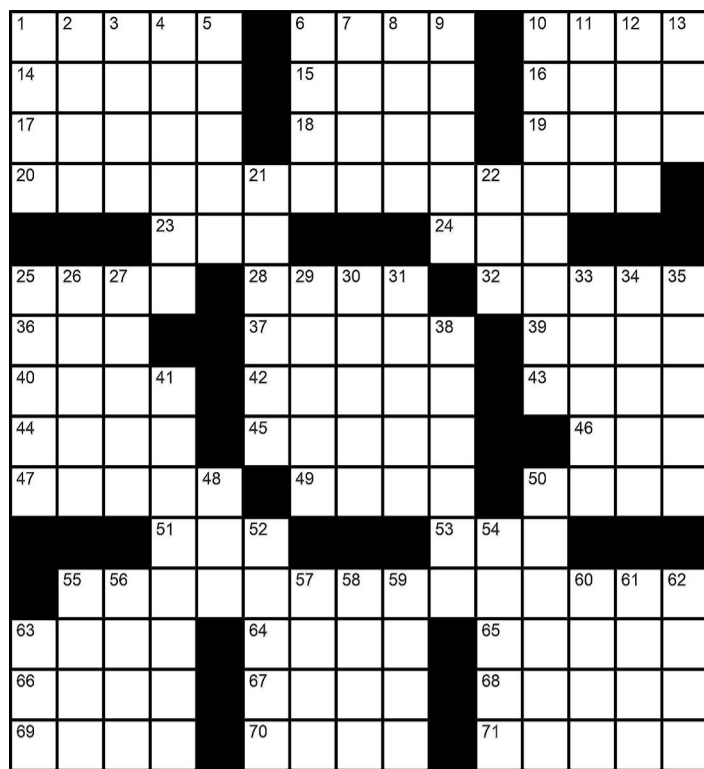
See **Views**, page A8

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Stella Zawistowski

ACROSS

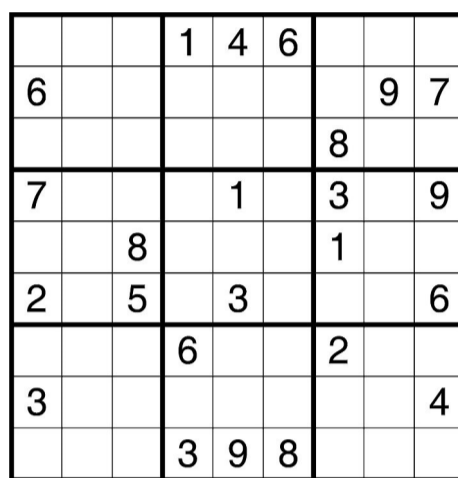
- 1 Punctuation for a pause
- 6 Julia Child, e.g.
- 10 " _ me as I am"
- 14 Disney mermaid
- 15 Sci-fi author Stephenson
- 16 Litter's littlest
- 17 Turn back to zero
- 18 Acid neutralizer
- 19 Notion
- 20 Dessert named after Beantown: 3 wds.
- 23 "Burn Notice" network, once
- 24 "My Gal _" (1942 film)
- 25 Military takeover
- 28 Lion's sound
- 32 Hands out cards
- 36 Crunch muscles
- 37 Handed down a decision
- 39 Golf course hazard
- 40 Petulant face
- 42 Playful river animal
- 43 Location
- 44 Caboose's spot
- 45 Use a loom
- 46 Calypso-like genre
- 47 Ramadan religion
- 49 _ Scott decision
- 50 Nerd
- 51 Huge vessel
- 53 Slime, e.g.
- 55 Cookie bits: 2 wds.
- 63 Aluminum wrap
- 64 Wear out
- 65 Sweet winter drink
- 66 Sunrise direction
- 67 " _ heard of him?"
- 68 Amherst school, for short
- 69 Actress Lanchester
- 70 Line of stitches



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 A8.

71 Is a tenant

DOWN

- 1 Low- _ diet
- 2 Dunkable cookie
- 3 _ America pageant
- 4 Get together: 2 wds.
- 5 Choral voices

- 6 "Mad Money" channel
- 7 Listen to
- 8 Facilitate
- 9 "Circus" insects
- 10 Three babies born together
- 11 German car make

- 12 Mid-leg joint
- 13 Airport posting: Abbr.
- 21 Not very wide
- 22 Angry
- 25 Italian isle
- 26 Orchestral winds
- 27 Customary
- 29 Exposed
- 30 Sacred table
- 31 Actor Christopher
- 33 Come up
- 34 Potato pancake
- 35 Say something
- 38 Dig up
- 41 John of "Grease"
- 48 Apple computer
- 50 Commute from work: 2 wds.
- 52 Big bags
- 54 Happen
- 55 Old furnace fuel
- 56 "Boo, _!"
- 57 Dwell
- 58 Surface measurement
- 59 Semester, e.g.
- 60 "Let me!": 2 wds.
- 61 Trading station
- 62 Be rude to
- 63 Account charge

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What type of issue is family financial insecurity?

Help solve the puzzle ➔



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A word that causes almost everyone stress

We all encounter certain words, phrases, terms or names that evoke strong feelings.



For example, I wince whenever I hear "no offense." That's because of the certainty that those words will be followed by a "but" and then an insult or that the insult was already delivered and the speaker senses the need for an easy, blame-free recovery.

No way I'm falling for that trick. If you're going to diss me, at least have the courage to own it.

There are plenty of other instances when seemingly innocuous words, alone or strung together, can send our anxiety levels skyrocketing. "We need to talk." "The test results are in." "Please hold." "Whatever." (Imagine the last one delivered by a 15-year-old with an attitude.)

But there is one that just might stand above all the rest. It could even be deemed the GOAT — greatest of all time — stress-inducing set of letters. Not only does it get high points for diabolism disguised as banality, but it's arguably unmatched for its prevalence in everyday life and its ability to frustrate even the most intelligent, sophisticated and emotionally grounded among us.

What is this champion of all headache-provoking, blood pressure-spiking words?

"Password." Indeed, this ordinary, unassuming little word is so impressively dreadful that it has spawned a phrase to describe the singular distress it causes: "Password hell."

Have you ever been stuck in an endless loop of entering a password, failing to log in, setting a new password and having that password rejected because it's the same password you

previously used? Then you try to set a new password but it lacks the required number of capital letters, numerals and special characters? On and on, and before you know it, you're locked out of your own account? You're in password hell.

Have you ever been notified that your password is too easy to guess and may be compromised? And you're advised that you should create long, complicated passwords that are unique to each account that you use, and they should be changed regularly to other long, complicated, unique passwords?

You're in password hell. Have you gone into panic attack-mode when you've heard a family member shout from the other room, "What's the password?" And then you must search for the list of saved passwords you keep on a piece of paper or on your device, and that list might or might not include the one that you're looking for, or it's out of date, because, let's face it, there is no perfect system for keeping track of your log-in information.

Where are you? Say it with me. Password hell.

Studies have shown that most people try to escape password hell by doing exactly what cybersecurity experts tell them not to do. They use the same password for everything, and by everything I mean the 70 or 80 or hundreds of password-protected sites that the average person frequents. Or they use "password" as their password. This is shocking, yes, but it's also understandable from a mental-health perspective. They have chosen to risk having their accounts hacked over becoming consumed by the hell fires that accompany a forgotten password.

There's another term I've come across to describe the condition that leads to such complacency: "password fatigue."

That fatigue is likely compounded by the extra security measures that have been devised to try to protect our private information — steps that I view

See Apodaca, page A7

MAILBAG

Costa Mesa likes native plants but not their pollinators

I was just cited by Costa Mesa Animal Control to get rid of the bees that have been living in a trash can in my atrium on and off for the last 10 years. My neighbors have no problem with this; on the contrary they call my gardens the arboretum.

Thirty-three years ago when I bought my home, I took out the lawns, put in a drip watering system and started planting and composting. The front and back gardens have fruit trees, grapes, berries, artichokes, asparagus, tomatoes, beans, other seasonal vegetables, native plants like milkweed and lots of flowers and vines. Therefore it is full of very busy bees, butterflies, nesting birds, lizards, spiders, moths, squirrels, and the occasional opossum, duck or raccoon. Everyone who walks their kids and dogs to the corner park loves my garden — especially the monarchs! For many this is their first introduction to nature; where they see a garden bursting with color and life year-round.

It's ironic that if you take the city's advice and take out your lawns and plant a garden that attracts pollinators, said pollinators must be transients! If bees decide they'd rather live in a trash can in your atrium where they can roll out of bed to pollinate your produce, suddenly you become a criminal beekeeper. The city gives you seven days to remove or exterminate the bees, or you'll end up in court. These services cost hundreds of dollars, a hardship for those of us living entirely on Social Security. What's more, I hate to break it to you, but the bees will come back. Where there is a garden, there will be bees.

So what's the city going to do next? Make us tear out our pollinator gardens and replace them with lawns?! This is the same twisted logic that caused Costa Mesa to spend \$100,000 on the Mariposa Butterfly Garden to bring in monarchs and other butterflies to the city, without planning even one native milkweed plant to attract the butterflies and feed their larvae. I went there yesterday. It is lifeless; not one butterfly or bee in sight. My garden is bursting with them, so I must kill them.

Bees are allowed in neighboring towns like Huntington Beach, Santa Ana, Irvine, Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods and San Clemente. As well as Anaheim, Fullerton, Orange, Stanton, Tustin, Westminster, and Yorba Linda. I have asked the Costa Mesa City Council to put a moratorium on removing my bees, but I've heard nothing yet.

Priscilla Rocco Costa Mesa



ROSES AND artichokes are two of the many plants pollinated by bees at a reader's Costa Mesa home. The city has told her she must remove a colony of the insects from her yard.

Priscilla Rocco

Church may be answer to prayers

Hats off to our neighborhood Congregational church and its willingness to use excess space to build low-income housing. This is such a Christian act. We have a large number of residents who would qualify for this type of housing. These individuals are facing challenging difficulties and navigating the increased rental costs happening all over Laguna. A large number of these individuals work in our stores and restaurants. They have been good citizens for a long time. The rental situation is constantly changing in Laguna as landlords find they can get more money for their rentals. It would be a shame to lose these great workers because there is no affordable housing in town. Laguna Beach Unified School District has worked with the county to establish a 55-year agreement, allowing National Church Residences to transform a vacant school into 70 units of low-income senior housing in South Laguna. One of our servers from a local restaurant finally cleared the waiting list, and she was able to move into this wonderful residence. This move has made all the difference to this older individual's ability to stay in Laguna comfortably and pay her rent. The renters have added to the neighborhood, bought goods and services from local merchants and not caused any problems over the last 50 years. I am sure the Congregational church will be a good steward of its land and involve its neighbors in making decisions to make the projects work and fit into the community.

Jim Kelly Laguna Beach

Positive words for A Word, Please

The Daily Pilot is the main reason I still subscribe to the L.A. Times (I live, work and play in Orange County). June Casagrande's byline is a "go to" I really enjoy. Regarding her recent column, "You're free to peruse this commentary in every sense of the word," Daily Pilot, May 21, for me,

"peruse" means not only to read, glance, skim or browse but to do so with purpose: 1. searching for a connection, subject, relevance, interest; 2. discovering a backstory, agenda, bias, motive, use; 3. finding names of people, places, things; 4. seeing what is not included.

Thank you, June!

Bobbi Cox Laguna Beach

Shaking things up in Newport

Last week was an exciting week for Newport Beach. There were two events that portend major changes in the future not just for Newport Beach but for California and the country at large. On Thursday, June 6, a trio of tremors hit the Costa Mesa-Newport Beach border, the greatest of which had a magnitude of 3.6. I felt it as well as some similar-sized quakes in Los Angeles County.

If you want to delve further into the potential of a larger Newport Beach-Costa Mesa earthquake, you could research information about its relationship to other California faults. The earthquake last week was close to the Compton thrust fault, one which could have major consequences for the L.A. Basin. More importantly, Thursday's quake also occurred near the Newport-Inglewood fault, which could bring a shake of even greater consequences to Newport Beach. Fortunately, experts say that these smaller recent quakes have no predictive power over the next major destructive earthquake.

Another event to hit Newport Beach last weekend with potential for major change in not just our city but our country as a whole was of the man-made variety. On Saturday, June 8, former President Donald Trump was in town. Evidence of that visit was very visible as I drove down PCH on my way to lunch at Fashion Island. Love him or hate him, there is probably no other person in America who elicits stronger feelings than Trump.

The crowd to welcome him was waving colorful flags and wearing equally

colorful clothing. From my perspective it was a cheerfully positive crowd, eagerly waiting to catch a glimpse of their hero who is turning our political world upside down.

At this point, I am guessing that he carries the vote in Newport Beach in November but loses the overall vote in Orange County as he did in 2016 and in 2020.

Lynn Lorenz Newport Beach

Issues with the priesthood

Let me get this straight. A married father of four and longtime member of a different faith is happily welcomed into the priesthood (June 9 Daily Pilot & TimesOC). He will "use his priesthood for the benefit of the weak and vulnerable in society." Of course, women have been doing just this since the beginning of time. We as women are the civilizers and peace builders. Even after the church turned a blind eye to child rape for decades, protecting evil men, we are banned from ordination and the altar, except maybe to clean it. If "priestly duties" had been open to women, I strongly believe this horrendous suffering would not have taken place on the scale that it did. I am a former Catholic, and I finally got the message of exclusion.

Jane Bove Fountain Valley

Not being a Catholic, I've never fully understood or agreed with the policy of Catholic priests not being allowed to marry. This policy is most likely a part of what drives these men to children as their sexual outlet, as they legally have no other in which to satisfy their unfulfilled sexual desires.

When I read about Greg Walgenbach, the first man to be ordained as a bona fide Catholic priest in Garden Grove who is married and has four children, I let out a loud "hallelujah." I don't know if this is some kind of prelude to future workings within the Catholic church, but in my opinion, it's a great new start.

Bill Spitalnick Newport Beach

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Dr. Martin Henry Litke

May 1931 - September 2023

Martin was born in Brooklyn, New York in May of 1931 to Louis and Teresa Litke. He died of natural causes in September 2023 at the age of 92 in his home in Newport Beach, CA. Martin graduated from Abraham Lincoln high school in Brooklyn 1949, Princeton University in 1953. He attended Medical School at NYU (Class of 1957), did his internship at Bellevue Hospital in New York City, and completed his residency as an Internist at the VA Hospital in Long Beach, CA.

He married the love of his life, Mildred Cohen, in September of 1957, who joined him as a schoolteacher in Korea, where Martin served as a Captain in the army (1958-1960), providing medical care for patients in Seoul post-Korean War. While in Korea, they had their first son, David Litke, in 1959.

Martin ran his private medical practice with his wife in Garden Grove, CA for 25 years before retiring to pursue his love of travel, teaching, and his hobbies. Between trips to the far reaches of the globe with Mildred, he remained involved in medicine as a teacher and mentor to the residents and interns at the Medical School of UC Irvine, becoming a clinical professor of medicine at UC Irvine medical center. Achieving his dream of attending college at Princeton, was a huge source of pride for Martin; and as an alumnus, he stayed involved in recruiting new Princeton students. His hobbies included boating, fishing, tennis, photography, theater, symphony, and bird watching.

Most important to Martin was his love of his family. He was a dedicated husband, father, and a doting grandfather and great grandfather. Martin is predeceased by his wife Mildred and his son David; and is survived by his daughter Ann and son Matthew Litke. He is dearly missed by them as well his 6 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren and many extended family members.

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OKASAKI*Continued from page A3*

ing students,” said Gold Boring. “We really wanted a cultural as well as a friendship exchange with both adults and kids. The adults would go maybe every five years for these special occasions and the kids would go every year. We send a delegation of eight kids there and sometimes eight kids come here. We’ve had up to 10 before ... a lot of these people who went with us have been there before, but COVID-19 kind of killed the whole exchange program.

“So now, as offices do, a lot of people have turned around in their positions. We lost a lot of people who recognized us as an organization, so in Okazaki we’re trying to rebuild all the communication again with the people there so we can continue the exchanges for the kids, especially.”

Gold Boring said her grandmother hosted a student years ago with whom their family has remained in touch. She said she still is a friend of a student who stayed with her family when she was 16.

Noting that relationships established by the association span generations, she reported meeting a man during her recent visit to Okazaki who had known her grandfather.

Weigand said one of this week’s delegation members was a student who went to Japan as part of one of the exchanges, learned Japanese while there and was able to help direct the English-speaking members

around the city.

“It’s almost full circle. You’ve got somebody who was a student, who’s now part of the group and is now taking a group of kids there too. His kids might do it, too, because he knows the language and worked there,” Weigand said. “All these things intertwine and that’s what it really comes down to — little Newport Beach gets to show their young ... another culture and how it might be different than theirs and makes it so we’re not so insular here in Newport Beach and get to see a worldwide perspective.”

Grant added that maintaining the relationship is a way to teach people to be respectful of other cultures, which she felt was important messaging to hear and know in today’s world. Gold Boring agreed.

“The reason we have our nonprofit is to get our kids there and to create a relationship early on. Now with technology — emails, phones, texting — a lot of the times we’ll get the numbers of the kids, and the kids can talk to each other before they go and after they go; they stay in relationships their whole life,” Gold Boring said. “The purpose is so that at a young age you’re introduced to a whole new culture and have this camaraderie and openness to people’s different lifestyles and backgrounds and monetarily different lives and learn from them.

“The whole point is to learn from each other.”

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FUN*Continued from page A1*

no idea what it used to be.”

The hammers and nails disappeared when the park ended its 2019 season. A pandemic kept the site shuttered over the next two summers and, in 2022, a statewide Level 2 water shortage preempted city officials from tapping non-recirculated potable water from Central Park’s irrigation system, so Adventure Playground stayed closed.

Locals rejoiced last year when the attraction reopened following a four-year hiatus, enjoying areas and features newly refurbished by Eagle Scouts who’d targeted the park for community service projects.

Garrett Hay, a Huntington Beach native who serves as scoutmaster for the city’s Boy Scout Troop 1, visited the park last summer just to see the progress that had been made. He recalled many summer days spent traversing mud hills with his siblings in the early ’90s.

“It really is a slice of Americana right out of a Mark Twain novel that you just do not see anymore,” said Hay, now a 39-year-old father of three, who recalled the park’s “feral” days.

“The large cement pool now filled with water was actually filled with mud back then. When you got there, there was a huge pile of muddy tennis shoes. You’d take off your good shoes and put them in a locker, then grab a pair of Converse with no laces.

*File Photo*

KIDS SLIDE down a “mud slide” on opening day of Adventure Playground in Huntington Beach in 2023. The park reopens this year on June 22.

Afterward, you threw them back in the pile, got cleaned up and went home — it was a treat.”

As a scoutmaster, Hay is now working with a handful of troop members working on Eagle Scout projects dreaming up new ways to make Adventure Playground even better.

For example, teens this summer will be building a series of sensory-rich play tables, complete with arts and crafts, water with floating toys or kinetic sand, for children who may be visiting with parents and older siblings but just miss the mark for the site’s key demographic of youth ages 5 to 12.

Hay hopes the projects will be part of a more formalized arrangement between the Boy Scout troop

and the city that will allow teens to keep the spirit of imagination and play alive for future generations.

“[Adventure Playground] is like its own ecosystem, and it’s sort of self-sustained by the community services department and the city of Huntington Beach and scouts and residents — it’s pretty unique.”

Barraza acknowledges that, while similar adventure playgrounds currently operate in Irvine and in Yorba Linda, the Central Park facility is among a handful of cherished and time-honored community traditions the city’s denizens seem to have a keen interest in preserving.

“Huntington Beach really likes to keep its traditions alive and keep

things going that people know from the past,” he said. “Also, today playgrounds are very standard. You go to a park and there’s a playground that’s got two slides and a swing set. This is really a park where kids can use their imaginations.”

Adventure Playground, located at 7111 Talbert Ave. in Huntington Beach, runs from June 22 through Aug. 17, Mondays through Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., but will be closed on July 4. Admission is \$4 per child and free for parents and adult chaperones.

Reservations can be made online at hbsands.org. For more information, call (714) 536-5486.

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APODACA*Continued from page A6*

as a tacit admission by those in charge of internet security that they don’t remotely have a handle on keeping our information safe.

We have, for example, two-factor authentication, which involves sending a one-time code to your

smartphone that must be entered before you can access your account.

Or you might encounter special software that recognizes your face or fingerprint. I find this feature not only glitchy and unreliable but also extremely creepy because it calls to mind a Dan Brown book I once read that features a plot point in which the bad guys override eye-recognition

security in the most horrific way imaginable.

Another extra protective layer might include security questions — such as mother’s maiden name, first pet or the street you grew up on — which feel like a strangely low-tech way to fix a technology issue.

I’m equally dubious of password managers, which are software systems designed to keep track of your

passwords for you. Can they be trusted? Who knows?

The trouble is that these measures do nothing to address the root of the problem, which is that our world is entirely dependent on the internet. For all the good it has enabled, it is also our Frankenstein monster, continually evolving beyond our ability to control it. The whole experi-

ment has run amok, and password hell is merely one aspect of that.

Part of me hasn’t given up hope that some Silicon Valley geniuses will use their brainpower to invent a more reasonable system. Someday, password hell will be a distant, detested memory.

Then again, maybe it’s too late, and we’re too engulfed in the inferno to turn

back. We’ll just keep making password hell more hellish.

At least until A.I. takes over. Then none of it will matter anyway.

PATRICE APODACA is a former Los Angeles Times staff writer and is coauthor of “A Boy Named Courage: A Surgeon’s Memoir of Apartheid.” She lives in Newport Beach.

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VIEWES

Continued from page A4

efited from so many different styles of artist that were working during this time period," said Stern.

Stern, who is also director emeritus of the Irvine Museum and the author of several books on California art, including "Painting California: Seascapes and Beach Towns," gave a lecture on the exhibition at the Hilbert on June 12, taking time for questions afterwards. His lecture, "Orange County Dreams: How California's Great Artists Painted O.C.," is part of an event series offered by the museum. Stern has served on the Board of Directors of the California Art Club and the Laguna Plein Air Painters Assn. and is considered an expert on paintings of the California Impressionist period.

Besides the sailboat paintings, "Same Place, Another Time" features works from important artists like Bradford J. Salmon, George James, Rosemary Vasquez Tuthill and others. Beach scenes and townscapes highlight everyday life in Laguna Beach, Newport Beach, Costa Mesa, Anaheim and Santa Ana in oils and watercolors.

Kerne Erickson, for example, is known for his airline advertisements that highlight places like Hawaii

and Palm Beach, but the Hilbert Museum features his recent work, "California Gold," a warm painting of orange groves in Villa Park.

"He's known for a lot of posters, so this may have been used as an ad for Sunkist," said Stern. "It shows that the oranges are mature, ripe and fresh when they are picked. The point of this painting is completely different because it wants you to understand something and possibly buy it."

When Villa Park was still covered in orange groves, the VillaPark Orchards Assn. was responsible for harvesting and shipping most of the fruit grown there. In Erickson's painting, a Sunkist truck loaded with orange crates is parked in an orchard where the trees, heavy with fruit, cast just enough shadow to create a little shade from the Southern California sun.

Other works feature other Orange County landmarks like the legendary music venue the Golden Bear, open in Huntington Beach from 1923 to 1986, and the Old Irvine General Store, located off the 5 Freeway at Sand Canyon Road, which served as a general store and post office for the original Irvine Ranch. And of course, Disneyland.

A 2017 painting from Bradford J. Salmon of the entrance to Disneyland in 1960 is inspired by the

artist's romanticized view of the theme park as a child. Salmon grew up 30 minutes from the Happiest Place on Earth but later became disenchanted with the commercialism that distracted him from the park's artistry. His painting, "Disneyland Vintage 1960," captures a nostalgic memory of a more innocent time under a bluish sky.

"Salmon paints all sorts of different things and he is very popular because he has this great sense of humor," said Stern. "He has a very childlike approach to his art."

A crowd of nearly 3,350 visitors came out to the reopening of the Hilbert Museum in February after the museum was closed for three years of remodeling that tripled its footprint. "Same Place, Another Time" is one of nine exhibitions at the museum and will remain on view until Sept. 7. Stern said the show is a good way to get an idea of what Orange County looked like in the past and how it compares to the way the county looks now, through a multitude of perspectives.

"There are pieces here that are clearly Orange County, but you get two artists in a room, and they will paint four different ways," said Stern. "They are always experimenting."

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CENSURE

Continued from page A2

own censure in 2021 alongside former Mayor Tri Ta as an appeal to his swing vote.

"I, myself, was a victim of being wrongly censured before," Nguyen acknowledged. "My vote is the vote to represent thousands of residents of the city whether they vote for me or not."

Nguyen noted most of the allegations as being true but didn't comment on those he said he didn't know enough about. At the end, the mayor said he

would agree to move forward with censure but suggested Phan West be given a second chance before a resolution would come back to council for a vote.

"How many chances are we going to give her?" Manzo asked. "She obviously does not care about just basic professionalism or decency when she comes to the council or the public."

Councilman NamQuan Nguyen, Phan West's sole ally against censure, attempted to persuade his council colleagues to take no action if she acknowledged the accusations.

"It's very humbling and

I'm willing to do that if the council is OK to take no action," Phan West said.

Mayor Nguyen didn't buy the sudden change of heart. "I can't trust that she's going to change," he said. "I can't until I see the real change in her."

With that, council members voted 3-1 to move forward with censure. Phan West abstained.

If Phan West doesn't change to the council majority's liking, a censure resolution will be scheduled for a Sept. 11 vote.

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OCMD

Continued from page A3

said. "We have benefits associated with everything from children's development and early childhood education ... and exposing residents and visitors to music and dance. Our aviation museum that we have there will have things like flight simulators and other interactive opportunities."

Pretend City Children's Museum Executive Director Ellen Pais said in an email the nonprofit has been working toward a permanent home since its founding more than 20 years ago.

"We have been in our current rented location 15 years — we will be celebrating in August — and we have outgrown our space. We have been planning a move to the Great Park, and now, with the city's investment in the Cultural Terrace, we will be one of four inaugural and anchor tenants," Pais wrote. "We are excited to share that we will be able to welcome many more families and field trips. We anticipate attendance to grow from our current number of 200,000 annually to over 325,000 annually. We also will grow our early childhood hub by expanding programming for all types



A RENDERING of the future home of Orange County Music & Dance at the Cultural Terrace in Irvine.

Courtesy of the city of Irvine

of children and families and welcoming tenants including Beyond Blindness, Orange County Department of Education, O.C. Assn. for the Education of Young Children and Start Well. We will also have a new concept full-service restaurant open to the general public, led by restaurateurs Ed Lee, Carl Tong and Linda Nguyen."

Michael J. Aguilar, a retired U.S. Marine Corps general and president/ chief executive of the Flying Leatherneck Historical Foundation, said in an email that plans to relocate the Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum began in late 2020 when the FLHF was informed by the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar that the museum, which was a USMC Command Museum, would be closing due to budgetary constraints. Aguilar said the city of Irvine approached the

FLHF in January 2021 with the suggestion to partner in an effort to relocate the museum back to its original home at MCAS El Toro, now called Great Park.

"The FLHF plans to build a new facility that will house all but the largest aircraft in the collection along with thousands of artifacts," he wrote. "The new museum will offer new and exciting exhibits and displays that tell the history of Marine Corps Aviation and the two air stations that helped build Orange County, MCAS El Toro and Tustin, honor the history and legacy of those that served, inspire a sense of patriotism and pride in America, and inspire our youth to pursue their education in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM)."

Jessica Peralta is a contributor to TimesOC.

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

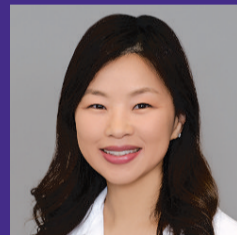
Crossword grid with filled-in letters: COMMAL CHEFTAKE, ARIEEL NEAL RUNT, RESET BASE IDEEA, BOSTONCREAMPIE, USA SAL, COUP ROAR DEALS, ABS RULED TRAP, POUT OTTER SITE, REAR WEAVE SKA, ISLAM DRED GEEK, VAT GOO, CHOCCOLATECHIPPS, FOILTIRE COCOA, EASTEVERUMASS, ELSA SEAM RENTS

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

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