

# Daily Pilot

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## LBUSD ends contract with Vioria

District officials say decision is not related to superintendent's performance but rather 'anticipated changes.'

BY ERIC LICAS

The Laguna Beach Unified School District's Board of Education unanimously voted to terminate their contract with Supt. Jason Vioria, effective Dec. 31.

The board announced the decision in a statement Friday. Members said it was not related to his performance but rather due to "anticipated changes in the governing board that may influence the direction and priorities of the district moving forward."

"The current Board of Education and I mutually decided that my stepping aside at this time would provide the incoming board with the opportunity to shape the leadership that best aligns with its vision for the district's future," Vioria wrote in a letter to LBUSD families. "While agreeing to the separation agreement was one of the most difficult decisions of my career, I believe it

See **Contract**, page A2

## Honeybee law clears official look with little sting

Costa Mesa City Council agrees to include buffer between hives, habitat in first reading of new beekeeping ordinance.

BY SARA CARDINE

With a little refinement — and a lot of conversation among animal control officers, backyard hobbyists and environmentalists — Costa Mesa appears to have landed on a set of rules to legalize and regulate residential beekeeping.

City Council members Tuesday approved the first reading of an ordinance that would allow residents to apply for permits to keep and maintain hives for honeybees on their properties, after undergoing review and approval by city staff.

Staff would consider site plans and notify all adjacent neighbors, who would have 30 days to re-

See **Law**, page A3



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**HUNDREDS GATHER** around a 96-foot Douglas fir Thursday during the South Coast Plaza's annual Christmas tree-lighting ceremony.

## South Coast Plaza kicks off busy holiday season



**ABOVE:** Orange County School of the Performing Arts students perform during a South Coast Plaza holiday event at Town Center Park in Costa Mesa on Thursday.

**RIGHT:** The Ryan family take a selfie at the base of the Douglas fir tree during the tree-lighting ceremony.



**S**outh Coast Plaza heralded the holiday season Thursday evening with a 43rd annual tree-lighting event that included caroling, a musical performance and a special guest fresh off a long journey from the North Pole to Costa Mesa.

Locals in the know camped out to snag the best viewing spots at the center's Town Center Park in front of the Westin South Coast Plaza hotel and waited for the countdown to begin. In an instant, 20,000 lights in the 96-foot Douglas fir tree illuminated to the delight of onlookers.

The plaza got a bit of an early start on the Black Friday festivities, kicking off the 2024 holiday season the morning after Thursday's tree-lighting with multiple seasonal displays and activities throughout the Costa Mesa retail complex.

In addition to the outdoor display, visitors can enjoy two other holiday trees, located in the Jewel Court and the Crate & Barrel/Macy's Home Store Wing.

Santa himself is accepting visits in Santa's Village, an Alpine winter wonderland on the first floor of Carousel Court, or Santa's cottage at the North Pole near Macy's Home Store, with photo packages running from \$19 to \$58.

Kids can take a spin on the Reindeer Carousel (admission is \$2) and Santa's Express Train, complimentary with any Santa photo purchase.

For a full list of holiday displays and activities, visit [southcoastplaza.com/holiday](https://southcoastplaza.com/holiday).

— Sara Cardine



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**ORANGE COUNTY** writer and native Greer Wylder, a former Daily Pilot columnist, has published her first book, "Born in OC: The Artists, Entrepreneurs, and Visionaries of Orange County."

## Local lifestyle writer profiles O.C. movers, shakers with her first book

BY MATT SZABO

Greer Wylder has run dozens of marathons.

Besides the obvious fitness benefits, she finds that running sometimes helps the proverbial light bulb burst on in her head.

It was on a run in January 2020 that Wylder, a longtime Orange County lifestyle writer who lives in Costa Mesa, had that "aha" moment.

"I do a lot of social media for myself and nonprofits, and it's all ephemeral," Wylder said. "Everything I do disappears. I have a friend who's an artist, and at least she can say, 'I painted that painting.' I just thought to myself that I

had to write a book. It was time."

Wylder, the founder of the popular Greer's OC website and newsletter and a former longtime Daily Pilot columnist, knew who she wanted to focus on.

Namely, some of Orange County's finest.

Wylder recently released her first book, "Born in OC: The Artists, Entrepreneurs and Visionaries of Orange County, California."

The book has blurbs and interview transcripts with a variety of county natives who Wylder feels share a common theme of being inspirational and adding value to

**"... I think there's a whole other side of Orange County that is so impressive. It's not all drama and all of that. I like the stories of these people who are doing amazing things through their careers, through philanthropy, and also employing so many people."**

See **Book**, page A3

— Greer Wylder



**OBITUARY**

# Fans mourn Skipper Carrillo, who offered all a 'home-run day'

BY ANDREW TURNER

Everywhere he went, he did so in uniform.

Arthur Tolbert Carrillo, known affectionately throughout the Laguna Beach community as Skipper Carrillo, was considered by many to be a baseball savant.

From the way he dressed and the stats he could pull out at a moment's notice to the nicknames he handed out and his standard greeting, Skipper lived for the love of the game.

Skipper died on Nov. 14,

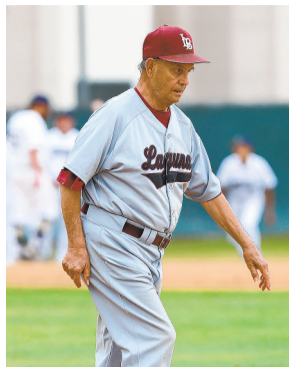
undoubtedly passing on to the Hall of Fame. He was 86.

It was his simplest pleasure to tell those he met to "have a home-run day."

A spreader of good vibes, Skipper would become an integral part of athletics at the high school. He sat in the dug-out at baseball games and on the bench at basketball games, and he worked the down marker at football games.

When a statue of Skip-

See **Carrillo**, page A4



Don Leach

**SKIPPER CARRILLO** walks on the field in 2015 after Laguna won a game against Calvary Chapel.

**CONTRACT**

Continued from page A1

is the right choice to honor the progress we have made together and to ensure the district continues to thrive."

Viloria has led LBUSD since 2016 and is credited with helping the district achieve first place in 2024 for assessments in English, art, math and science. During his tenure, the district has also doubled participation in advanced placement classes, expanded opportunities for dual enrollment in technical education programs and developed mental-health support systems on campuses. Viloria also set LBUSD facilities on a path to attain carbon neutrality by 2030.

"I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to work with a parent community that is so highly engaged and deeply invested in their children's education," Viloria wrote. "Your active involvement has been a



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**LBUSD SUPT.** Jason Viloria stands in the center quad on the first day of school at Laguna Beach High School. On Friday, Laguna Beach Unified officials announced the termination of their contract with Viloria, effective Dec. 31.

cornerstone of our district's success, and it is this partnership between families and schools that makes LBUSD truly special. As we move forward, I encourage you to continue this vital participation."

A pair of newcomers to the LBUSD Board of Education won seats in the November election. They ousted Jan Vickers, an in-

cumbent who had served six consecutive terms since 2000.

Sheri Morgan and Howard Hills will be sworn into the district's governing body on Dec. 16. Meanwhile, the board will work to appoint an interim superintendent.

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**THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE**

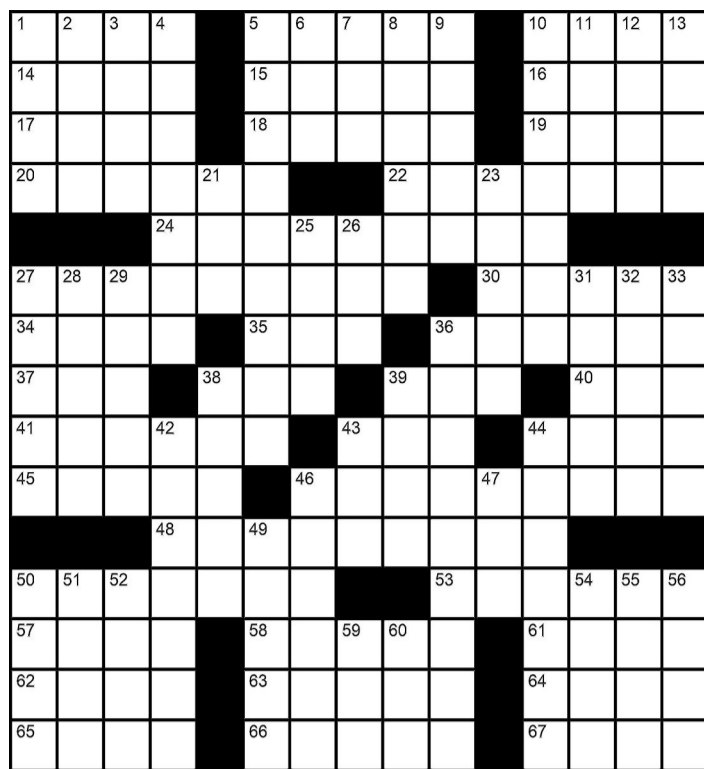
By Stella Zawistowski

**ACROSS**

- 1 Shop with cold cuts
- 5 Stockpile
- 10 Water around a castle
- 14 Author Wister
- 15 Opposite of outer
- 16 Doing nothing
- 17 Shipped
- 18 Taste or smell
- 19 Midday
- 20 Claim
- 22 Provided food for
- 24 Ice cream truck brand: 2 wds.
- 27 No-tariff policy: 2 wds.
- 30 Things to do
- 34 Dishonest person
- 35 Sick
- 36 Aplenty
- 37 Fitting
- 38 " \_ to go!"
- 39 Vinaigrette part
- 40 Cellist's stick
- 41 Get control of: 2 wds.
- 43 Police alert: Abbr.
- 44 Tree with cones
- 45 Go in
- 46 Enthusiastic to a fault
- 48 Soldier of fortune
- 50 Goes ape: 2 wds.
- 53 Endured
- 57 Showy spring flower
- 58 Lot attendant
- 61 "Eek!": 2 wds.
- 62 Horse's hair
- 63 Actress \_ Noni Rose
- 64 12-inch unit
- 65 "Benevolent" group
- 66 Pry bar
- 67 Big to-do

**DOWN**

- 1 Indian rice pancake
- 2 She-sheep
- 3 Microscope part
- 4 0, 2, or -1
- 5 Writer who covers the past
- 6 "That's a good \_!"
- 7 Author Patchett
- 8 Save from danger
- 9 Nighttime vision
- 10 Quartz or talc
- 11 Telltale smell
- 12 Soothing succulent
- 13 Take care of
- 21 Go bad
- 23 Sum
- 25 Actress Tyne
- 26 "Good"



**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](http://sudoku.org.uk).

	9							
	6	2	1	4		3		
3				2	6		1	
					3			7
	7				2		4	
6			5					
	1		9	5				8
		8		3	7		9	
							7	

**For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A3.**

cholesterol: Abbr.

- 27 Emergency signal
- 28 Become more mature
- 29 Face-plant: 2 wds.
- 31 Edna Ferber novel: 2 wds.
- 32 Danish currency unit
- 33 Drainage system
- 36 British territory that borders Spain
- 38 Piano parts
- 39 Not shut
- 42 Archenemies
- 43 NYC's Madison, for one: Abbr.
- 44 Is fruitful: 2 wds.
- 46 Gas rating
- 47 Notable time period
- 49 Adversary
- 50 Margarita ingredient
- 51 Taken by mouth
- 52 Plummet
- 54 "How Great \_ Art"
- 55 Seth's son in the Bible
- 56 Connect the \_
- 59 Actress Tyler
- 60 \_ out a living

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**ORANGE COUNTY**  
Beekeepers Assn. President Liz Savage with backyard beehives in Fullerton, where beekeeping was legalized in 2018.



Courtesy of Liz Savage

**LAW**

Continued from page A1

spond with questions or possible objections. The keepers of any currently unpermitted beehives would have 90 days to come into compliance with the rule, which would take effect after the draft law's second reading by council.

Up to two hives would be allowed in a front yard, backyard or side yard, as long as they were at least 15 feet from a keeper's property line and 25 feet from neighboring buildings, but could not be visible from the public right of way. If that distance can't be maintained, a beekeeper must build a 6-foot wall or hedge around bee boxes to drive flight paths skyward.

City officials have not yet determined how much a beekeeping permit might cost but agreed to review and return with a fee resolution with amounts sufficient to recover staff time spent on implementation and enforcement of the new rules.

While most of the ordinance had already been hashed out by Costa Mesa Police Lt. Stephanie Selinske, who manages the

city's Animal Services Unit, a group of conservationists from the local nonprofit Coastal Corridor Alliance (CCA) appeared Tuesday with a special request.

Paul Waggoner, a community organizer for the CCA, said honeybees can become highly territorial and drive off native species of bees. They are also prone to starting feral colonies in places where they're not particularly helpful.

He asked the council to include information on native plants and pollinators to new permittees and consider creating a 1-mile buffer zone between residential hives and natural habitat open spaces, such as the city's Fairview and Talbert parks, the Randall Preserve on Costa Mesa's border with Newport Beach, and the Back Bay area.

"We just hope that we can find a way to do what we want as humans and also protect the natural world," Wagonner said.

Sean Crowley, a commercial beekeeper and mentor to newcomers to the pursuit, advised the council to include some flexibility on the number of allowable bee boxes, so hives could be split in springtime, when bee

populations can swell exponentially, to reduce aggressive swarming.

Councilman Manuel Chavez put forth a motion that conceded to Crowley's point and also established a 500-foot distance requirement between home hives and the four named open space preserves.

"There's a lot of restoration going on in Fairview Park, and a lot of work going on in the [Randall] Preserve in the next few years, and I want to have a buffer — not a big one, just a small one — to see if that helps with that process," he said.

Bee enthusiasts like resident Alberta Mirisciotti, who runs the licensed bee rescue and relocation business Hey Honey, thanked the council for responding to residents' requests for nearly three years to legalize beekeeping.

"Although the ordinance is probably never going to make everyone happy, I support it," she said. "It's something us beekeepers are willing to work with so we don't have to go underground, and we can also support our environment in Costa Mesa."

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news as his River Jetty Restaurant Group became the operator of the renovated Lido Theater.

Wylder will be holding a book signing for "Born in OC" at Lido Theater on Dec. 9 from 5 to 7 p.m. Guests are asked to RSVP to greerwylder@gmail.com.

There will also be an author talk and book signing on Jan. 9 from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Donald Duncan Library in Costa Mesa, with more appearances to come.

McG, who was an executive producer on the television show "The O.C.," said he was happy to be featured in Wylder's book.

"I think it's an eclectic bunch, and it illuminates the impact that Orange County has had the world over," he said. "In the 1970s and '80s, Orange County was a collection of planned communities, where we thought there would be nothing artistic to contribute to the world. Now, I think with skateboard, surfboard, snowboard culture, the music scene, I think Orange County has gone on to touch the world over. I mean, you see kids with Hurley T-shirts on and Volcom T-shirts on in Switzerland. What's that all about?"

He added that people trust Wylder, which makes her interviews sparkle.

Originally from Reno, Nev., Wylder is nevertheless a local who grew up on

Lido Island before attending Newport Harbor, Orange Coast College and Long Beach State.

She said the initial reception of the book has been good, with some saying they will be giving it as a holiday stocking stuffer. She self-published "Born in OC" through Archway Publishing.

Greer's OC has 112,000 unique monthly visitors to the website and 7,000 daily subscribers, she said, but the book has given her a new avenue to feature those who make a difference.

What's next? Well, she turns 60 next March, and on that day she said she'll be running the Los Angeles Marathon with one of her sons.

"I'm not stoked on it all," she said of her upcoming landmark birthday, "but what are the alternatives?"

Maybe the 26.2-mile jaunt around the City of Angels will spark more creativity in Wylder.

For now, she's blessed to keep writing about a community she loves.

"A lot of the book focuses on Orange County and how it has changed, or why they choose to live here," she said. "The weather, the beauty of Orange County, the beaches, the arts, it's incredible."

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Twitter: @mjszabo

**CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS**

D	E	L	I	H	O	A	R	D	M	O	A	T	
O	W	E	N	I	N	N	E	R	I	D	L	E	
S	E	N	T	S	E	N	S	E	N	O	O	N	
A	S	E	R	T	C	A	T	E	R	E	D		
				G	O	O	D	H	U	M	O	R	
F	R	E	E	T	R	A	D	E	T	A	S	K	S
L	I	A	R	I	L	L	G	A	L	O	R	E	
A	P	T	W	A	Y	O	I	L	B	O	W		
R	E	I	N	I	N	A	P	B	P	I	N	E	
E	N	T	E	R	O	V	E	R	A	G	E	R	
				M	E	R	C	E	N	A	R	Y	
L	O	S	E	S	I	T	L	A	S	T	E	D	
I	R	I	S	V	A	L	E	T	O	H	N	O	
M	A	N	E	A	N	I	K	A	F	O	O	T	
E	L	K	S	L	E	V	E	R	F	U	S	S	

1	9	4	3	8	5	7	6	2
7	6	2	1	4	9	3	8	5
3	8	5	7	2	6	4	1	9
8	2	1	4	6	3	9	5	7
5	7	3	8	9	2	1	4	6
6	4	9	5	7	1	8	2	3
2	1	7	9	5	4	6	3	8
4	5	8	6	3	7	2	9	1
9	3	6	2	1	8	5	7	4

**BOOK**

Continued from page A1

the county.

Subjects include Steve Van Doren of Vans, Megan Klink of Susan G. Komen, prolific author Dean Koontz, chef and restaurateur Zov Karamardian and many more.

"Every person in this book, you can be inspired by," Wylder said. "I'd love for young adults to read this book and think, 'Maybe I can do something like that.'"

"I don't want to diss the [Real Housewives of Orange County], because it's a part of our culture or a way people know about Orange County, but I think there's a whole other side of Orange County that is so impressive. It's not all drama and all of that. I like the stories of these people who are doing amazing things through their careers, through philanthropy, and also employing so many people."

Wylder conducted the interviews herself, many of them on Zoom during the pandemic. She had an editor in New York, Laura Ross, who helped her whittle down conversations that sometimes lasted for hours.

The book is immensely personal for Wylder. She took many of the profile pictures in the book herself and one of her four sons, Matthew Lobdell, designed the cover. Bella Swart, a former mentee of Wylder at her alma mater of Newport Harbor High School, also helped her during the initial research stage in back in 2020.

Wylder said she likes arts people. Mark Hilbert, who established the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University along with his wife, Janet, and Anton Segerstrom were a couple of more of her favorite interviews.

"Writing a book, I found out, is a huge labor of love," said Wylder, who married Paul Nordlund earlier this year. "You have to make a lot of sacrifices. I couldn't spend time with my husband, do things with my family, I also work, so it was a lot of weekends, late night kind of week."

One of her good friends, Newport Beach native Joseph McGinty Nichol, is also featured in the book. Known professionally as McG, he was recently in the

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**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that on **Thursday, December 05, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.** or soon thereafter as the matter shall be heard, a public hearing will be conducted in the Council Chambers at 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach. The Planning Commission of the City of Newport Beach will consider the following application:

**Uchi Sushi Restaurant** - A request for a conditional use permit and coastal development permit to convert 5,096-square-foot vacant suite to a new eating and drinking establishment (i.e., restaurant) with approximately 2,400 square feet of net public area (NPA) and a Type 47 (On-Sale General - Eating Place) Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) License. The existing suite is currently vacant but was previously approved for use as a retail use (grocery store). The project also includes a request to use valet parking and locate a portion of the required 48 parking spaces off-site at 2436 West Coast Highway. The proposed hours of operation are between 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m., daily. The project does not include a request for late hours or live entertainment.

The project is categorically exempt under Section 15301 - Class 1 (Existing Facilities) and under Section 15301 - Class 1 (Existing Facilities) of the State CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) Guidelines.

All interested parties may appear and present testimony regarding this application. If you challenge this project in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you raised at the public hearing or in written correspondence delivered to the City or before the public hearing. The application may be continued to a specific future meeting date; if such an action occurs, additional public notice of the continuance will not be provided. Administrative procedures for appeals are provided in the Newport Beach Municipal Code Chapters 20.64 (Appeals) and 21.64 (Appeals and Call for Review). A fee is required to appeal any final action on a coastal development permit to the City Council. The project site is located within the appeal area of the coastal zone; therefore, final action by the City may be appealed to the California Coastal Commission.

The agenda, staff report, and corresponding documents will be available by end of business day on the Friday preceding the public hearing and may be reviewed at the Community Development Department Permit Center (Bay C-1st Floor), at 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660 or the City of Newport Beach website at [www.newportbeachca.gov/planningcommission](http://www.newportbeachca.gov/planningcommission). Individuals not able to attend the meeting may contact the Planning Division or access the City's website after the meeting to review the action on this application. All mail or written communications (including email) from the public, residents, or applicants regarding an agenda item must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on the business day immediately before the meeting. This allows time for the Planning Commission to adequately consider the submitted correspondence.

For questions regarding this public hearing item please contact Jenny Tran, Associate Planner, at 949-644-3212 or [jtran@newportbeachca.gov](mailto:jtran@newportbeachca.gov), at 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660.

**Project File No.:** PA2024-0068  
**Activities:** Conditional Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit  
**Zone:** Mixed-Use Mariners' Mile (MU-MM)  
**General Plan:** Mixed Use Horizontal (MU-HT)  
**Coastal Land Use Plan:** Mixed-Use Horizontal (MU-H)  
**Filing Date:** April 18, 2024  
**Location:** 2510 and 2436 West Coast Highway  
**Applicant:** B.E. Architects  
David Salene, Secretary, Planning Commission, City of Newport Beach

**Project File No.:** PA2023-0202  
**Activity No.:** Limited Term Permit (>90 Days) and Coastal Development Permit  
**Zone:** Commercial Corridor (CC)  
**General Plan:** Corridor Commercial (CC)  
**Coastal Land Use Plan:** Corridor Commercial 0.0-0.75 FAR (CC-B)  
**Filing Date:** December 20, 2023  
**Location:** 3801 East Coast Highway  
**Applicant:** Ryan Wilson  
David Salene, Secretary, Planning Commission, City of Newport Beach

**Project File No.:** PA2023-0202  
**Activity No.:** Limited Term Permit (>90 Days) and Coastal Development Permit  
**Zone:** Commercial Corridor (CC)  
**General Plan:** Corridor Commercial (CC)  
**Coastal Land Use Plan:** Corridor Commercial 0.0-0.75 FAR (CC-B)  
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David Salene, Secretary, Planning Commission, City of Newport Beach

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THE CROWD | B.W. COOK

# Country artist Steven Cade livens up SPIN's Denim and Diamonds gala

**"Y**a'll come!" And they did. Some 200 benefactors of Costa Mesa based Serving People in Need (SPIN) converged at dusk on a recent Friday night turning over their "horsepower" to livery attendants stationed in front of Strawberry Farms' Big Red Barn in Irvine.

The evening billed as Denim and Diamonds was a boot stompin' success for the local agency, which places homeless and near homeless Orange County families with children in permanent housing. For nearly 40 years, this small, local nonprofit founded by the late Sam Boyce has transformed thousands of lives in Orange County. **The Boyce family** attended the 2024 Western gala fundraiser feted with a major ovation from the crowd.

The gala was chaired by the dedicated **MaryLou Shattuck**, a longtime board member of SPIN. She was joined by her supportive volunteer committee including fellow board members **Katie Domagala** and **Mike Gilmore**, with **Shelly Vercrease** and **Chef Jamie Gwen**. In addition to placing families in housing, SPIN assists clients with employment counseling, medical and dental services, childcare, education, transportation assistance and much more. The average annual success rate with clients placed in permanent housing exceeds 92%.

This season SPIN has been led by a new executive director, **David Wetzel**, a former executive in the fast-food industry who chose to dedicate his next stage of work life to saving others in need, and giving back to the community. Wetzel witnessed years of people struggling on the streets where his restaurants operated. He joined **Ladeshia Goubert**, SPIN manager of donors and volunteer services working closely with Shattuck and committee to ensure the major success in the barn.

An enthusiastic crowd came to celebrate. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres were served al fresco beside the Red Barn facing the Strawberry Farms Golf Course as the sun set behind hills. The sound of crickets punctuated lively conversation and cowboy guitar players picking at the strings. During the reception the crowd, including **John and Lynn Osth**, **David and Emily Plourde**, **John and Kathleen Falcetti**, and SPIN board members all enjoyed a special converted trailer turned into a traveling beer bar. Greeting longtime friends, the crowd perused the silent auction filled with travel, dining, fashion, spir- its, jewelry and more.

The presenting sponsor for



**SPIN FAMILY** mom Gaby Harris and her daughters stand to the left of Kellee and Steven Cade during the recent Denim and Diamonds fundraiser.

SPIN was its board chairman **Curtis Scheetz** with his wife, **Jill**, and their company Total Environmental Management (TEM). A generous "match" from the **Scheetz family** compelled the crowd to give with considerable pride. **Curtis Scheetz** joined fellow donors including **Craig and Katie Domagala** of Air Treatment Corp., **Laura and Hal Reisinger**, **Lorie and Jim Buchanan**, **John and Carolyn Coutts** and **Wayne and Dianne Blackburn**. Also supporting the cause were **Dick and Kim Crawford**, the **Frome Family Foundation**, Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Church, **Lynn Freer** and Mothers Market.

With the opening of the barn doors the crowd flowed in for dinner and the special evening program. Wetzel, Shattuck and committee planned the fundraiser around a most unique performer lending the theme of the night. Grammy-nominated country music composer and singer **Steven Cade** arrived from Nashville with his wife **Kellee**, son **Levi** and daughter **Eliana**, fronting the SPIN performance. In addition to his music, Cade is known for his philanthropy, invested in a program he calls "Giving Guitars."



**ATTENDING THE SPIN** gala were Lorie and Jim Buchanan and Laura and Hal Reisinger.

Traveling the nation and beyond, Cade donates a guitar to a deserving youth in a gesture of delivering inspiration, high hopes and perhaps even opening a musical door to a young person living in difficult situations. With such purpose, and plenty of emotion, Cade presented two guitars to a pair of sisters that are part of a SPIN family in Orange County. The applause was deafening. In turn, SPIN presented Cade with its Jean Wegener Humanitarian Award for 2024.

With that, the tone was set for the incomparable emcee of the night, TV's **Chef Jamie Gwen**, to work her special talent. Gwen's genuine and heartfelt outreach for SPIN ultimately raised the significant funds for 2025 programs all due in great part because of the "match" provided by the Scheetzes.

Strawberry Farms created and served a wonderful dinner in the barn filled with blue and white gingham clothed tables festooned with huge yellow sunflower cen-

ter piece displays. The butter cake and See's chocolate candies for dessert took the night over the top!

Steven Cade performed his solo act for the audience followed by joining his band inviting the crowd to line dance. By the end of the evening, more than \$350,000 had been raised.

**B.W. COOK** is editor of the Bay Window, the official publication of the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach.

## CARRILLO

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per was created by local artist Randy Morgan, Jeff Sears, the late Laguna Beach baseball coach, said the local icon had earned it.

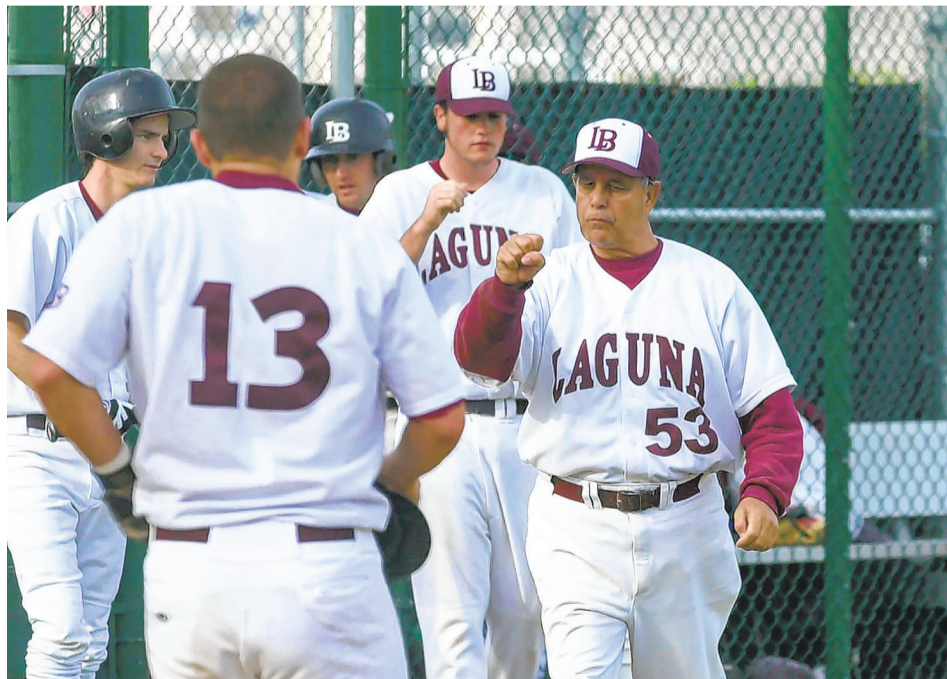
"If there was ever a Mr. Laguna, he would be, because if you ask people about Laguna Beach, Skipper's name would be in the first sentence probably," Sears told the Daily Pilot in January 2019.

Skipper was born prematurely, but he outshined his developmental disability to become a Laguna Beach legend as large and as well thought of as the Greeter. In a special segment with CBS, Skipper revealed that he arrived in the world weighing just 3 pounds.

"You were nobody until Skipper gave you a nickname," said Bret Fleming, who coached the Laguna Beach boys' basketball team for 27 years before stepping away in 2022.

Those nicknames revealed his love of sports, especially baseball. His father was "The Coach," his mother "Don Drysdale" — after his favorite player — and even money was referred to as "Willie Mays," which Fleming told him was "no good here" when he wanted to go to the snack bar at games.

"They called him 'Mr. Uniform,'" said Fleming, who was "Jerry West," as far as Skipper was concerned. "He took care of all the uniforms at the school. ... He



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**SKIPPER CARRILLO**, right, joins in celebration of a baseball playoff game at Laguna Beach High School in 2001. Skipper, a beloved community member and die-hard supporter of Laguna Beach athletics died on Nov. 14 at the age of 86.

would wash them, fold them, all that kind of thing.

"In baseball, he was kind of the bat boy. There was a manual scoreboard out in the outfield. At the end of every inning, he would sprint all the way to the outfield and put up a zero or a one or whatever the score was after that half of the inning, and then sprint back to the dugout."

Fleming, who goes to St. Catherine of Siena Parish, where Skipper also attended, said the church — located at 1042 Temple Terrace — plans to have a remembrance service on Nov.

30.

Dr. Gary Arthur, a chiropractor, was one of Skipper's doctors, but one therapeutic activity they engaged in together was musical gigs. Arthur wrote a song after Skipper's "have a home-run day" greeting, and when the saying came around, it was his part to sing.

"Skipper was always my ace in the hole because this song I wrote for him called 'Have a Home-Run Day,' he would come up with me, and I would give him his own microphone, and he would sing the 'have a

home-run day' part with me," said Arthur, whose band was called "Love Tribe."

"When it was the saxophone solo, I would pretend that I was the pitcher, and he was the batter, and he'd be swinging his bat, wiggling his butt around, and then I would throw him an imaginary pitch, and boom, he would hit it out of the park. He'd run a little 5- or 8-foot circle running the bases and then come into home plate, and I would say, 'Safe!'"

Skipper's volunteerism also extended to umpiring



**A SMALL SCULPTURE** of Skipper Carrillo created by local artist Randy Morgan.

Little League at Riddle Field.

His house, which he called the "ballpark," overlooked the field at the high school, which was named after him.

Arthur, nicknamed "Kirk Gibson," regarded Skipper as "our most beloved citizen in this town." The statue forged by Morgan stands outside Arthur's office, and it has seen its share of flowers over the past week, he said.

"He liked to be called 'the ballplayer,'" Arthur said, adding he learned more from a book titled, "Have a Home Run Day: Stories and Sayings of a Baseball Savant," written by Skipper's sister, Alicia Rowe. "More than Skipper, he liked to be called 'the ballplayer,' and little did I know that he had been in the Special Olympics in 1961 and was in first place on this 220-yard run. One of the other kids that was competing

fell, so Skipper stopped and picked him up, and ended up getting fourth himself."

Some might say that was poetry in motion, a "grand-slam day," as three crossed home plate in front of the hometown favorite.

Arthur added that two podcasts were produced with KXFM 104.7, the local radio station, sharing Skipper stories with the community.

As for the last time he saw Skipper, Arthur said he had come over with his son to make sure "the ballplayer" could watch his beloved Dodgers live during the World Series. They hooked up a smart TV in his house and stayed with him until the Dodgers had completed the comeback from a five-run deficit against the Yankees in Game 5, the clinching game of the series.

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