

Daily Pilot

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 /// Now including Coastline Pilot and Huntington Beach Independent /// dailypilot.com



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

STUDENTS ON THEIR lunch hour at Estancia High School in Costa Mesa, where an unknown threat was made over the weekend.

Police presence beefed up at Estancia High after threat made

BY SARA CARDINE

Additional police officers on Monday patrolled the Estancia High School campus, after Newport-Mesa Unified School District confirmed a noncredible threat had been made against the Costa Mesa campus, spurring rumors on social media.

In a message sent Sunday to the school community, district leaders notified parents that the Costa Mesa Police Department had investigated an alleged threat against the school and determined it was not credible.

"Students who were unaware of the outcome of the police investigation recently posted a warning of this unsubstantiated rumor," the message continued. "Students and staff should feel safe about coming to school tomorrow."

CMPD spokeswoman Roxi Fyad said she

could not comment on the details of the threat, as the incident was still being investigated.

Fyad said additional patrol officers had been sent to the Placentia Avenue campus to support the school resource officer already assigned there. She was unable to provide details on how long the additional support would remain at the school.

While threats against public safety are uncommon at Newport-Mesa Unified, Estancia High School officials were put on alert in December 2019. An image of someone holding a gun was posted on Instagram. Words overlaying the image read, "Tell staff and police, this ain't no joke. Don't go to school tomorrow."

Two individuals were arrested during the investigation of that incident, including a 17-year-old Estancia student and 18-year-old Lenny Vega, who did not attend the school.

Both suspects were residents of Costa Mesa.

Although that threat was also deemed not to be credible, CMPD officers reportedly recovered a BB gun that had appeared in the photograph from the home of one of the suspects.

Fyad confirmed Monday the most recent threat was not similar in nature to what happened in 2019, saying the department considers each report on a case-by-case basis.

"Every incident is different and has its own details and facts," she said.

While NMUSD spokeswoman Annette Franco said she could not provide details on the incident, she did confirm that attendance at Estancia High School Monday was lower than usual.

sara.cardine@latimes.com
Twitter: @SaraCardine

Foley settles dispute about briefings

An order prohibiting county health experts from participating in the supervisor's COVID-19 updates is lifted.

BY SARA CARDINE

An order prohibiting Orange County Health Care Agency experts from participating in COVID-19 updates hosted by Supervisor Katrina Foley has been lifted, as feuding county officials have reached a détente over how and when to keep the public informed.

Foley explained in a weekly briefing Tuesday issues between her and other supervisors had been ironed out in a recent agreement that will allow her to feature OCHA experts twice monthly, while the county would continue to hold its own media briefings each Friday.

"I've been working with the CEO's office and the Health Care Agency — that's our compromise that we've come to," she said.

Tuesday's talk invited members of the media to pose pandemic queries to Dr. Regina Chinsio-Kwong, an OCHA deputy health officer who, alongside other county experts, had been participating in Foley's talks since early August.

Such appearances came to a halt after then-Supervisor Chairman Andrew Do and 4th District

See *Briefings*, page A2

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

KANOA IGARASHI EASILY ADVANCES IN FIRST U.S. OPEN OF SURFING HEAT PAGE A3

LOCAL PLAYERS EARN JUNIOR ALL-AMERICAN WATER POLO HONORS PAGE A3

O.C. executive indicted in student loan scheme

BY CITY NEWS SERVICE

An Orange County business owner was behind bars Tuesday in what California Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta said was a "nationwide, multiyear, multimillion-dollar student loan debt relief scam."

Angela Kathryn Mirabella, 47, was being held without bail and was scheduled to be arraigned Wednesday in the jail courtroom

in Santa Ana, according to jail records.

She was one of seven people indicted on a range of charges, including conspiracy to commit grand theft and unauthorized use of personal identifying information in a scheme that prosecutors say netted more than \$6 million from an estimated 19,000 victims nationwide, including 3,000 in California.

Mirabella is the founder of the Mirabella Group LLC, located in Huntington Beach, as well as Student Renew LLC and My Financial Solutions, both of Newport Beach, according to a grand jury indictment.

The alleged scheme involved multiple call centers that "swindled" student loan holders with promises of debt relief for a total of \$1,000 in fees paid monthly, Bonta said.

"They were swindled, they were scammed," Bonta said. "For some, their dreams have become horrific nightmares."

The alleged victims paid the fee to gain debt relief, but did not receive any help and instead often ended up with higher student loan interest, defaults and late notices, Bonta said.

The defendants allegedly stole

See *Loan*, page A4



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

ROBBIE BRITVICH works on her mosaic art in her garage on Monday.

Newport artist uses mosaics to reflect Catalina Island

BY LILLY NGUYEN

For her art, Robbie Britvich starts by breaking things — tiles, mostly.

"I don't like anything that's precise. I like it irregular," said Britvich in a recent interview, adding that she usually starts hammering away at the backs of pieces of tile — sometimes whole, sometimes broken — with the

image of what she wants to make already in her head before she starts. "I've always been like that in my art."

"Off-kilter, a little bit," said the 82-year-old Newport Beach artist.

Britvich works in mosaics and describes herself as having always been an artistic person. She started out painting furniture, but

See *Mosaics*, page A3

Passengers board the Fairview Park railroad after long pandemic break

BY SUSAN HOFFMAN

For the first time since the pandemic hit in early 2020, conductors at the Mackerel Flats and Goat Hill Junction Railroad shouted, "All aboard!" to the 2,700 plus riders who took advantage of free rides offered Saturday and Sunday.

Members of the Orange County Model Engineers, the nonprofit group that operates and maintains the miniature railroad in Costa Mesa's Fairview Park, were on hand to welcome an enthusiastic public, including families who'd often enjoyed the railroad's loop in the park prior to its closing.

Irvine resident Matt Malone and his family of four have been frequent visitors to the trains over the years. "We're so happy it's reopened after 18 months," Malone said. "Our kids love trains and coming here."

Railroad President Dennis Neil said his organization had received about 40,000 inquiries on social media prior to Saturday's reopening.

The Mackerel Flats and Goat



Photo by Susan Hoffman

CONDUCTORS EXPLAIN the ongoing reconstruction of trestle bridge during a pit stop as part of the OCME train rides at Fairview Park.

Hill Junction Railroad was founded in 1988 by a group of local railroad buffs who have operated the 7½-inch gauge railroad for 30 years. An all-volunteer group, the Orange County Model Engineers behind the railroad is dedicated to preserving and operating vintage and modern live steam, gas-mechanical and electrical machinery in Orange County.

OCME has a variety of the miniature trains that travel over five miles of track for about a 15-minute ride. The organization provides the free public rides the third weekend of each month between 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. as part of the Fairview Park use agreement with the city of Costa Mesa.

See *Railroad*, page A2

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NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: LINDA FRANCES YELLIN AKA LINDA F. YELLIN
CASE NO. 30-2021-01220662-PR-OP-CJC
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of LINDA FRANCES YELLIN AKA LINDA F. YELLIN. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by ERIC YELLIN, JULIE YELLIN AND DAVID KYMAN in the Superior Court of California, County of ORANGE. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that ERIC YELLIN, JULIE YELLIN AND DAVID KYMAN be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests the decedent's WILL and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The WILL and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows: 11/04/21 at 2:00PM in Dept. C08 located at 700 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE WEST, SANTA ANA, CA 92701

Notice in Probate Cases
(1) If you plan to appear, you must attend the hearing by video remote using the court's designated video platform; (2) Go to the Court's website at <http://www.occourts.org/media-relations/probate-mental-health.html> to appear for probate hearings and for remote hearing instructions; (3) If you have difficulty connecting to your remote hearing, call 657-622-8278 for assistance. IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. Attorney for Petitioner
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**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING (CORRECTED)**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on **Thursday, September 30, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.** or soon thereafter as the matter shall be heard, a public hearing will be conducted online via Zoom. The Zoning Administrator of the City of Newport Beach will consider the following application:

Escalette Residence - A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) to allow for the remodel and addition of an existing 3,695-square foot, two-story, single-family residence with an attached 640-square-foot, three-car garage. The proposed addition and remodel would result in a 4,900-square-foot, two-story, single-family residence with an attached 1,260-square-foot, three-car garage. The project includes new landscape, hardscape, and drainage facilities within the confines of the private property. No work will be conducted bayward of the existing bulkhead. The project complies with all development standards and no deviations from the municipal code are requested.

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

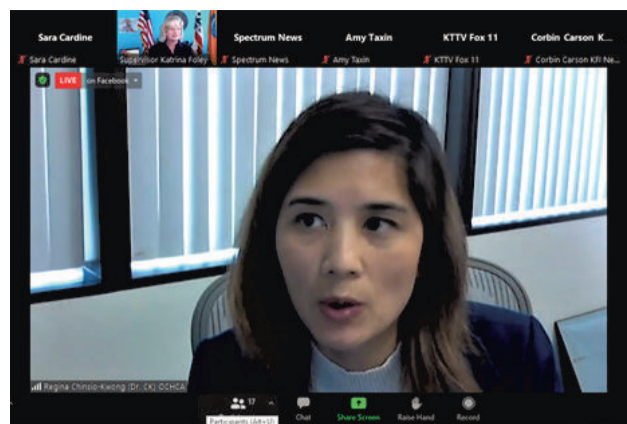
All interested parties may appear and present testimony in regard to this application. If you challenge this project in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you raised at the public hearing or in written correspondence delivered to the City, at, or prior to, the public hearing. The application may be continued to a specific future meeting date, and 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 Chapter 21.64 (Appeals or Calls for Review). A fee is not required to appeal any final action on a coastal development permit to the Planning Commission. 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.

SPECIAL NOTICE REGARDING COVID-19
Given Governor's Executive Orders N-08-21 and N-29-20 related to COVID-19, we recommend that you submit your questions and comments in writing for the Zoning Administrator's consideration by sending them to the Community Development Department at CDD@newportbeachca.gov. To give the Zoning Administrator adequate time to review your questions and comments, please submit your written comments by **Wednesday, September 29, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.** Please review the Zoning Administrator Agenda for instructions on participating via Zoom. The Agenda, staff report, and corresponding documents will be posted to the City's website at www.newportbeachca.gov/zoningadministrator, by end of business day on **Friday, September 24, 2021**. If you are unable to participate in the meeting via the process set forth in the agenda, please contact the Planning Division at 949-644-3200 or CDD@newportbeachca.gov and our staff will attempt to accommodate you.

For questions regarding this public hearing item please contact Afshin Atapour, Planning Technician, at 949-644-3212, aatapour@newportbeachca.gov, 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660.

Project File No.: PA2021-146
Activity No.: CD2021-027
Zone: R-1 (Single-Unit Residential)
General Plan: RS-D (Single Unit Residential Detached)
Coastal Land Use Plan: RSD-A (Single Unit Residential Detached - 0.0-5.9 DU/AC)
Filing Date: June 17, 2021
Location: 36 Balboa Coves
Applicant: Architectural Design Solutions

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Screenshot by Sara Cardine

DR. REGINA Chinsio-Kwong, a deputy health officer with the Orange County Health Care Agency, Tuesday is shown in a briefing held by Supervisor Katrina Foley.

BRIEFINGS

Continued from page A1

Supervisor Doug Chaffee condemned Foley's updates as a publicity stunt and barred OCHA officials from joining in.

"Taking county staff away from their jobs for private publicity events is not the most appropriate use of public resources," Do said in a statement. "It is an abuse of power to use county executive staff to self-promote."

Foley — who began livestreaming virus talks after the Board of Supervisors stopped hosting regular updates at its own meetings — on Tuesday maintained her primary motivation was to keep residents informed of changing coronavirus trends and statistics.

"My goal always is just to be able to make sure we get accurate information out to the public so they can make appropriate health decisions," she said.

Foley and Chinsio-Kwong provided an update on the county's infection rates and COVID-19 hospitalizations, on the decline in recent weeks, and countywide vaccination efforts.

OCHA on Tuesday reported 433 new infections and three deaths. A total of 311 residents are hospitalized with COVID-19, with 95 being treated in intensive-care units. As of Monday, six children were in the hospital due to the infection, while three were in the ICU.

Chinsio-Kwong said case rates are averaging at 11.4 per 100,000 people — compared to 16 to 18 at the start of the month — with the

average positivity rate at 3.7%, down from 6.8% at the end of August.

"In terms of the case rates and hospitalizations, everything is downward trending," she added.

Meanwhile, the county's vaccination rate continues to grow. Chinsio-Kwong said the county inoculated 5,379 people on Monday and is averaging about 1,833 new patients per week.

About 79.7% of all vaccine eligible residents have received at least one dose, while 70.4% are fully vaccinated. Among the at-large population, which ultimately determines herd immunity, only 68.6% have gotten at least one dose, while 60.6% have completed a full regimen.

Media members Tuesday questioned why vaccination rates continue to lag among Latino populations — who, figures show, constitute nearly 36% of Orange County's population but only 21.3% of vaccinated residents.

Chinsio-Kwong said officials were considering how to reverse such trends, stating Latino residents could make up 15.4% of the vaccinated public whose ethnicity was captured as "other" or "unknown," but could not explain why neighboring counties, such as San Diego, seemed to have fewer disparities.

Foley said she'd like to engage more deeply with local church and school communities.

"I do think that's a missing link in reaching the Latino community," she said.

sara.cardine@latimes.com
Twitter: @SaraCardine

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LEGAL NOTICE

**NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS CALLING FOR BIDS
COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**

Project Name: **Golden West College LRC Duct Work Replacement**
Bid Number: **Bid #2168**
Advertisement: **September 22, 2021 & September 29, 2021**
Pre-Bid RFI Deadline: **October 6, 2021 12:00pm**
Bid Deadline: **October 11, 2021 PRIOR to 2:00 pm**

A MANDATORY pre-bid job-walk will be held at 10:00am, September 30, 2021, North Side of LRC Building, 15744 Goldenwest St., Huntington Beach, CA 92647. **MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIRED.**

Place of Bid Receipt: All bids shall be submitted electronically via the PlanetBids Vendor portal located on the District Website (<https://pbsystem.planetbids.com/portal/36722/bo/bo-detail/86857>), including the forms furnished by the District, prior to the bid closing date and time, and results will be available immediately upon the close of bids. Incomplete, inaccurate, or untrue responses or information provided therein by a bidder shall be grounds for the District to reject such submissions for non-responsiveness.

Project Description: Remove and replace existing return ductwork with new lined ductwork; top duct of double stacked deck on roof of the Learning Resource Center; Crane will be required for removal and placement; Reseal supply ductwork prior to installing new return ductwork; Contractor responsible for ensuring unit is shut down and returned to service correctly; Disposal of all materials and cleaning of work area. A detailed safety plan will be required. It is anticipated that the Project will commence on December 20, 2021, with completion by January 21, 2022.

Each bidder shall be a licensed contractor pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 7028.15 and Public Contract Code Section 3300. The District requires that the bidder possess at the time of bid, and maintain throughout the duration of the Agreement, the following license classification(s):

Bid Package	Trade	License	Engineer's Estimate
1	HVAC	C-20	\$400,000

DIR Registration. Each bidder submitting a proposal to complete the work, labor, material, and/or services ("Work") subject to this procurement must be a Department of Industrial Relations ("DIR") registered contractor pursuant to Labor Code Section 1725.5. A bidder who is not a DIR-registered contractor when submitting a proposal for the Work is deemed "not qualified" and the proposal of such a Bidder will be rejected for non-responsiveness. Pursuant to Labor Code Section 1725.5, all subcontractors identified in a Bidder's subcontractors' list shall be DIR-registered contractors as well.

Prevailing Wage Rate ("PWR") Monitoring and Enforcement. The Work is subject to payment of the PWR. The Contractor and all Subcontractors of every tier shall pay laborers performing any portion of the Work not less than the PWR established for the labor provided. Pursuant to Labor Code Section 1771.4(a)(4), PWR monitoring and enforcement shall be by the DIR.

More information regarding this project can be found on the PlanetBids Vendor portal listed above. Further inquiries should be directed to the District's Purchasing Department at purchasing@cccd.edu.

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Photos by Susan Hoffman

THE O.C. MODEL Engineers' Mackerel Flats and Goat Hill Junction Railroad offered their first train rides in 18 months.



MATT MALONE and Betty Chan, with kids, Koa, 2, and Kai, 5, are happy to revisit the OCME at Fairview Park after its long closure.

RAILROAD

Continued from page A1

The Tran family, who drove to the park from Fullerton, were among the many first-time riders. Ethan Tran, 3, was excited to go on his first train ride.

Huntington Beach resident Derrick Fadden brought his 3-year-old daughter, Kinsley.

"I grew up here and in my whole life it's the first time I've ever experienced it," Fadden said. "Kinsley loves trains, she's been on a dozen trains, Knott's Berry Farm, Disneyland, Colorado and Yosemite."

Fadden said he plans to

celebrate his daughter's next birthday with a party at Goat Hill Junction Railroad, which has become a popular event at the mini train operation.

Passengers on Sunday didn't seem to notice the railroad's old Hank Hornsveld Trestle, originally built in 1991 and crumbling, was out of commission until the conductors pointed it out.

Club volunteers began the reconstruction project of the 96-foot trestle bridge last July to replace rotted wood vertical piers or bents, horizontal stringers and decking across the top.

"The entire structure is new except for the concrete footings," explained Hank Castignetti, OCME secretary. "We don't expect competition until mid 2022."

"As we take down the old, we build the new," Neil said. "It's a lengthy process."

SUSAN HOFFMAN is a contributor to Times Community News.

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SURFING



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

HUNTINGTON BEACH'S Kanoa Igarashi competes on Tuesday morning during Day 2 of the U.S. Open of Surfing.

Huntington's Igarashi easily advances in first U.S. Open heat

BY JOE HAAKENSON

Huntington Beach's Kanoa Igarashi handled his business Tuesday on the south side of the Huntington Beach Pier as the U.S. Open of Surfing completed the first round of the men's competition, reducing the number of surfers still in contention for a title from 96 to 48.

The women's competition got underway, completing 10 of the 16 first-round heats.

Igarashi made it look easy in his heat, putting up scores of 8.33 and 6.67 for a two-wave total of 15.00, winning the four-man heat and advancing to the Round of 48, where he'll be matched against San Clemente's Kade Matson, Florida's Evan Geiselman and Australia's Reef Heazlewood.

Igarashi's confidence on the south side wave comes from his familiarity with it, surfing it hundreds of times for nearly his entire life.

"Obviously Huntington's where I

learned how to surf," he said.

"Living in Huntington we have a few options to surf but I only surf south side. I definitely spend a lot of time out here and it's definitely given me a couple of waves in the past and even today."

Igarashi's 8.33 is the third highest-scoring wave in the Open so far, surpassed by San Clemente's Griffin Colapinto (8.50) and Australia's Liam O'Brien (8.40). Igarashi has a history with both, facing Colapinto numerous times in contests growing up, then beating Colapinto in the final heat to win the US Open in 2018.

O'Brien knocked out both Igarashi and Colapinto in the 2019 Open, on his way to the final, where he ultimately lost to Yago Dora.

Other notable men who advanced to the Round of 48 are Olympian and San Clemente resident Kolohe Andino, Championship Tour surfer Connor Coffin of Santa Barbara, Long Beach's Nolan Rapoza, Encinitas' Jake Marshall, and Patrick Gu-

dasukas and Cole Houshmand of San Clemente.

In the women's competition, Olympian Caroline Marks won her four-woman heat with a two-wave score of 11.10, advancing to the Round of 32.

Sage Hill School graduate Courtney Conlogue, a two-time Open winner who finished No. 9 in the world in the just completed Championship Tour season, will surf her first-round heat Wednesday morning around 9 a.m.

Two other local women surfed on Tuesday — Newport Beach's Meah Collins and Huntington Beach's Chiasa Maruyama.

Collins, the daughter of former pro surfer Richie Collins, placed third in her heat with a two-wave score of 9.67, just missing out on advancing.

Maruyama, a 2019 graduate of Huntington Beach High, was one of two women's alternates to get into

See **Open**, page A4

WATER POLO



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

VANGUARD AQUATICS' Zachary Bettino, shown scoring against San Diego Shores in July, was tournament co-MVP.

Local players earn Jr. All-American honors

BY MATT SZABO

USA Water Polo has released its Junior Olympics All-Americans, based on the results from the Junior Olympics held in Orange County in July.

Gabriella Alexson of Newport Beach Water Polo was the 12-and-under Girls MVP, after helping Newport Beach win the title. Other first-team selections from Newport Beach included Valerie Verdugo and Sadie Ricks, while Campbell Pence and Terra Lindberg were second-team honorees. Honorable mentions included Hannah Jacklin of Vanguard Aquatics, based in Huntington Beach.

Kamryn Anderson of Costa Mesa Aquatics Club won the 12-and-under Mixed Division MVP after helping CMAC win its first platinum division title in program history. Teammates Madison Mack and Jay Larson joined Anderson on the first team, while CMAC's Dominic Diaz and Thomas Mauser were second-team selections.

Allison Cohen of Vanguard was the 14-and-under Girls MVP. Other first-team selections from first-place Vanguard included Laguna Beach High freshman Kara Carver and Kate Sloman, while Vanguard's Presley Jones (also a Laguna Beach

freshman) and Charli Krotts earned second-team nods. Sophia Del Villar of Newport Beach Water Polo was an honorable mention.

The other local MVPs were Zachary Bettino and Ryder Dodd of Vanguard, who split the honor after helping Vanguard win the 16-and-under boys' title.

Bettino and Dodd are a junior and sophomore, respectively, at Huntington Beach High. They were joined by Finneas Palca and Ethan Spoon as first-team selections, while Vanguard's Jay Pyle and Christian Hammonds were on the second team. Newport Beach had Finn Genc on the second team, and Finn Lesieur as an honorable mention.

Huntington Beach players James Rozolis-Hill and Chase Dodd (first team), as well as Gabriel Haddad and Nikola Mirkovic (second team), also earned Junior Olympics All-American status for Vanguard. They helped the 18Us reach the title match before losing to Bay Area-based CC United. Newport Beach's Mason Hunt (second team) and Ben Liechty (honorable mention) also earned honors in the 18U age group.

On the girls' side, Newport Harbor High seniors Morgan

See **Honors**, page A4

MOSAICS

Continued from page A1

eventually "graduated" to doing mosaic work almost two decades ago when longtime friend Catrina Awalt was about to toss out some tiles that had arrived broken in a shipment to her Catalina Island shop.

"I said, 'Don't throw those away. I will take them and I will do something with them.'"

"So, I did. I started with birdhouses and she started selling them in her shop and they all sold," Britvich said. "And then, I started doing historic things — the [Catalina Island] casino, Chimes Tower, mermaids ... [Awalt's] been taking all of my pieces for years and they've been selling, so I've just continued that."

Awalt said that Britvich's works bring prices ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 at Two's Co. of Avalon, depending on the scale of the item. What's more, she specifically sells her artwork only to people who live in Southern California so that she can deliver them herself.

There's no fixing something that's one of a kind, she said.

"I sell a lot of tiles, but some of the tiles in my shop arrive broken," Awalt said. "She just comes up with these really clever ideas. You give her pottery, broken jewelry. Give her something to play with and she comes up with wonderful, wonderful things."

Britvich works out of her garage-turned-studio in Newport Crest and spends a few hours each day at her craft, taking anywhere from one or two weeks to a full month to complete an item, depending on its scale.

But art wasn't her life from the start. Not by a long shot.

Britvich was born in 1938 in Oklahoma City. But when World War II ended and her father was discharged from the U.S. Navy, her family left West Virginia for San Pedro, where she grew up.



Photos by Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

ROBBIE BRITVICH created a tile mosaic plate at her home.



BRITVICH PLACES a piece of tile into a piece she calls "Casino Mermaid" at her Newport Beach home on Monday.

She'd eventually make her way to Newport Beach in 1963, where she would later meet her husband, Darwin, and start her own business.

She helmed Robbie's Rag and Mop, a women janitorial service, for about 25 years.

"[Darwin] was a contractor and he was building homes and I sold my business and then went into my arts full-time at that point because I [had been] kind of dabbling with it," Britvich said.

"We were just happy. A happy couple with kids, grandkids and then he had a stroke and was 69 [in 2002]," she said.

"It was a tough time. When he passed away, I kept doing my stuff. I just kept doing it because it was my [survival]."

She said that since her husband died she has found art to be a lifeline. And she's enjoying selling her works.

"I'm 82; I'm actually going to be 83 in November," she said.

"This is probably the best time of my life."

Awalt said she gets attached to pieces that Britvich brings in, but the artist reminds her she has to sell the pieces and not just keep them in her shop.

"My store is on the higher end side, so it has interesting artwork. Hers just fits in there with everything else. I just never know what she's going to come up with," Awalt said. "She goes 'I'm coming over. I did this.' She found an old antique mirror and tiled it. Brought it in and it's just beautiful. Just one thing after another."

For Britvich, she said there's something about the presentation of art and the creation of it that is fulfilling for her.

"For me, I don't think I could ever survive without it," Britvich said.

"When I'm creating a piece, I get excited and then I just go into this area. I can't explain it. Isn't that weird? Happy. I'm happy."

lilly.nguyen@latimes.com
Twitter: @lillibirds

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

- 1 Patriotic uncle
- 4 Mates for does
- 9 Put forth, as a question
- 13 Sharif or Bradley
- 15 Dry run
- 16 Pres. Hoover's state of birth
- 17 _ up; hoard
- 18 Cuban ballroom dance
- 19 Old Russian title
- 20 Lets go, as a class
- 22 Berry & Jennings
- 23 Hook or Nemo: abbr.
- 24 Go quickly
- 26 Point the finger at
- 29 _ with; making eyes at
- 34 Kilmer's famous poem
- 35 Grouch
- 36 "Not a moment soon!"
- 37 Sorrowful drop
- 38 _ time; locked in prison
- 39 Head covering
- 40 "For a jolly good fellow"
- 41 Confused struggle
- 42 Disloyal
- 43 Lifted up
- 45 Like seahorse tails
- 46 "All _ day's work"
- 47 Hit the runway
- 48 Additionally
- 51 About to happen
- 56 Genuine
- 57 Shade of purple
- 58 Appear in the distance
- 60 Three wise men
- 61 Saw-toothed
- 62 Toy with a string
- 63 Wingtip-to-wingtip measure
- 64 Scare off
- 65 Grumpy person's need, perhaps

26 Asleep _ switch; derelict in duty

- 27 Fish basket
- 28 Discontinue
- 29 Cooked in oil
- 30 Freeway division
- 31 Know- _; smarty-pants
- 32 Hindrance to sleep
- 33 Punctured
- 35 Composer Porter
- 38 Listing all the particulars
- 39 In a robust way
- 41 One of God's 6th-day creations
- 42 Earmarked sum of money
- 44 Stringed instrument
- 45 Zodiac sign
- 47 "For _"; vacant shop sign
- 48 Biceps locations
- 49 _ years; 2124, 2128, etc.
- 50 Long tale
- 52 Muddy swampland
- 53 Scheme
- 54 End of the morning
- 55 Spanish romantic painter
- 59 Headful of thick hair

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13			14		15						16		
17					18						19		
	20			21							22		
			23					24	25				
26	27	28				29	30				31	32	33
34					35						36		
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48	49	50			51	52	53				54	55	
56					57						58		59
60					61						62		
63					64						65		

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.

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

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A4.

- 1 _ up; absorb
- 2 In the center of
- 3 African nation
- 4 1 of 13 on the U.S. flag
- 5 Have confidence in
- 6 Shoots carefully
- 7 Actor Kaplan
- 8 _ prices; making
- drastic cuts
- 9 White _ fence; front lawn border
- 10 Leak out
- 11 The Ugly Duckling, in reality
- 12 All _; listening
- 14 Savior
- 21 Tumor
- 25 Vex

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