



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

SHOP FOREMAN David Talbot brings out a gargoyle skull headdress to be used as part of the Pageant of the Monsters' "Maze of the Minotaur" and haunted house, which will be hosted in Laguna Beach at the Festival of Arts grounds on Oct. 27, 28, 29 and 31.

Contest offers a peek at a green future

The O.C. Sustainability Decathlon asked college students to design and build affordable, energy-efficient homes.

BY SARA CARDINE

In the world of college coursework, designing and building a modular house that can accommodate an entire family without creating any carbon emissions sounds like a steep ask.

But that's exactly what one team of students from Orange Coast College and UC Irvine have been doing, side by side, for the past year and a half.

The stylish, solar-powered result of that collaboration, called "luminOCity home," was on full display at the Orange County Sustainability Decathlon at the county fairgrounds in Costa Mesa earlier this month.

Using FrameCAD, a computer animated system for creating and cutting light-gauge steel framed designs, the team built a 750-square-foot, two-bedroom house with high ceilings that can withstand a 9.0 magnitude earthquake.

"It was a lot of work and a lot of

See *Future*, page A3

Pageant of the Monsters goes Greek for Halloween

BY ANDREW TURNER

Schoolchildren generally dread summer reading assignments, but the upcoming Pageant of the Monsters will make some wish they hadn't skipped out on the homework.

Some might remember Greek mythology popping up on the lesson plan. Those who dare to enter "Maze of the Minotaur" will need a good understanding of it to safely pass through to the other side.

The Pageant of the Monsters, making its return after a five-year recess, will take over the grounds of the Festival of Arts for four nights only — Oct. 27, 28 and 29 and on Halloween, Oct. 31, from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

Beware the almighty power of the gods, as the journey will take the adventure seeker along the

See *Monsters*, page A10



PAGEANT DIRECTOR

Diane Challis Davy brings out a prop in "Maze of the Minotaur" at the Festival of Arts.

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Orange County Polo Club

UNITED STATES POLO ASSN. WOMEN'S ARENA OPEN FINALS MOUNT UP IN SILVERADO CANYON PAGE A2

Working together: 4th Street Market neighbors win grants

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Siete Family Foods, a Hispanic-focused food and beverage brand, was started by a family of seven whose motto is "Juntos es Mejor." Together is better.

That sentiment is shared by Delilah Snell and Loreta Ruiz, two female business owners at Santa Ana's 4th Street Market. Snell owns and operates Alta Baja Market, a curated market that sells an assortment of products and prepared foods sourced from Mexico, the American Southwest and California, while Ruiz owns and operates La Vegana Mexicana, a vegan Mexico food stall inspired by her daughter that has made a name for itself selling vegan tamales and more.

Although the businesses are positioned as next-door neighbors and would-be rivals, Snell and Ruiz are more companions

than competitors.

"When my neighbor wins, I win," said Snell. "When Loreta succeeds, I am going to succeed."

Ruiz agrees. "Delilah and I have always worked together," she said. "We are the only two female-business owners here at the 4th Street Market."

Their support of each other is partly why the two were selected as 2023 recipients of Siete Family Foods' Siete Juntos Fund.

"Siete created the Juntos Fund because we are deeply committed to elevating other small businesses in the food realm," said Veronica Garza, Siete co-founder, president and chief innovation officer. "We are honored to uplift Latina founders and provide meaningful funding to support their entrepreneurial dreams."

Siete Family Foods bills itself as

See *Grants*, page A2



LORETA RUIZ of La Vegana Mexicana and Delilah Snell, owner of Alta Baja Market and cafe, stand in the entryway of the 4th Street Market in Santa Ana on Tuesday.

Don Leach Staff Photographer

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O.C. Polo Club hosts women players, public in Silverado

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

The Orange County Polo Club is a private club, but today the Silverado Canyon arena and event space will open to the public for the United States Polo Assn.'s Women's Arena Open Finals.

"We are very excited to be hosting the finals matches, which is the highest level of women's arena polo that is played in the United States. It is a really big deal in the polo community," said Heather Perkins, O.C. Polo Club manager.

In honor of the finals, the O.C. Polo Club will host "Sunday Brunch at the Ranch," priced at \$105 for adults and \$35 for children. Brunch will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with two signature cocktails for 21 and over guests. The ticket also includes an arena-side seat to the championship match, which will begin at 1 p.m.

"Besides the brunch there will be a pop-up shop, and it's going to be a fun experience," Perkins said.

Polo is among the world's oldest known team sports, played on horseback with two opposing teams using long wooden mallets to hit a ball through each other's goal. The O.C. Polo Club is an arena polo club, as opposed to a grass club or one on a field.

"Grass polo is played on 10 acres of grass, for one field," said Shelley Geiler, who owns the O.C. Polo Club with her family. "An arena is 150 feet by 300 feet, so it is a much smaller space."

The smaller playing field is more advantageous for spectators, said Geiler.

"When you are watching, it is real up close, and you can see the action right in front of you," said Geiler. "It is a rubber ball that bounces, so it is a lot like hockey on horseback. The line changes quickly, and there is a lot of action. It is really an exciting game to watch."

The O.C. Polo Club, at 27271 Silverado Canyon Road in Silverado, is the only arena polo club in Or-

ange County and got its start more than 30 years ago. Originally located in Anaheim, the then-Winston Polo Club moved from various equestrian facilities in Orange County over the years.

"Eventually, we got to a place where it was time to buy some property and make a permanent home," said Geiler.

The family purchased the property in Silverado Canyon in 2015 and opened the facility in 2018. The property houses two arenas, with stabling for more than 60 horses and a private clubhouse.

"We basically built this state-of-the-art facility from the ground up," Geiler said.

The O.C. Polo Club opens to the public for special events, like this Sunday's brunch, but also offers polo lessons and a riding school.

"We teach non-polo players how to play polo here — that is what our club membership is mostly comprised of — and we host tournaments where we open it to other polo players to come in," said Perkins.

The club offers kids' programs and lessons for adults with USPA-certified instructors that include mounted instruction time.

The club only opens to the public for ticketed events twice a year, and Geiler said this weekend's event is a wonderful way for guests to get familiar with the game.

"You will be able to meet the players and see the horses up close," said Geiler.

Perkins added that the Women's Arena Open Finals are a fine example of the athleticism required to play polo.

"It is pretty exciting to see these girls that are tough, and they have traveled from all over the country to come and play here."

Tickets for Sunday Brunch at the Ranch and the Women's Arena Open Finals can be purchased at ocpolo.com.

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Photos courtesy of Orange County Polo Club

THE UNITED STATES Polo Assn. Women's Arena Open Finals will take place today at Orange County Polo Club.

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THE ORANGE COUNTY Polo Club will host the USPA Women's Arena Open on Oct. 22.



GRANTS

Continued from page A1

a "better-for-you Mexican-American food brand," which produces grocery items like tortilla chips, salsas and gluten-free almond-flour tortillas. The South Texas-based company recognizes that Latino-owned businesses disproportionately tap into personal and family savings in order to support and expand their businesses. The gap is based on limited access to outside capital and, according to a Stanford Graduate School of Business report, when Latino entrepreneurs start a business, 70% of their funding comes from personal savings. In particular, McKinsey reports that Latino founders run nearly 2 million businesses across the country but receive less than 2% of venture capital funds. Those disparities are why Siete Family Foods has committed to award \$2 million over the next five years to businesses that empower and support Latino communities.

"Every business starts as a small business, and we understand the inherent challenges of building a company from scratch.

ALTA BAJA Market and cafe owner Delilah Snell and Loreta Ruiz of La Vegana Mexicana stand in the store in the 4th Street Market in Santa Ana.

Don Leach
Staff Photographer



Knowing the additional funding struggles faced by Latino founders, we are proud to use our Juniors Fund as a vehicle for financial support," said Miguel Garza, co-founder and chief executive officer of Siete Family Foods.

On Oct. 9, under the guise of doing a segment on Hispanic Heritage month, KTLA's Annie Rose Ramos surprised a shocked Snell on camera with a giant check from Siete Family Foods for \$30,000. Ruiz's business was

awarded \$15,000.

"I actually knew about the fund last year; our office manager forwarded it to me," said Snell.

The application was saved on her computer for months, but she didn't get to it before the dead-

line.

"I was dealing with the street-car craziness for so long," said Snell, referring to the OC Street-car construction that ground 4th Street Market's business to a halt most of last year.

This year, she vowed to fill out the application, and when she finally did sit down to write out all the ideas she had for Alta Baja, she was overwhelmed with the prospect of receiving the funding to make those dreams come true.

"One of the questions was what would you do with \$10,000? and then what would you do with \$20,000, what would you do with \$30,000? And I was, like, maybe we can get a dishwasher because we have been washing dishes by hand for seven years," Snell said.

Snell said the money could also help replace equipment, like her current kegerator that constantly freezes beer. Snell also hopes to expand with an open kitchen and refurbish a trailer into a mobile michelada truck.

"I started thinking if we got this, it could change everything," said Snell.

One of Alta Baja's employees,

See **Grants**, page A3

FUTURE

Continued from page A1

cramping — it was super stressful,” OCC architecture student Georgie Ampudia, a member of teamMADE (Modular Affordable Dwellings for the Environment), said of the final few days of construction.

“We were really rushing it to get it to the fairgrounds. We didn’t know if we were going to open on time,” Ampudia continued. But we ended up being one of the first three teams to open up.”

Held on two consecutive long weekends, the inaugural decathlon was envisioned as sort of a biennial world’s fair of sustainability, designed to showcase environmental innovations, net-zero practices and green jobs in action.

It featured educational entertainment for school kids, as well as environmental-themed vendors, demonstrations and a green job fair.



Photos by Eric Licas

MEMBERS OF teamMADE, a collaboration of UC Irvine and Orange Coast College students with their entry into the Sustainability Decathlon at the O.C. fairgrounds Oct. 14. The modular home they built will be used to shelter the homeless.

“When I was 8 years old and living in Queens, I went to the New York World’s Fair. It was the most amazing thing I’d seen in my life,” said Fred Smoller, a Chap-

man University instructor who co-founded and raised funds for the inaugural event with colleague Mike Moodian.

“I said, ‘How did they

ever think of this?’ That stuck with me,” he continued. “I thought we could create a world’s fair of sustainability, and we could stun and amaze people.”



THE FIRST-EVER Orange County Sustainability Decathlon took place Oct. 6 through 15 at the O.C. fairgrounds.

The show’s main event, the design-and-build competition, drew 14 teams of undergraduate and post-secondary researchers, architects, builders and innovators, all tasked with creating affordable, energy-efficient modular homes that could be easily reproduced and transported to a “Sustainability Village” at the fairgrounds.

Edged out slightly in the General Excellence category by the Rancho Cielo Construction Academy in Salinas, teamMADE placed first in the Engineering and Construction and Market Potential categories, scored second in Sustainability and Resilience and third in Architecture and Interior Design, Communications and Marketing as well as Innovation.

But perhaps the biggest win is the one they helped score for the at-risk individuals who will be living inside the home they created.

The UCI/OCC team specially designed “luminOCity” for Placentia nonprofit Homeless Intervention Services of Orange County, measuring out a plot of land where the structure will serve as transitional housing for men ages 18 to 24.

Ampudia explained the builders were given the images of a turtle shell and a butterfly metamorphosis as inspiration for the finished product. They thought long and hard about how to incorporate those as elements in their design.

“We wanted to encapsulate the feeling of having a safe space to be in and being free from harm and danger,” she said of the team’s motivation. “They’re the ones at risk of being

homeless, so we want them to feel safe.”

Another modular entry was the LUCID home designed by a team of UCI civil and environmental engineering graduate and undergrad students.

With fire-resistant walls made of recycled high-density foam sandwiched between thermally insulated concrete, the structure tied for first place in an Energy Efficiency performance rating challenge and came in fourth in seven other categories.

“This house actually absorbs carbon dioxide,” explained engineering professor and team adviser Aymann S. Mosallam. “Usually people say net-zero — but this is negative.”

Smoller acknowledged Thursday that while the event’s overall attendance could have been better, the competition succeeded in getting young people thinking about how to reasonably tackle climate change, while exposing the public to green innovation in a way that is fun, engaging and, above all else, doable.

“Sacramento is making laws that will change the cars we drive, how we get around, the houses we live in and the places we work,” he said of the need for future decathlons.

“If they’re going to do that, we need to do something that will engage businesses, the academic public and engage the public sector — I think that overall goal makes sense.”

Contributor Eric Licas assisted in the reporting of this story.

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MEMBERS OF teamMADE cheer upon winning second place in the first Orange County Sustainability Decathlon on Oct. 14.



KIDS ASK Gia Baham questions about Mr. Bojangles the owl during a sustainable pest control demonstration.

GRANTS

Continued from page A2

Sheila Anderzunas, put together a small altar, or ofrenda, as a way of manifesting the future projects the Siete Juntos Fund had inspired them to dream up.

“People started bringing in stuff and putting it on there, and even customers put stuff on there,” said Snell. “It’s like the hopes and dreams of the store.”

The ofrenda stood in the store under a small computer print-out sign that read, “We recently applied for the Siete Juntos Fund — a grant for Latina food businesses. After 3+ years of COVID & construction, this grant could make an incredible change for Alta Baja — and in applying we were inspired.”

Snell felt inspired to encourage Ruiz to apply herself.

“Delilah was the one that actually told me that this was available,” said Ruiz. “I am thankful that I got it,

“I am trying to build out this kitchen and be prepared as a business so when the development and construction finally ends, we are ready.”

— **Delilah Snell**
Alta Baja Market owner

but I am thankful that she got it as well.”

Ruiz said her business was among those hit hard, first by the pandemic and then the streetcar construction.

“Things are tough, and we are really just surviving here,” said Ruiz, who plans to use the grant money to help grow her business.

“I definitely would like to get a couple more appliances to help me make different dishes,” she said.

Tacos have been selling well at La Vegana Mexicana, and Ruiz wants to add a vegan “fish” taco to the menu, which would require a small deep fryer. She also wants to reward her staff, who have been loyal to the business since day one.

“I really hope I can get my cook, Mary Mendoza, back to 40 hours,” Ruiz said.

While Alta Baja Market and La Vegana Mexicana serve the community, Snell and Ruiz have also have found ways to support the Santa Ana community outside of their businesses.

Snell has long been an advocate for Santa Ana’s downtown district, organizing the first farmer’s market years ago and opening her previous store, the Road Less Traveled, in the city. She continues to galvanize local businesses affected by the streetcar construction and share information about funding and aid available to them.

Ruiz runs her food stall but also splits her time with

her other job and passion, Latino Health Access, working to spread Spanish-language healthcare information in the Santa Ana neighborhoods that aren’t reached through traditional methods.

The women’s dedication to the community was among the characteristics that made them extraordinary to Siete.

“We received hundreds of applications from across the country, but Alta Baja and La Vegana Mexicana stood out for their commitment to community and authentically celebrating their heritage,” said Veronica Garza. “The Latina founders truly inspired us with their efforts to create special spaces and share their culture with Santa



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

THE MICHELADA MENU at the Alta Baja Market and cafe in the 4th Street Market in Santa Ana.

Ana.”

Over the next few months both business said customers will start to see changes and upgrades, which will help them both serve the community more.

“I am trying to build out this kitchen and be prepared as a business so when the development and construction finally ends, we are ready,” said Snell.

Ruiz said she is overjoyed

that both La Vegana Mexicana and Alta Baja Market were recognized.

“I am really happy that we are next to each other, and it is a nice example of women supporting women,” said Ruiz.

“*Juntos es siempre mejor.*” Together is always better.

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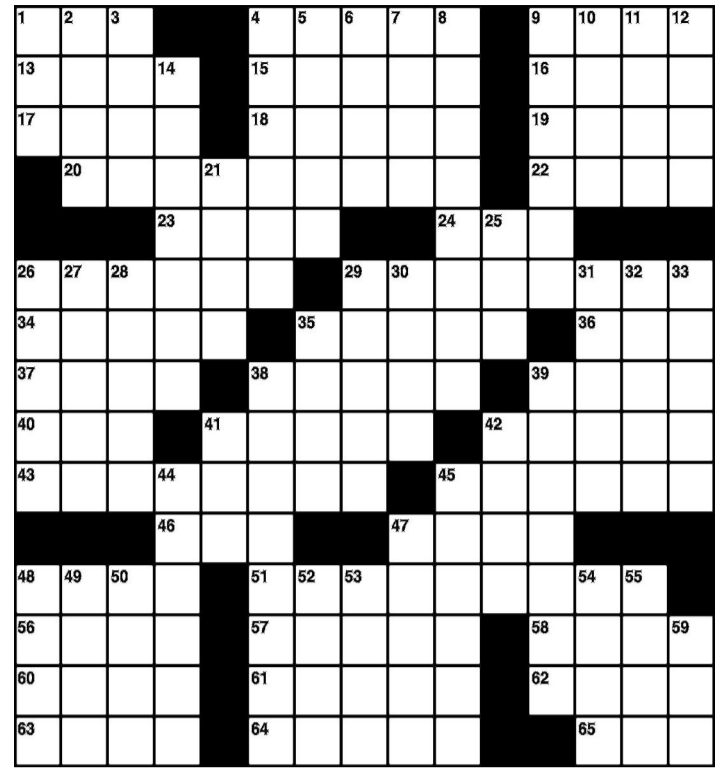


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THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

- ACROSS**
 1 Become firm
 4 Bags
 9 Go on and on
 13 Student's ordeal
 15 Lifting machine
 16 Out of town
 17 Skimpy skirt
 18 Ramada resort
 19 Journey
 20 Neighbor of Kentucky
 22 NY's _ Park; FDR's hometown
 23 Arrived
 24 Mediocre grade
 26 Criminal's reason
 29 Cause of cloudy vision
 34 Dark wood
 35 More bashful
 36 Do an outdoor chore
 37 "Phooey!"
 38 Base before home
 39 Hoax
 40 Pierre's pal
 41 Nudges
 42 Social division
 43 Cut jaggedly
 45 Least bananas
 46 Prefix for stop or fiction
 47 Piece of jewelry
 48 Mail opening
 51 Woodworker's irritants
 56 Emmy-winning TV sitcom
 57 Hue similar to lavender
 58 Audition for a role
 60 More than
 61 Acquired relation
 62 Wise man
 63 Dwindle
 64 Blabs
 65 Hightailed it
- DOWN**
 1 Emerald or opal



SUDOKU

By the Mepham 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.

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

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A8.

- 2 Freeway off-ramp
 3 "Penny _"; Beatles song
 4 Conspiracy
 5 Stood up
 6 Persians & others
- 7 Word attached to cap or pad
 8 Picked
 9 Foam
 10 Crooked
 11 Uttered
 12 _ A; ambitious personality

- 14 Chopping finely
 21 Blue shade
 25 Hearing organ
 26 Olympian's prize
 27 21st-century president
 28 Pick-me-up
 29 Scold
 30 Broadcasts
 31 Keep entertained
 32 Expenditures
 33 Twitter post
 35 Injection
 38 Send by wire
 39 Texas team
 41 Expert
 42 Lacks the ability to
 44 Complete
 45 Tough fibers
 47 Opponent
 48 Stash away
 49 Volcanic output
 50 Yaks
 52 See-through rectangle
 53 Help to relax
 54 Fanny
 55 Long story
 59 TV room, perhaps

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forum

A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE

Seven times commas are optional

Let's eat, Grandma!
Let's eat Grandma!
As anyone who's chuckled at this well-worn punctuation joke can attest, commas matter. A



comma can even make the difference between a friendly invitation to break bread and cannibalism. But that doesn't mean you should stress over every comma in everything you write. Sometimes, commas are optional. Here are seven times when you get to choose.

Serial commas. Much has been written about the serial or Oxford comma, which comes before the conjunction in a list of three or more things, like the second comma in "red, white, and blue." I've written a thorough discussion of why it's optional. But in brief, just know that you can use it or not as long as you're consistent.

Between independent clauses. Punctuation rules say you should put a comma between independent clauses connected with a conjunction, for example: "Peter works



Patrick Semansky | Associated Press

ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR. testifies before a House Judiciary Select Subcommittee in July. Adding commas around Jr. and Sr. is optional, June Casagrande writes.

hard, and he plays hard."

An independent clause contains both a subject and a verb. The noun "Peter" and the pronoun "he" are both subjects and each has its own verb, hence the comma in my example. But the rules are flexible. If both independent clauses are short and your meaning is clear without a

comma, you can leave it out: Peter works hard and he plays hard.

Before "too," "also" or "either." When I was a kid, I was told in no uncertain terms that "too" should be set off with commas, as should "also," "either" and similar terms. So you can imagine my surprise when,

decades later, I looked it

up. None of my punctuation or grammar guides says you must set these words off with commas. I still do because it seems to help the sentence and because old habits die hard. But there's nothing wrong with leaving the comma out.

Around "Inc.," "Ltd.," "LLC," etc. It's logical to put

commas around "Inc." or similar terms in a business name: Widgets, Inc. But there's no risk of confusion if you leave it out: Widgets Inc. That's why some editing styles say to not set off "Inc." with commas. To be more precise, these same style guides say you should usually leave out "Inc." altogether. But when it make sense to include "Inc.," commas are optional.

Around Jr. and Sr. After a name, "Jr." and "Sr." work a lot like "Inc." They add extra information. So it's no surprise that they follow the same rule: Commas around them are optional.

After a short introductory phrase. A lot of times, we set up the main part of a sentence with a phrase. Case in point: the phrase "a lot of times" in the last sentence. The rules say that introductory phrases should be followed by a comma, which makes sense when the phrase is long: "A lot of times when we native English speakers formulate a unit known as a sentence, we start with an introductory phrase." Here, the comma helps keep all those words organized. But when the introductory phrase is very

short, like "On Tuesday" in "On Tuesday I go to class," you can omit the comma if you like.

Around unambiguous appositives. "My wife, Lea, our dog, Spike, my boss, Jennifer, and our plumber, Jay, are here." An appositive, which is a noun that restates a noun immediately before it, should technically be set off with commas. So when you write "my wife, Lea," the name "Lea" is appositive to "my wife." When you leave the comma out, you're saying that the name "Lea" isn't a restating of "my wife" but instead it's needed to clarify the noun "wife." So technically, without a comma you're saying that her name is there to indicate which of your multiple wives you're talking about. But as you can see in the first sentence of this section, sometimes this rule is impractical. In those cases, you can write "my wife Lea" without implying that you have others.

JUNE CASAGRANDE is the author of "The Joy of Syntax: A Simple Guide to All the Grammar You Know You Should Know." She can be reached at JuneTCN@aol.com.



Eric Neil Piper

May 11, 1934 - September 23, 2023

Eric Neil Piper, 89, reached the finish line on Earth peacefully surrounded by family. He had been a resident of Corona del Mar for 53 years. Born in Brighton, England, Eric was the only child of Eric Cyril Piper and Queenie Barbara Piper. Eric's strong faith in God, generosity, and positive attitude were key to being a loving husband, a devoted father, a loyal friend, and a strong community member. From the day Eric and Berry were married, they embarked on their journey to serve God and help others. He is survived by his loving wife of 67 years, Berry, his son Eric (Rika), son Jonathan (Heather), and daughter Jennifer (Jose), grandchildren Logan, Hadley, Natalie, Neil, Piper, and Eliza, cousins, nieces, and many dear friends. Colonel Piper will be deeply missed and forever remembered. The family would like to thank Hoag Hospice and the caregivers at Broadway Manor for their kind and compassionate care. Memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at www.pacificviewcalifornia.com for the Piper family. A celebration of Eric's life will be held at a later date.



Sybil Moore Watts

March 1, 1940 - October 12, 2023

In the early morning of Wednesday, October 12, 2023, Sybil Moore Watts, aged 83, passed away peacefully in her home in Costa Mesa, California.

Sybil was born on March 1, 1940, to Clifford Campbell Moore and Mildred Robbins Moore in Rutherford County, North Carolina. After school, Sybil went on to work for Carlson Design Construct, where she met her husband, John Watts.

Always an early riser, Sybil used to say her favorite part of the day was between the hours of five and six a.m. where she could read her newspaper, drink her first (and second) cup of coffee, and sit guard at her living room window as the self-appointed head of neighborhood watch.

Sybil had fine tastes and even finer standards; always touted as "the pretty woman in the neighborhood, with the pretty dog and the pretty car." You wouldn't see her walk to the mailbox without a full face of makeup and she had standing weekly hair and nail appointments.

She taught her family the importance of travel and spending time in places they loved, the correct way to drink a nice glass of Lagavulin, her love of Bette Midler, and to be proud of their southern roots.

Sybil would be incredibly dissatisfied with this obituary if her favorite place in the world weren't given its due and for those who know her well, it's no surprise. If you found yourself in more than a five-minute chat with Sybil, you could guarantee "London" would be slipped into the conversation. She had the pleasure of visiting London more than ten times, staying at her favorite hotel, The Goring, for most of those trips, eating at her favorite restaurants and seeing friends she'd made in previous visits.

If she weren't racking up a shockingly low number of miles on her convertible, or spending time with her beloved dog, Finn, you could find Sybil with a cigarette, a gin and tonic and a witty remark. She had a way of making you laugh, even when it was inappropriate to do so. Her love was unmatched. If you had the pleasure of being in her spotlight, you never wanted to be anywhere else.

Sybil is predeceased by her father, Clifford Moore, mother, Mildred Moore, son, Jeffrey Jones, sister, Barbara Jones, and brother-in-law, Joe Jones. She is survived by her husband, John Watts, her daughter, Scotti Jones Lamutt (David), granddaughters, Evan Lamutt and Lauren Lamutt Tilden (Andrew), grandsons, Cliff (Nina) and Will Jones and Matthew Sutton, great-grandson, Campbell Jones, nieces Beverly Jones Bentley (Mike) and Annette Jones (Lanny Walker) and great-niece, Anna Bentley.

Sybil requested that there be no formal service. Thoughts and prayers for our family are greatly appreciated. In lieu of flowers, John and Sybil ask for contributions to the Trauma Intervention Programs, Inc. (TIP), an Orange County, CA volunteer program that provides grief and coping services for deceased loved ones after a family trauma. They were a compassionate help to John after Sybil's passing. To donate, please go to www.tiporangecounty.org/donations.htm.

MAILBAG



File Photo

PATRONS COME and go from the Huntington Beach Public Library, the focus of a recent City Council decision.

Leave librarians and parents to make their own decisions about books

President Dwight Eisenhower stated at the Dartmouth College commencement ceremony in 1954, "Don't join the book burners ... Don't think you're going to conceal faults by concealing the evidence that they ever existed. Don't be afraid to go into a library and read every book."

Huntington Beach City Council Mayor Pro Tem Gracey Van Der Mark should heed the advice of this former Republican president and five-star U.S. Army general. A library will always have materials that some people might find offensive, but when they get inaccurately labeled as "porn," the facts get blurred, and people start repeating misinformation. Here are the facts: The Huntington Beach Public Library does not acquire porn, it locates books with adult themes in the adult or young adult sections — not the children's section — and it offers a review process for parents who might want a book removed to the adult section.

Therefore, I was deeply disappointed to learn that the Huntington Beach City Council on Oct. 17 voted for Van Der Mark's dangerous resolution, that would create a review board to inspect children's books for sexual content (a term they have not yet defined). The members of this review group will not be trained librarians; they will be the City Council's political appointees. Since the resolution was extremely vague, it's hard to comprehend how this will work, let alone whether it's legal. One of

their most baffling requirements is that the library will not be able to allow access to "any content of a sexual nature" for anyone under 18 years of age without consent of a parent or guardian, regardless of "whether the books or materials are intended for children or adults." So, a 17-year-old, who's heading to college in a year, has a car and a smartphone, and holds down a job can't check out "The Great Gatsby" or "Romeo and Juliet" without Mommy's or Daddy's approval? What gives our City Council the right to determine what constitutes sexual content in library books? Will they ban kissing or hugging? How about a book involving reproductive health? Or popular teen series like the Hunger Games trilogy or the Twilight Saga? Or books on gender identity and sexual orientation? The Bible?

The real target for the conservative council members is their discomfort with LGBTQ+ books and materials. There's a big difference between pornography found in an adult bookstore and a library book about same-sex marriage (which is legal) or gender dysphoria (which is real). When politicians label these books as "porn," it's clear that their intent isn't about protecting children, it's about promoting a culture war. That's why the four conservative members of the City Council have banned flying the Pride flag in June, dissolved the human relations committee which addressed inclusivity, and inserted homophobic and transpho-

bic verbiage in the city's human dignity statement.

Republicans have criticized Democrats for political overreach, but by policing our library's books, Republicans are conducting one of the most dangerous forms of political overreach by controlling our citizens' intellectual freedom. The four City Council members should not have the power to force their personal moral standards on every other citizen within our diverse city of 200,000 people. This is censorship and is a violation of the 1st Amendment.

Carol Daus
Huntington Beach

Sitting in the Huntington Beach City Council chamber audience for over seven hours at the Oct. 17 meeting, I noticed that the dais seemed like the movie set for a thriller or horrific drama whereby the mad scientist or rogue general fends off all attempts to save the day and hurtles toward imminent destruction for all concerned. Wave after wave of protests, most well-reasoned and on-point, washed up on the dais where the villainous mayor, Tony Strickland, and his council majority cronies held sway. This time, the city was not rescued. Deeply flawed and ill-conceived measures regarding library services, the handling of our local elections (featuring the restrictive on voter ID), the restrictive display of certain flags on city property, and other issues were approved on a 4-3 vote despite compelling evidence and arguments to the contrary. Surf City may

be doomed to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars and risk numerous lawsuits on the autocratic vanity of members bent on wielding power rather than sound governance. It was both sad and infuriating. Yes, the irresponsible charter measures might be voted down next year, but enormous damage will already have been done. And worse, the remorseless culprits will remain free and unfettered to strike again. Huntington Beach is now suffering the consequences of its grievance-driven lurch to the right in the 2022 local election. It's hard to see how this movie has a happy ending.

Tim Geddes
Huntington Beach

Gracie Van der Mark's plans to restrict access to library books she deems offensive is nothing more than an attempt to hijack the library's book collection for her own political agenda. If she and her fellow council members truly believed the majority of residents wanted this, they would have allowed the residents to vote on it. Van der Mark has used the standard fear tactic in making parents believe the library is not safe and is filled with dangerous books. One of the books she highlighted is "It's Perfectly Normal," which has been in the library children's book collection for 29 years. Somehow none of the children who visited the library during that time seems to have grown up being

See **Mailbag**, page A7

MAILBAG

Continued from page A6

harm by this book. Van der Mark claims to be protecting the children, but what she is really doing is turning teens away from using the library. All books with sexual content will be moved to the adult collection. This term is very broad and vague. Anyone under the age of 18 will no longer be able to enter the adult book stacks without parent consent. The majority of high school students are under the age of 18. Most books they need for school reports and reading materials are in the adult section. The library is a beautiful open concept building designed to welcome the public in, not to keep them out. Just how does the council majority plan to keep teens from accessing the adult book stacks? Build a wall around them?

The council majority said it wanted to stop government overreach and stress personal choice by voting to ban mask and vaccine mandates. Van der Mark has said "just about every book you touch is controlled by the government." Yet somehow it is not considered government overreach when the City Council votes to revoke librarians' ability to order books, nor when they vote to form a committee to decide for all library users what is and is not safe for children and teens. So much for choice and letting parents choose for themselves. Oh, the irony.

Barbara Richardson
Huntington Beach

I have an idea for the City Council of Huntington Beach: How about coming up with some positive legislation that will enhance the city rather than looking around for things to ban or criticize? And by the way, the council could be a bit more original as they are far from being the first agency, be it a city council or school board, to vet reading material for the children's library. Let's see: The council also

banned masks and COVID-19 vaccine mandates just a few years ago. They joined the Newport Beach City Council during the height of the pandemic in trying to prevent Gov. Newsom from closing beaches to protect people from spreading the coronavirus. They also, more recently, banned the state from enforcing state law SB94 and ADUs in an effort to deal with adequate housing.

Not too long ago the Huntington Beach City Council decided there would be no rainbow Pride flags flying at City Hall, and most recently the council has been trying to imply, through changes to the human rights declaration, that schools are not adequately observing "parental rights" because they are not notifying them about their child's perceived gender at school.

The censorship of books for children also falls under this category of "parental rights," which I prefer to call "parental responsibilities." As a public school teacher for 37 years, I am mystified

that parents would have any more expectations for their children's teachers. The duties of teachers are already burdensome without adding these controversial tasks to their list of responsibilities. Do parents realize how many quality teachers are leaving the classroom because of unrealistic demands on their time?

If you live in Huntington Beach, why not encourage your civic leaders to look for positive goals for the city? Huntington Beach is a popular tourist spot and well liked by its citizens as well as by tourists. The council should stop following the "madding crowd" and start seeking positive goals for its scenic city.

Lynn Lorenz
Newport Beach

A fact check on death rates

There is an adage that states "Facts can change opinions, but opinions cannot change facts." Huntington Beach Mayor Pro Tem Gracey Van Der Mark

seems devoted to disproving the latter half of that expression.

Once again I am left shaking my head in disbelief after reading some of her comments. The following quote is particularly troublesome. "I agree, many people died from COVID. However, many more died from depression suicide because they were not allowed to earn a living, they were not allowed to see their families."

This statement sounds like it comes from the Marjorie Taylor Greene school of political drivel and misinformation. Operating by the theory if you repeat a lie often enough people will believe it's true.

After verifying the U.S. suicide statistics given in the Daily Pilot article (Huntington Beach proclaims itself a 'No Mask and No Vaccine Mandate City,' Oct. 6) using data from the World Health Organization I checked with other fact keeping groups such as the National Institutes of

Health, the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, the Journal of American Medicine and several other sources. All supported total given of 143,617 deaths in three years from suicide in this country. Because the reasons for suicide are complex and multifactored, determining how many of these deaths are related to pandemic shutdowns isn't possible. WHO reports U.S. deaths attributed to COVID-19 from January 2020 to October 2023 at 1,127,152. Van Der Mark is off by nearly a million. Shouldn't a mayor pro tem have more common sense than this?

I spent a day poring through articles from the above organizations as well as studies and papers published by Johns Hopkins, Centers for Disease Control, the Mayo Clinic, Yale University and Stanford Medical School. I did not research the vaccines. The evidence for wearing masks to prevent or slow the progress of COVID-19 and to

prevent those infected from sharing infected respiratory droplets with others appears solid. The CDC also states wearing a mask has no significant adverse health effects on the wearer.

When several of the world's leading disease research and health organizations give the same advice for prevention it's a safe bet that the advice is good. Unless of course you are a follower of "alternate facts."

Van Der Mark and her three like-minded co-council members seem more intent on deconstructing any progress made by the previous council than actually getting anything of value done. All I see is a lot of busy work making changes to mission statements, city charters or anything else that doesn't fit their narrow view of how things ought to be. Getting rid of citizen boards and committees followed by an attempt to have the city attorney take over the run-

See **Mailbag**, page A8

Daily Pilot

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MAILBAG

Continued from page A7

ning of the library is moronic. I don't believe these four represent the views of the majority of locals they were elected to serve.

Mary Franklin
Huntington Beach

Massacre raises local questions

I wept last week as I read the headlines about 40 Jewish babies being slaughtered by Hamas, some by beheading. Israeli families are being warned to erase social media from their children's devices before Hamas starts livestreaming the executions of hostages, which include more Israeli children and babies. Tears ran down my face and into my children's lunch boxes, whose father is Jewish, as I thought, "those babies and children could have been mine."

My tears turned into anger as I saw images on social media of young people around the world rejoicing in the slaughter of these



James Carbone

HUNTINGTON BEACH City Councilwoman Natalie Moser, left, Mayor Pro Tem Gracey Van Der Mark and Mayor Tony Strickland listen to public comments about the proposal to screen children's books at the library.

innocent lives, holding signs saying, "Decolonization is not a metaphor" and "By any means necessary." Students at CSU Long Beach advertised a protest for Palestine with an image of a paratrooper, in reference to those that brutally raped and murdered over 200 Israeli civilians at a music festival. UC Irvine released a statement, not condemning the violence, but softly "both-siding" the issue, stating that the "conflict in Israel and Gaza is having a direct impact on many members of our campus community." How can these people be so blinded by the atrocities that occurred in Israel? Why

do they not know evil when they see it?

While I agree there are legitimate grievances about the treatment of Palestinians throughout history, these grievances and current power imbalance should never justify the dehumanization and killing of innocent life. This celebration and rationalization of evil is what happens when an insidious ideology slowly creeps through our educational institutions and promotes lived experiences over objective truth and victim hierarchies over equality. These people wrongfully believe the notion that these innocent lives are "complicit" in the historical mistreatment of Palestinians. Unfortunately, this ideol-

ogy is only set to spread in California. In 2021, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 101, which will require all California public high school students to complete one semester of Ethnic Studies to graduate starting for the graduating class of 2025. The model curriculum encourages students to use a critical lens to analyze social power structures such as colonialism, imperialism, white supremacy and capitalism. The word "colonization" is mentioned 52 times, and a sample lesson aims to "inspire critically conscious action and reflection" regarding settler colonialism. Another lesson asks, "How can literature be used to activate the possibilities of decolonization?"

By encouraging "critically conscious action" and the activation of decolonization, California's ethnic studies curriculum will only perpetuate the evil we are seeing today. Local school board officials including here in Orange County must realize that the barbaric events that occurred in Israel are essentially what "decolonization" looks like. The ideology behind the ethnic studies curriculum dresses itself up as equity and compassion, but in reality, it divides communities, aggravates grievances and rationalizes evil.

Rebeka Sinclair
Newport Beach

Saturday was a typical fall day. I paid a few bills, shopped for groceries and watched college football. It also was the day a million residents of Gaza were expected to evacuate the north and move south by any means possible. If the same order to evacuate ever was issued in Laguna, there would be complete and total panic in town.

Imagine food, water and electricity being cut off for days before receiving the news: You have 24 hours to pack up and leave. Because Crown Valley has been reduced to rubble — as has coast highway in both directions — the only way to escape is via Laguna Canyon Road.

Here's where it gets tricky. First, much of the canyon road is impassable due to bombing, so the only way to evacuate is by foot; and second, if you do manage to reach Irvine or Lake Forest, for example, both cities turn you away. What would you do? Where would you go? Will there be food and water somewhere else? Will you be safe?

I imagine these are the same questions a million mothers, fathers, sons, daughters and grandparents are asking themselves in Gaza now.

Don't get me wrong. I believe Israel's hunt for the Hamas killers hiding in Gaza is totally justified. After all, these cowards killed innocent babies and

anyone else they could find. What concerns me is the humanitarian crisis the evacuation currently is causing and will continue to cause long after the fighting ends. As one young physician put it, "We are living in a cage, and there isn't a way out." If this isn't a nightmare scenario, then I don't know what is.

Yes, fall is a time for change. I just never thought it would be this kind of change.

Denny Freidenrich
Laguna Beach

Ode against abortion

I believe Planned Parenthood is the most prolific child killing machine in American history (Planned Parenthood president and CEO Jon Dunn celebrates 30 years as the nonprofit's leader, Daily Pilot & Times OC, Oct. 15). Referring to abortion as healthcare is the ultimate lie. Just ask the child. Every abortion kills a living child.

Many Tears Ago
Two people entered a Planned Parenthood door, Devastation to the core.

One forever damaged, one forever dead, Writing on the wall needs to be read.

On her mother a child's hopes were pinned,

Yet mom has cast her fate to the wind.

Abortion is truly not about choice,

It is all about a tiny voice.

Protecting this eternal creation,

The only hope for a fallen nation.

Never knew there was a heart that beat,

Should have looked at tiny hands and feet.

I wonder if she knew her life was for sale,

And understood the ultimate betrayal.

I wish I could say it wasn't so,

But that was many tears ago.

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Museum with California art to triple in size

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Mark and Janet Hilbert have one of the largest collections of California narrative art, and an expansion of the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University will create more room to showcase and share it.

“We hope to continue to foster art and artists in this community,” said Mark Hilbert, during a special walk-through of the construction site where the museum is in development. “And we would like to see this area become an arts district.”

The redesign, by Johnston Marklee Associates of Los Angeles, includes two side-by-side buildings: the original Hilbert Museum at 167 N. Atchison St. in Orange and the former Chapman Dance Center to its north.

“The Hilberts gave a major gift to Chapman University in 2014, and so that gave us the where-withal to open the original Hilbert Museum,” said Mary Platt, director of the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University.

Conveniently located across from the Orange Train Station, the original museum measured about 7,500 square feet and found much success.

“In 2019 we pulled over 30,000 visitors,” said Platt. “It has become one of the most popular museums in Orange County.”

When the museum re-opens in 2024, the newly expanded Hilbert will have triple the exhibit space of the former museum, stretching to more than 22,000 square feet.

“We will be opening with eight major exhibitions,” said Platt.

There will be plenty of space to display the more than 5,000 pieces in the Hilbert collection that chronicle California history from the 1900s to the pre-

sent through the work of not only California scene artists but Hollywood studio artists and animators.

“A lot of our paintings are figurative because we are a story-telling museum, a narrative museum, and when you have people, there is more of a story line,” said Hilbert.

Museum visitors can look forward to works from David Hockney, depicting the swimming pools in the backyards of California that inspired much of his art. They can also anticipate an entire gallery dedicated to California watercolors.

“This museum is noted for having one of the greatest collections of California watercolors,” said Platt. “During the period between the 1920s and the 1960s there were a lot of artists here in California that were depicting everyday life. Not just landscapes but people in cities, ranches, in the water and on the beaches.”

Watercolors are a faster, more translucent medium, and museums tend to keep their watercolors shelved and protected, since they are works on paper. Hilbert Museum is happy to display them and has been internationally recognized for its watercolor collection.

There will also be art from Norman Rockwell, a gallery dedicated to Disney animation, and galleries for Indigenous American art and American design.

Besides more gallery space, the new design will include a cafe, a research library, outdoor event space and a community room that will be used for events, lectures and classes.

“The Burra Community Room will have enough space to seat maybe 100 people for lectures,” Hilbert noted.

Special attention has also been given to the previous life of the land, and the new design honors the local Orange industrial and mercantile architecture and



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

MARY PLATT, director of the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University, and founder and donor Mark Hilbert stand outside one of the museum's new buildings under construction in the city of Orange.



Courtesy of Johnston Marklee, project architects

AN ARCHITECTS' rendering shows the future Hilbert Museum of California Art, including the Millard Sheets mosaic, “Pleasures Along the Beach,” prominently positioned in front.

the historic Cypress Street barrio, which was home to many Mexican Americans in the city of Orange.

“We did several things because we wanted to have an acknowledgment of the location,” said Hilbert.

The cafe will be named Cypress Street Cafe, for instance and the architecture of the building takes influences from Mexican architect Luis Barragán.

“The architects are

Johnston Marklee Associates of Los Angeles, but Barragán is one of the inspirations, and he is known for this geometric massing and sharp angled geometric forms that cause really sharp shadows.”

Additionally, the landscaping will be made up of plants native to the area with a large California live oak tree in the center of the museum's courtyard.

The crown jewel of the

expanded building will be the Millard Sheets mosaic, “Pleasures Along the Beach.” The massive mosaic is being restored and relocated to the museum's facade after 50 years at a flagship Home Savings & Loan building on Wilshire Boulevard in Santa Monica. Mark and his wife, Janet, identified “Pleasures Along the Beach” as their favorite from the series of mosaics, painted murals and stained

glass artworks Sheets completed for Home Savings & Loan and were ecstatic to give the mosaic a new home.

Installation of the 40-foot-by-16-foot mosaic, made using Murano glass from Italy, is anticipated to begin in mid-November, while the museum is projecting a grand opening in late February.

Platt said she's sure the mosaic will help make the building a distinct landmark.

“It is going to become a billboard for the city of Orange, for the Hilbert Museum and for Chapman University,” said Platt. “People can see it from the train, from the bus stop and driving by. And since it is made of thousands of pieces of colorful glass, so when the sun sets and hits it, it is going to light up like anything.”

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Tier 1 | Fifty nine dollars per guest

- Pan Roasted Turkey Breast**
White & dark meat, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, house made stuffing, turkey gravy
- Blackened Wild King Salmon**
Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, avocado relish, honey jalapeno beurre blanc
- Pasta Primavera**
Linguine pasta, roasted fennel, yellow squash, celery, carrots, marinara sauce
- Braised Short Ribs**
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Tier 2 | Sixty nine dollars per guest

- Prime Rib of Beef**
Au jus, creamy horseradish, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, broccolini
- Prime Rib of Beef & Pan Roasted Turkey Breast Combination**
Whipped Yukon gold mashed potatoes, house made stuffing
- Prime Filet Mignon**
Eight ounce prime filet mignon, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes
- Miso Marinated Chilean Sea Bass**
Soy glaze, coconut rice, stir-fried vegetables, mushrooms, lemongrass ginger beurre blanc

Tier 3 | Seventy nine dollars per guest

- Prime Bone-In Rib Eye**
Sixteen ounce prime bone-in rib eye, whipped Yukon Gold mashed potatoes
- Northern Australian Lobster Tail**
10 ounce tail, drawn butter, grilled lemon, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes

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MONSTERS

Continued from page A1

River Styx to Hades. Regions beyond could have unsuspecting visitors step into Pandora's box, which may lead to encounters with the stone-cold personality of Medusa and jarring thunderclaps that could only be attributed to Zeus.

"It is popular, and I'm sure we could build an audience," said Diane Challis Davy, the director of the Pageant of the Masters. "The problem is we're creating an original Pageant of the Masters every year, and that takes a lot of time and effort. We realized early on that we couldn't sustain devoting all of October and some of September to creating a haunted house."

"I think I would probably find myself getting into trouble. In Greek myth, it's hubris. I think it would be hubris to think that we could do a haunted house every year."

While the haunted house only resurfaces once every five years, Challis Davy said it is as popular among volunteers as it is for the public. Instead of begging for candy, people clamor for parts in the production.

Halloween, with dressing up in costume among its more celebrated customs, was Challis Davy's favorite holiday growing up. Rumors of the former residence of the late travel writer Richard Halliburton being haunted only added to the fascination.

"We were trick-or-treating at the Halliburton house, which is in South Laguna, which was rumored to be a haunted house," Challis Davy said. "We hiked all the way up to that hill — it's at Aliso — and the man who built the house, he was a famous travel writer, and he disappeared at sea. He was on a voyage he was going to write about on a Chinese junk, and the whole vessel was lost."

"I had read about it in the paper that it was a haunted house, and we talked to the owners, and



PAGEANT DIRECTOR Diane Challis Davy shows a scene in the Pageant of the Monsters "Maze of the Minotaur."



SHOP FOREMAN David Talbot brings out a life-sized mirror to be used in "Maze of the Minotaur."

they allowed us to come in the house and look around. That was probably my most memorable Halloween."

The maze will travel along a garden path on the outskirts of the Irvine Bowl amphitheater, into the Pageant workshops and onto the stage. Visitors can expect to see artistic sets and technical genius, such

as an erupting volcano. "When you're in this maze, and when the lights are going and the fog's going, you don't know where you are," said David Talbot, construction foreman for the Pageant of the Masters. "If people have no idea [the workshops] are back there, people just think it ends [on the far side of the amphitheater]."



A GARGOYLE LIZARD prop will greet people as part of the Pageant of the Monsters' "Maze of the Minotaur"

When you start going back through all these buildings, people are like, 'Where are we?'

"People who know it's there will all of a sudden look up, and they'll be like, 'Holy cow, this is the paint shop,' because you won't recognize it unless you're familiar with it, and then you kind of look up above the lights, and you'll see

something that kind of gives you a hint of where you're at."

The creator of this year's headlining villain is W. Bradley Elsberry, who last exhibited at the Festival of Arts in 2019. Like Challis Davy, Halloween has been an absolute favorite for Elsberry, who has been known to furnish costumes and wear them on Holly-

"When you're in this maze, and when the lights are going and the fog's going, you don't know where you are."

— **David Talbot**
construction foreman for the Pageant of the Masters

wood Boulevard. Elsberry put his bull head on the market, and he was delighted with how it played out.

"I was going to get rid of some of my bigger pieces, and [Challis Davy] immediately said, 'We want that one,'" Elsberry said. "I said, 'OK, why?' And she said, 'Oh, for the Pageant of the Monsters,' and I thought, 'Oh, that's nice.'"

"When I found out what they were calling this year's Pageant, then I was really excited. I wanted to make sure I bumped it up and improved it and made it better. I did all that. Since it's right there in the name of the show, I want it to really be a star. I'm excited. After all this time, it gets to star in something."

Past Pageant of the Monsters themes have included "Raiders of the Lost Art," "The Sinking of the Titanic," "Phantom of the Opera" and "Monsters go to the Movies."

For those who have the courage to venture through parts unknown, advanced tickets for "Maze of the Minotaur" are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children age 12 and younger. Admission will be \$25 at the door. Tickets are available through foapom.com/monsters.

After completing the maze, there will be options for food and additional entertainment. The spooky selections include fortune tellers, who are free to practice a variety of methods from tarot readings to palmistry.

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