



Photos courtesy of Rodeo 39

RODEO 39, a new dining and lifestyle center in Stanton, is set to open Saturday. It is the creation of San Juan Capistrano developer Dan Almquist.

Stanton rounds up new food and lifestyle center, Rodeo 39

BY LORI BASHEDA

Mention that you're headed to Stanton and you're likely to hear something along the lines of: *Where's Stanton?*

But a new public market is putting the tiny city on Orange County's map in a big way.

Rodeo 39 is the creation of San Juan Capistrano developer Dan Almquist, a managing partner at Frontier Real Estate Investments.

It was Stanton (population 36,000) city leaders who came to him. They had a blighted 24 acres on Beach Boulevard just off the 22 Freeway, and did he want to take crack at it?

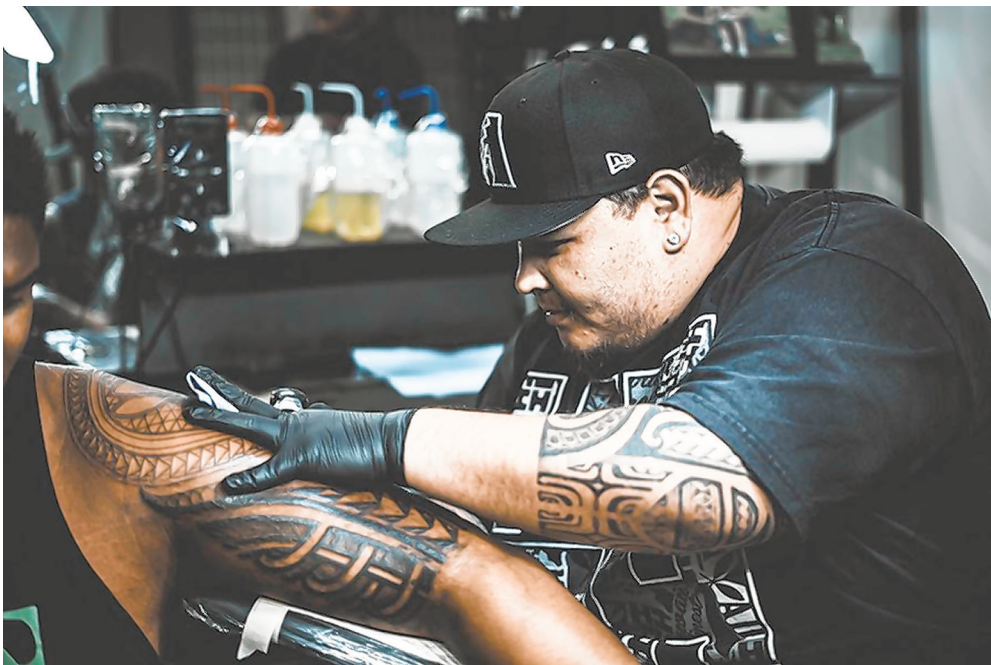
He accepted the challenge, seeing a chance to break out of the traditional shopping center mold and create a collection of shops and eateries that was more along the lines of a hangout, something experiential.

"I felt vested in doing something right by the city," said Almquist, 43. "Stanton was always a little bit of an underdog. The community deserved more."

While food is the foundation of Rodeo 39 (and it is a carnival of food), don't call it a food hall.

"The food hall concept ... you eat, but then what?" Almquist said. "I wanted to create a place that goes beyond a transactional environment, somewhere you want to spend time."

So in addition to an Insta-worthy floral boutique and a bakery, Rodeo 39 has a retro



A TATTOO ARTIST from Skin Design Tattoo, a shop in Rodeo 39, marks a customer's arm.

arcade, a raw bar, a tea bar, a cocktail bar, a coffee shop and even a small stage for that exciting day when live music can resume.

Rodeo's biggest vendor coup though is scoring Skin Design Tattoo, which is owned by Robert Pho, who many argue is *the* best

tattoo artist in the nation. Just to put it into perspective, Skin Design now has locations in Las Vegas, New York City, Honolulu — and Stanton.

See **Rodeo 39**, page R6

Voters assured fraud won't be tolerated

At a news conference, county officials maintain ballots will be protected and intimidation will not be allowed.

BY BEN BRAZIL

Following President Trump's repeated — and disproven — statements about widespread election fraud, Orange County officials sought to assure voters Monday that they would defend ballot integrity and protect polling places from outside interference.

"I think one of the messages that I want to make clear is that we're not going to tolerate intimidation, we're not going to tolerate rule-breaking in the vote centers, and we want to make sure that the laws, the regulations and the rules are followed," Orange County Registrar Neal Kelley said at a news conference outside the Santa Ana office.

During the event, crews loaded semi-trucks with 1.7 million ballots set to be mailed this week to registered voters.

Trump has urged supporters to monitor voting centers for fraud, a directive that has led to concerns nationwide about the potential for intimidation and disruption.

Trump has repeated the widely discredited claim that mail-in ballots lead to voter fraud — a claim California's top law enforcement official called "baseless" during the Santa Ana news conference.

"The studies have been done, voter fraud in America is exceedingly rare, voter fraud in California is exceedingly rare," Secretary of State Alex Padilla said. "Vote-by-mail, specifically since we're going to count on it so much this November election, is nothing new in California."

Mail-in balloting has "proven to be secure," he said.

Orange County District Atty. Todd Spitzer said his office will prosecute those who engage in voter fraud.

"There are those people that need to know that if they are thinking about, or planning to engage in potential mischief, we will be there to enforce the law," Spitzer said.

See **Voters**, page R6

SURFER MAGAZINE, AN ICONIC TOUCHSTONE OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BEACH CULTURE, SHUTS DOWN

BY MIKE FREEMAN
AND GARY ROBBINS

SAN DIEGO — Surfer magazine, which helped legitimize wave-riding as a global sport through its lush photography and California-cool stories, printed its final edition and suspended operations this month, to the dismay of the legions of baby boomers who once lingered at newsstands waiting for the latest issue.

Founded in 1960 and beloved by pre-internet-age surfers from Mission Beach to Biarritz, the magazine furloughed staff Friday and ceased further print and online content offerings. Though founded in Orange County, the magazine was based in recent years in Carlsbad.

"The whole staff got let go

yesterday (no, nothing to do with the heat from the Biden endorsement, just the COVID economy), but I feel like we're ending on a high note with this one," editor in chief Todd Prodanovich said in an Instagram post about the final issue.

"Funny how you can work a job like this for 10 years and each issue is a completely new and different journey. I'll really miss that part, and the mag in general, which ends on this issue after 60 years of publication."

Though many in the surfing community say they saw the end coming, the demise of Surfer still stings for aging surfers who couldn't wait for the monthly magazine to arrive.

"I have watched many great publications go out of business

over the past few years, but this one hit me really hard," said Steve Hawk, who edited the magazine for eight years in the 1990s. "It was so much more than just a magazine for a lot of surfers of a certain generation. It was a cultural touchstone and groundbreaking in a lot of ways."

Surfer was among the first niche sports magazines of any kind to be successful, with a pedigree akin to Hot Rod and Field & Stream, Hawk said.

It helped spawn a plethora of beach culture publications such as Surfing, which closed about three years ago, and the ongoing magazines Surfer's Journal in the U.S. and Surfing World in Australia.

"It was the first. It became the communications vehicle for surf culture, and out of that came other ones," said Peter Townend, a legendary surfer and president of ActivEmpire, an industry consulting firm. "We have suddenly lost one of the most iconic brands in the surf culture over the past 60 years."

Known as the "bible of the sport," Surfer probably reached its peak in the early 2000s. Like many print periodicals, it struggled to get a grip on the digital advertising business model as more and more of its readership transitioned online.

"There was a real magazine and



Roger Showley | San Diego Union-Tribune

SOME BACK ISSUES of Surfer magazine are shown on a shelf in the periodicals department of the Los Angeles Central Library.

print mentality among the editorial staff that said, 'Look man, this is Surfer magazine. This thing is never going away,' " said Scott Bass, who worked in digital operations at Surfer from 1997 to 2007. "No one wanted to admit it."

After a series of ownership changes, Surfer was acquired in 2019 by American Media Inc., which owned the National Enquirer.

AMI has since merged with another company and has been re-

named A360 Media. It publishes a handful of other magazines, including Men's Journal, Muscle & Fitness, Star, In Touch, US Weekly and Soap Opera Digest.

When AMI bought Surfer, it also acquired sister publications Bike, Snowboarder, Powder and Transworld Skateboarding. Some of these publications also have been reportedly affected by furloughs and suspended opera-

See **Surfer**, page R6

JOHN SEVERSON started Surfer magazine with a single issue in 1960.



Family Photo



Courtesy of the Wild and Scenic Film Festival

"BARE EXISTENCE" will be featured at the virtual Wild and Scenic Film Festival on Saturday. The annual festival usually takes place in Costa Mesa but is going online this year, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Environmental film festival goes virtual

BY BEN BRAZIL

As wildfires rage and the pandemic tears through the country, a film festival organizer in Orange County is hoping to play a part in shedding light on climate change.

The Wild and Scenic Film Festival, one of the largest environmental film festivals in the country, will return for the third year at 6:30 p.m. Saturday.

"It's pretty obvious bad things are happening to the environment, and I don't know if we can reverse it or not, but we can try," said festival organizer Karen Kennedy. "And this is a way people can be aware and learn."

Though the festival is usually held at Orange Coast Unitarian Universalist Church in Costa Mesa, it will take place virtually this year.

The event will feature 11 short films — the longest is about 20 minutes — and will run for about an hour and a half. Viewers will be able to chat online with filmmakers.

Kennedy said she was convinced to move forward with the virtual festival after speaking with organizers of the physical festival.

"At first we weren't even going to do it," Kennedy said. "We said we don't want another Zoom."

She said the films vary, but should give viewers a sense of hope about the planet's future.

One, "Bare Essentials," documents the experiences of biologists fighting to save polar bears from extinction. The species has been hit hard as climate change continues to eat away at their environment.

"This film presents a drastic cry for immediate attention and instills our viewer with hope, illuminating present-day efforts for a brighter future," the film description says.

"Detroit Hives" showcases a young couple who have been purchasing vacant lots in Detroit and repurposing them as bee farms.

"The theme this year might be hope," Kennedy said. "As we get through this time and to make the world a better place we have to look forward and keep going."

For more information about the festival, visit bit.ly/3jHoOdF.

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Topping out ceremony held for Orange County Museum of Art

BY ANDREW TURNER

The Orange County Museum of Art is one step closer to realizing its expansion.

A topping out ceremony was held at the construction site on the Segerstrom Center for the Arts campus on Tuesday in Costa Mesa.

"The topping out ceremony is particularly significant in construction because it marks the pinnacle of the structural phase and the transition to the finishes, both exterior and interior," Carlos Gonzalez, the regional executive officer of Clark Construction Group, said.

Shortly before the final structural beam, signed by people affiliated with the project, was lifted and put into place, Gonzalez spoke about the symbolism of a live tree accompanying it to the top of the steel structure.

"It will carry a live tree that will signify life for the building, the cultural life of the art that will be housed in the museum, and life for those of us that have had the privilege of being a part of the project," Gonzalez added.

Brandon Welling, a managing partner of Morphosis, the designing architectural firm for the museum, said that he envisioned the building serving as the final piece of the puzzle to complete the Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

"The overall form of the building is kind of balancing creating iconic, strong presence for the museum in the complex, as well as being sensitive to the idea that we're integrating into an existing campus ... for the arts," Welling said. "We're trying to create something that is strong and has presence but is not overpowering to the other institutions and buildings that are located there."

Welling added that the new Orange County Museum of Art building will be



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

SOREN STUFKOSKY, left, and Brad McGlothlin watch as the final beam is put into place during Tuesday's ceremony at the construction site on the Segerstrom Center for the Arts campus.

approximately 53,000 square feet with about 25,000 square feet of galleries.

Segerstrom Center for the Arts already contains Segerstrom Hall, Segerstrom Concert Hall, Samueli Theater, Morr Theater and the South Coast Repertory.

Sarah Jesse, the interim director and CEO of the museum, told guests in attendance and those viewing the ceremony virtually that \$53 million of the expected \$75 million needed to complete the project has been raised.

She also said that nine lead donors have made donations of at least \$1 million to the project. The donors are Noella and James Bergener, Henry Davis and Christina Fazzone, Cynthia and Stephen Fry, Jennifer and Anton Segerstrom, Jim and Pam Muzzy, Jeri and Danny McKenna, Hal Struck, the Segerstrom Foundation and a donor who wants to remain anonymous.

The project, which broke ground in September 2019, is now expected to be completed in 2022, Jesse said.

"We've made so much progress on construction during this time of quarantine, and we've done it in a way that has kept all of the workers safe and healthy," Jesse said in an interview prior to the ceremony. "That's been a really important priority for us, and we're happy that we were able to achieve both a ton of progress and also keep everybody safe."

Mark Perry, the chairman of the board for Segerstrom Center for the Arts, marveled at the progress that has been made in a year often defined by the negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic, saying, "We've not wasted a crisis."

"We're getting closer to completing the eighth wonder of the world, and it really is," Perry added. "There's nowhere you have a collection [of the visual and performing arts] like this, so we're one day closer to making that happen, to celebrating together the completion."

Jesse also stated that the building will reflect the museum's values as a public space.

"It's a very community-oriented, very public building in the design itself," Jesse said. "It also provides us with this platform to showcase our world-class collection."

"The galleries for the first time will really allow us to show the collection at all times, and I think it will be a real discovery for our local community to learn what a wonderful and important community asset it is."

Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley appeared to find it inspiring to witness the investment in the community at a time of economic hardship.

"There's 350 people working on this site [and] more than \$73 million is being invested into our community with this project," Foley said. "The amount of investment in our local community is so fitting right now when we are really struggling economically, and so to see this progress continue, I think it gives hope for a better future."

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Family of a Black man fatally shot in San Clemente files claim against O.C. Sheriff's Department

BY ANH DO

The family of a Black homeless man fatally shot last month in San Clemente has filed a wrongful death claim against the Orange County Sheriff's Department, accusing deputies of targeting people of color and turning a jaywalking incident "deadly."

On the afternoon of Sept. 23, Kurt Andras Reinhold was crossing El Camino Real in front of Hotel Miramar while holding some peanuts and an iced tea.

Coming out, he began walking in the middle of the street, disrupting traffic, based on witness accounts and a video shot by a bystander.

Two deputies from the sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team approached Reinhold. An argument erupted. One of the officers, using his gloved hand, repeatedly tapped the victim's right shoulder, as Reinhold told him, "Stop touching me."

According to the video, one deputy ordered Reinhold to "go sit down," but Reinhold, appearing agitated, instead tried to pass the two men.

As the officers wrestled Reinhold to the ground, a voice, presumably a deputy's, cried out: "He's got my gun! He's got my gun!" Two shots are then heard. It is not possible to tell from the video whether Reinhold actually



Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

LATOYA REINHOLD, widow of Kurt Reinhold, reads a prepared statement at a news conference in Santa Ana on Tuesday after filing a wrongful death claim against the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

tried to grab a weapon.

Orange County sheriff's deputies do not wear body cameras. The department plans to roll them out over the next 18 months.

"These officers are supposedly

trained to deal with the homeless. They needed to deescalate the situation, rather than escalate it," said John Taylor, an attorney representing

See **Claim**, page R5

Need a mask on the go? Two Newport retirees have got you covered

BY MATT SZABO

The small clothesline sits in front of the house on Azure Avenue in Newport Beach.

It contains a handful masks, differing in colors and patterns.

No, there is no catch. Yes, they are all free for passersby to take, whether they're on their bicycles headed to the Back Bay or

just walking the dog in the Bayview Heights neighborhood.

Nancy Buck, 75, and Nita Livingston, 69, share the house. Retirement has brought the two women, who each have artistic backgrounds, an opportunity to sew masks together during the novel coronavirus pandemic. Since

See **Masks**, page R5



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

NEWPORT BEACH residents Nita Livingston, 69, left, and Nancy Buck, 75, have been sewing masks and putting them on a line in their front yard for anyone to take since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Santa Ana bans the county's only needle exchange program

BY BEN BRAZIL

A yearslong saga came to a quiet end Tuesday when the Santa Ana City Council unanimously banned hyperdermic needle exchanges without comment.

Since the city forced the closure of Orange County's first and only needle exchange program in early 2018, it has since held the position that used syringes threaten public health.

"Literally, right outside of City Hall, the needle exchange program was run largely by volunteers in the area between City Hall and the library," Santa Ana Councilman Jose Solorio said by phone. "I was always very painfully disappointed to see used drugs and needles all around City Hall, including in our local libraries and parks. And it was just something that was not safe for the community and children."

Advocates of the program say that access to clean needles keeps intravenous drug users from sharing syringes and spreading HIV, hepatitis C and other blood-borne pathogens.

"It's not surprising, but disappointing," said Mahan Naeim, a former member of the Orange County Needle Exchange. "We are in the middle of a deadly pandemic, on top of a deadly opiate epidemic. It was difficult for folks suffering from opiate dependence before the pandemic, now it's harder to access care."

Naeim said Orange is the largest county in the country without a needle exchange.

Such programs are en-

dorsed by the American Medical Assn., the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Solorio said the program drew homeless people and drug addicts to downtown.

"Santa Ana shouldn't be the only city in the county burdened with allowing this service in their community, and better strategies and disposal cost reimbursement provisions need to be developed to keep dirty needles away from libraries, parks and schools," Solorio said.

Naeim agreed that other cities aren't shouldering their share of the responsibility.

"We are pushing people further away from the care they need and deserve, but this seems to be a conscious effort from a number of cities in Orange County," Naeim said. "So we're not surprised."

The saga of the OC Needle Exchange started in early 2018, when it was forced to shut down after Santa Ana city officials denied its permit application.

The OC Needle Exchange came back with a proposal for a mobile program in Costa Mesa, Santa Ana, Anaheim and Orange.

In response, the Board of Supervisors approved a resolution opposing the concept, but the state still approved the program in July 2018.

The county, Costa Mesa, Anaheim, Orange and Newport Beach sued to block the exchange. And in October 2019, a judge sided with the county and cities.

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CLAIM

Continued from page R4

Latoya Reinhold, the widow of Kurt Reinhold. She, along with the victim's son, 7, and daughter, 8, have filed a claim for wrongful death, statutory and punitive damages.

"How do we get from helping to ending up on the ground — the victim of gunfire — when he was unarmed?" Taylor continued.

At a news conference in Santa Ana on Tuesday, Latoya Reinhold read a short statement while surrounded by grieving relatives, among them, Judy Reinhold, Kurt Reinhold's tearful mother, along with his sister. Latoya Reinhold described her trauma and painted a picture of her husband as a devoted soccer coach who woke up early on Saturday mornings to participate in the game with his son.

"None of this makes any sense. It's a nightmare I'm living with each and every day," Latoya Reinhold said.

Taylor and Neil Gehlawat, another attorney representing the family, said that Kurt Reinhold,

who was 42, joins "an ever-growing mountain of evidence of unarmed black men and women shot by white officers."

"Jaywalking should not get you killed in Orange County. Being homeless should not get you killed in Orange County," Taylor added.

Kurt Reinhold struggled with mental illness and had been diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, Gehlawat said. At times, he took medication, and he had drifted from living with his mother or wife, whom he married in 2008, based in Inglewood and the Ladera Heights area of Los Angeles.

The father of two made his way to the beachfront town of San Clemente in September, drawn to it, "like many others" because of its beauty, Taylor said. The family is seeking "justice and transparency" from sheriff's officials and are awaiting the autopsy report, footage of the incident and radio traffic, along with the names of deputies to see if they have been involved in use-of-force situations in the past, Gehlawat said.

In an email sent

Wednesday to The Times, Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer said that his office assigns an independent medical examiner to conduct the autopsy and that there's a separate "set of specimens" available to the family to test independently.

Orange County Sheriff Don Barnes, who has said the Homeless Outreach Team had engaged with Reinhold many times previously to direct him to resources, issued a statement responding to the family.

"The Orange County Sheriff's Department extends our condolences to the family of Mr. Reinhold for their loss," the statement read.

"Every time law enforcement contact escalates to the use of deadly force, it is tragic for the family, the deputies and the community. It is vitally important that we reserve judgment until a full and complete investigation has been completed by the Orange County district attorney's office."

ANH DO writes for the Los Angeles Times.

MASKS

Continued from page R4

they put out the clothesline in March, Buck said more than 1,100 masks have been given away.

"Nancy has always said, 'Work is love made evident,'" Livingston said. "I think that's very true. If you're just idle, you don't have any satisfaction."

Buck, a longtime Newport Beach post office employee who also worked for 10 years in the Irvine Unified School District, said she already had a surplus of fabric before the pandemic. So she started making the masks with Livingston, a retired teacher in the Capistrano Unified School District.

The masks are made of double-layered cotton. On Wednesday morning, Bridgette Cobb passed by on her bicycle, stopping to meet the women and take a

mask.

"I think it's wonderful," said Cobb, who lives on the Balboa Peninsula. "It's a wonderful act of generosity. The world needs more people like that."

The mask-making process is simple enough.

"I work at one end of the table and Nita works at the other," Buck said. "We've kind of got an assembly line. She's better at some parts of it, putting together the fabric and the elastic. Then she passes it over to me, and I do the outside, then I pass it back to her and she does the folding. She passes it back to me, and I sew up the ends. We can turn out about 25 [masks] in about an hour and a half."

There are also decorative rocks with positive messages available in front of their house. Those are also free to take.

Those who pick up the masks have showed their

appreciation in different ways.

"We've had people that have left fresh produce in a bag, just clothes-pinned to the line," Livingston said. "Some people have left \$5, some people have left a little Starbucks card. Some people just leave a note that says, 'Thank you so much.'"

In fact, Buck said that enough money has been left to help them purchase a second sewing machine that aids in the masks' production.

Buck and Livingston said they are planning to keep producing masks for the foreseeable future.

"It's so rewarding to make a connection with people," Buck said. "I think it's kind of a win-win. We're both artists, and we love being creative. It's a way for us to express our creativity and help other people."

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SURFER

Continued from page R1

tions.

In an emailed response to questions, a spokesman for A360 Media said that “due to pandemic’s economic impact on the industry and the cancellation of live events, staff furloughs and the suspension of operations for some brands are necessary for the time being.”

Bass, executive director of the Boardroom surfboard show in Del Mar and a longtime industry executive, recalled that the first issue of the magazine contained a photo of a surfer paddling out toward a glassy pristine wave. It became a signature of what the magazine was about.

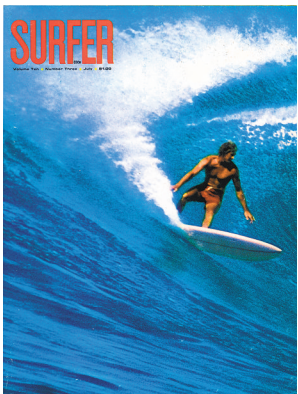
“That kind of set the bar for this ideal of going out and finding your own little slice of heaven,” Bass said. “Searching for that, this idea of adventure, of freedom, of individuality, of being different, a little bit of counterculture, all of those things. That is what Surfer magazine was draped in. It was very important.”

John Severson, an art teacher, photographer, writer and cartoonist, founded Surfer magazine to promote a new surf film, said Steve Pezman, who worked at the magazine for 20 years before founding the Surfer’s Journal. The artistry of the magazine captured readers’ imaginations, he said.

“Surfing is sort of the artful relationship between humans and the ocean,” he said. “So all the photos and stuff about surfboards, all of it has an art factor to it that gives it a level of being that goes beyond most topical magazines.”

The quality of the articles also brought in loyal readers. “Writing about surfing tends to become unintentionally philosophical because waves come and go, but they represent benchmarks to your skill and your life,” Pezman said. “People write about them in a special way.”

The magazine’s end has sparked nostalgia among its many readers over the years, particularly for those



San Diego Union-Tribune

JOHN SEVERSON realized that surfers would devour any image of a wave or a surfer.

in the pre-Instagram, pre-YouTube generations.

“Surfer was the bible when I started surfing in 1977 in Imperial Beach at the age of 13,” the town’s mayor, Serge Dedina, said. “Every page was scrutinized repeatedly. I subscribed in 1978. I still have all my issues.

“Surfer printed my letter to the editor about the proposed Imperial Beach breakwater project back in 1980 (stopping that project was the first victory for the Surfrider Foundation) as the president of the Mar Vista High School Surf Club,” Dedina continued. “The seminal articles by Craig Naughton and Kevin Peterson influenced me to become a surf adventurer starting in high school and college. I will miss Surfer and always be thankful for its outward-looking focus on exploring the world, being a global ambassador for surfing, protecting the coast ocean, and pursuing lifelong ocean stoke.”

Townend, the ActivEmpire president, wonders where young surfers will turn for inspiration today without publications like Surfer.

“Last week, there was great hurricane surf on the East Coast. There were pictures on social media. But they were there and gone,” he said. “Surfer magazine had permanence. You’d rip out its pictures and pin them to a wall. Today’s groms don’t have that.”

MIKE FREEMAN and **GARY ROBBINS** write for the San Diego Union-Tribune.



Photo by Donna LaPorte

MULTIPLE TYPES of pizza are served up by Steel Pan.

RODEO 39

Continued from page R1

Almquist said it was Pho who reached out to him.

“There were people early on that just kind of got what we were doing,” he said.

Skin Design already has a wait list, and Rodeo’s grand opening isn’t even until Oct. 17-18.

“It’s insane, the stuff they do,” Almquist said of Pho’s team. “It’s art.”

That’s why he put Skin Design in a glass box. So you can watch the artists at work.

Stanton’s first craft brewery, Bearded Tang, is also here behind glass, so you can watch them make the beer — and then drink it. There are 24 on tap.

Almquist said he wanted

“an element of voyeurism,” just like you find at a real rodeo.

“People like to people watch,” he said.

There are plenty of places to do it here. All sorts of seating is scattered throughout the 41,000-square-foot space, both inside and out, from counter seating to cozy cafe tables with scoop chairs.

The hard part won’t be finding a table, but deciding what you’re going to bring to that table.

There are 18 food choices, and they’re all over the map, from Vietnamese street crepes and Japanese ramen to Detroit deep-dish pizza, Hawaiian-style Kimchi Butter Chicken Katsu, artisanal vegan donuts and Filipino rice bowls.

“We wanted diversity,”

VOTERS

Continued from page R1

A member of the media at the event brought up Orange County’s troubled past with poll watchers.

In the 1980s, Republican-backed security guards hounded Latino voters in Santa Ana.

“We will protect the vote,” Spitzer said. “... Rhetoric cannot control this election; the facts will control this election.”

Beginning Oct. 30, Kel-

ley said about 300 county employees will be in the field and can respond to voters’ concerns.

Voters can report issues by calling the registrar at (714) 567-7600, the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center at (714) 289-3949 and the Secretary of State’s office at (800) 345-8683.

HOW TO TRACK YOUR BALLOT

Voters have the option to mail in their ballots or drop them off at one of



FIKA FIKA IS an ice cream shop opening in Rodeo 39.

Courtesy of Rodeo 39

Almquist said.

Vendors include Kra Z Kai’s, OC’s first Laotian BBQ spot. Beleaf Burgers sells vegan takes on popular fast-food sandwiches like McDonald’s Filet-O-Fish (their version of In-N-Out’s Single is some kind of trickery). At the artisan butcher shop Primal Cuts you can pick your own steak or burger from the case and have them cook it for you the way you like.

Rodeo 39 also has eight pop-up shops, currently selling street-wear inspired clothes, kitschy sunglasses, handmade jewelry and retro cowgirl handbags (from a real traveling rodeo vendor).

Stanton Councilman Rigoberto Ramirez said city leaders and residents are loving the Rodeo lime-light. “It checks off all the boxes,” he said. “It gives us an opportunity to be relevant and change the perception of the city. And as a 25-year Stanton resident I’m stoked, because now I have somewhere to go and entertain family and

friends, as well.”

He said the project seed was planted nearly six years ago when the city began holding what would eventually be 102 neighborhood meetings to decide Stanton’s future.

“People said, ‘Ya know, what we need is a point of destination, where we can play, hang out, have fun.’ ”

Next city leaders did 280 business visits.

“And the businesses said ‘We need a destination point. When we talk to customers, they really don’t know where Stanton is.’ ”

The crazy thing is, said Ramirez, is that every day roughly 79,000 cars pass the Beach Boulevard exit where Rodeo 39 now sits. That’s 79,000 opportunities that Stanton missed every day — until now.

In the eyes of Mayor Dave Shawver: “We have just added a crown jewel to the city of Stanton.”

LORI BASHEDA is a contributor to Times Community News.

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