

Daily Pilot

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Footage of fatal police shooting released

Seal Beach police shared details of the Jan. 16 incident, when officers shot, killed an armed man outside a home.

BY SARA CARDINE

Seal Beach police last week released officer body camera footage and an audio clip of a 911 call made from a local residence on Jan. 16 that ultimately led to the fatal police shooting of a 47-year-old man.

Two officers reportedly fired shots during the incident, still being investigated by the Orange County district attorney's office and under internal review.

In a video posted on social media on Friday, Chief Michael Henderson and Capt. Nick Nicholas offer a rundown of events that took place shortly after 9:30 p.m. that night on the 100 block of Old Ranch Road, when a woman called the police to report a man outside her home.

"There's somebody banging on my door," an unidentified woman is heard telling a 911 dispatcher in the recording, explaining her two children are also in the house. "Oh my god — he's kicking my door in."

Although the caller says she doesn't initially recognize the individual, she soon after identifies him to the dispatcher, describing him as an ex-boyfriend against whom she'd previously filed a restraining order.

In the video, which provides edited segments of footage, police

See **Footage**, page A2

Cartwright named Newport's new chief of police

The 21-year-veteran has been the department's acting head since former Chief Jon Lewis left the role in December.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Newport Beach officially has its newest police chief.

City Manager Grace Leung on Monday announced the appointment of Joe Cartwright, who had been acting as the interim chief of police while the city searched for its new hire.

Cartwright has been with the department for 21 years, according to the city, and has held a number of different positions within it prior to his appointment as the interim chief in late December of last year.

"It is an honor to serve the Newport Beach community with such an outstanding team of officers, professional staff and volunteers," Cartwright said in an email. "I am very grateful for this opportunity and look forward to continuing the Newport Beach Police Department's commitment to public safety excellence and community engagement."

Cartwright will formally step into his role next month, which will make him the 11th police chief in the department's history.

See **Chief**, page A2

HOAG CLASSIC



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

ERNIE ELS smiles as he holds the Hoag Classic trophy after winning the tournament at Newport Beach Country Club on Sunday.

Ernie Els storms back to win his second Hoag Classic title

BY MATT SZABO

Professional golfer Ernie Els is nicknamed "The Big Easy."

Winning PGA Tour Champions titles, though, has been anything but easy for the rangy South African.

He came into this weekend's Hoag Classic with 33 top-10 finishes on the tour, yet just two trophies.

Els continues to find Newport Beach very much to his liking.

He fired a final-round 65 to win the Hoag Classic for the second time, in wet conditions at Newport Beach Country Club.

The last day of winter brought a misty light rain for much of the round. But it didn't seem to trouble Els, a World Golf Hall of Fame member.

He shot 13-under-par for the tournament, a stroke better than Steve Stricker and Doug Barron at -12. Two of his three Champions Tour wins have come in Newport Beach. He also won the Hoag Classic in 2020, and led heading into the final round last year.

On Sunday, Els, 53, became the fourth two-time winner of the tournament, joining Hale Irwin, Jay Haas and Fred Couples.

See **Classic**, page A4



HOAG CLASSIC champion Ernie Els chips onto the 15th green at Newport Beach Country Club on Sunday. Els shot 13-under-par for the tournament to win his second Hoag Classic title.

Flooding shuts down H.B. stretch of PCH again

BY ERIC LICAS

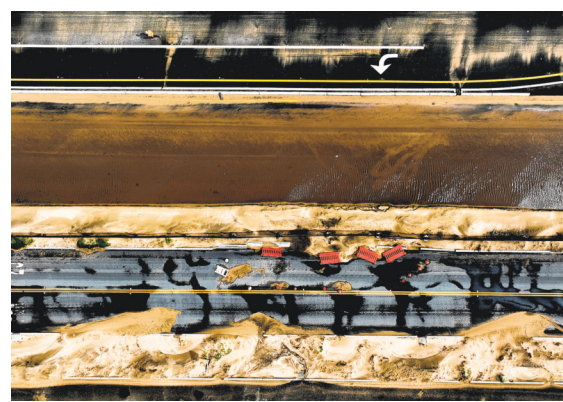
More rain in the forecast means a flood-prone section of Pacific Coast Highway in Huntington Beach near Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve will remain shut down again at least through Wednesday, and officials were searching for a solution for the recurring traffic issue.

Showers that began Tuesday should dump an inch or more of rain on most portions of Orange County before conditions dry out

on Thursday, according to the National Weather Service. They will be accompanied by thunder, winds gusting between 50 mph to 60 mph along the coast, and daytime highs on Wednesday of 59 degrees in Costa Mesa and Fountain Valley, 58 degrees in Huntington Beach and Newport Beach, and 57 degrees in Laguna Beach.

That may be enough rain to submerge the lowest lying por-

See **Flooding**, page A2



A RUNNER races along the Pacific Coast Highway. Both sides of PCH were closed due to flooding between Warner Avenue and Seapoint Street in H.B.



A CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT of Transportation worker patrols with a view of both sides of the closed Pacific Coast Highway, due to flooding between Warner Avenue and Seapoint Street in Huntington Beach last week. The same stretch was closed again this week as another storm swept through.

Photos by Allen J. Schaben
Los Angeles Times

Man pleads guilty to crash in Costa Mesa area that killed Newport Beach woman and her dog

BY PAUL ANDERSON

A 33-year-old Riverside man pleaded guilty Friday and was immediately sentenced to 15 years to life in prison for a deadly crash that killed a woman and her dog in an unincorporated area near Costa Mesa.

Ali Zohair Fakhreddine pleaded guilty to second-degree murder, hit-and-run with permanent and serious injury and driving drunk.

Fakhreddine killed 72-year-old Cleusa Moraes Coffman of Newport Beach and her Shih Tzu, Bob, on Sept. 6, 2020.

Fakhreddine was charged with second-degree murder instead of vehicular manslaughter because he was convicted of drunken driving in a Rancho Cucamonga court, in San Bernardino County, in 2008 and in Orange County in 2015.

When drivers are sentenced for drunken driving they are warned they could face a murder charge instead of a manslaughter charge if they are involved in a deadly collision while driving under the influence.

The victim was crossing Irvine Avenue at Mesa Street with her dog in a crosswalk when she was struck by a 2014 Hyundai about 6:34 a.m., according to the California Highway Patrol.

Fakhreddine ran a red light at the intersection before hitting the victim and her dog and not stopping, the CHP reported.

Riverside police found Fakhreddine passed out behind the wheel of his car, which sustained front-end damage, according to the Orange County District Attorney's Office. When the officers attempted to rouse him he drove off, prosecutors said.

The defendant had a blood-alcohol level of .10, as well as fentanyl and marijuana in his system, Deputy Dist. Atty. Brian Orue said.

The sons of the victim attempted to write an impact statement to Orange

County Superior Court Judge Kimberly Menninger, but found it to be too painful an exercise, Orue said. They wrote the following statement: "We are not going to write any statement to the court. We thought about it and it's just too painful and at the same time brings a lot of anger and frustration about the tragedy and this whole process. I tried writing but it brought back so many emotions that I had to stop."

The defendant offered to apologize publicly to the family, but that was rejected, Orue said.

Fakhreddine broke down several times as he struggled to make a statement to

the judge.

"There hasn't been a day gone by that I haven't prayed for your family," Fakhreddine said to the victims, who did not attend the hearing.

"Every day, I pray to God to take away your pain, your grief," he added. "I'm sorry for the mental, physical and spiritual harm I caused. I apologize for the actions I'm responsible for, for taking the precious life of [the victim]. I wish I could take them back. The decision I made that day will haunt me. I have no excuse. I have to live with that. I will pray for you to the end of my days."

Menninger said, "I hope and pray there is some

comfort in your words" for the family.

"In these cases, there is no winner. Everyone suffers," Menninger said.

Deadly crashes involving alcohol or drugs usually involve "decent people who make a horrible mistake," Menninger said, adding that the defendants still have to pay the consequences.

The judge said the defendant's plea and apology should be "impactful" when he appears before a parole board.

The defendant was given credit for 922 days so far in custody.

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FOOTAGE

Continued from page A1

arrive at the property and are shown on one officer's body-worn camera engaging with the individual, later identified as Michael Bernard Emch Jr, 47, of Irvine.

Officers ask Emch to show his hands, identify himself and explain his relationship to the 911 caller. When he later fails to obey commands to raise his hands or take a seat, at least one officer is shown with his gun drawn.

Police threaten to use a taser to subdue Emch, seen with one hand inside his pants pocket, if he does not comply. As he makes his way back toward the residence, officers tase him and fire several rounds.

At one point, Emch is heard saying to police, "Finish me off" and is told to shut up. Orange County Fire Authority paramedics were called to the scene and transported Emch to nearby Hoag Hospital, where he died from injuries roughly one hour later, a



Courtesy of Christie Applefield

MICHAEL BERNARD EMCH, seen in an undated photo, was fatally shot by Seal Beach police officers the night of Jan. 16. Last week, the SBPD released footage of the incident.

family member confirmed Tuesday.

Nicholas explains on the video that Emch was found in possession of a loaded firearm that had been taken from concealment during the shooting. Spent shell casings from that gun, and

another not belonging to police, were retrieved from the scene.

"A pointed metal weapon and three knives were located on his person. Additionally, a loaded magazine was located on Mr. Emch at the hospital," Nicholas says,

describing how a restraining order forbade Emch from being within 100 yards of the 911 caller or her residence.

SBPD spokeswoman Lt. Julia Clasby said the city has not recorded a fatal police shooting in more than

20 years, and created a "critical incident debriefing" video.

The act was a response to California's Assembly Bill 748, which requires law enforcement agencies to share body-worn camera footage of most police shootings and other serious uses of force with the public within 45 days of the action taking place.

"It's an opportunity for us to take control of our own narrative and give that context and clarification on the body-worn camera footage in our own voice without compromising any of the investigations," Clasby said Tuesday.

"We have nothing to hide — this is part of our ongoing mission and message of transparency with our community."

The spokeswoman said the video was shared with Emch's family members ahead of the Friday release, a fact his sister, Christie Applefield, confirmed Tuesday.

Applefield said her brother, an electrician by trade, had been in town staying at a nearby motel to

be close to a paying job and may have been dealing with mental illness when the shooting occurred.

"I think there was a little mental illness going on, and I think that was overlooked by doctors," the Carlsbad resident said Tuesday, reflecting on how shocked she and her family were to hear her brother on video pleading to be killed.

"They shot so many times that, for somebody who was feeling so bad, it may have been easier in his mind (to die). All of us were just so heartbroken that had to be the end of it." She added that she and the family are relieved no one else was injured that night.

Applefield said the Seal Beach Police Department website indicates officers learn de-escalation strategies as part of their training and wonders if that was a consideration the night of her brother's death.

"If it had been de-escalated quickly, could it have turned out differently?" she wondered aloud.

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CHIEF

Continued from page A1

Cartwright succeeds former Chief Jon Lewis and will oversee a department of more than 200 full-time employees across four divisions and a number of specialized units.

"Chief Cartwright brings a tremendous breadth and depth of public safety leadership experience to this position," Leung said in the statement announcing the hire. "He is a proven leader with a passion for providing the best possible police services to the Newport Beach com-

munity."

Cartwright started his career with the Los Angeles Police Department in 1999 but would leave three years later for Newport Beach in 2002. He has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's in organizational management in addition to being a graduate of several advanced law enforcement courses and being a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He currently is chairman on the board of directors for the Newport Beach 1st Battalion, 1st Marines Foundation.

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Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

A COUPLE walk past a flooded playground section of the park including the swings, bench and open play area at Edison Community Park in Huntington Beach as a series of storms began hitting the Southland on Monday.

FLOODING

Continued from page A1

tions of Pacific Coast Highway between Warner Avenue and Seapoint Street beneath well over 6 inches of water, Caltrans spokeswoman Angela Madison said. And that much moving liquid is capable of washing most vehicles off

the road. "This is all about safety," Madison said. "We don't want anyone swept away."

People trying to pass through the area will have to find alternate routes. In the meantime, Caltrans is working with officials from the U.S. Geological Survey and Huntington Beach Parks and Recreation to come up with a long-term

solution.

California has seen an especially wet start to 2023, which has had a positive impact in the face of a years-long drought throughout the state. But unprecedented storms in the region have also caused millions in property damage in Orange County. One Newport Beach house had to be demolished last week

after soil loosened by recent storms gave way in a landslide, destroying its backyard.

Rainy weather has also wrought havoc on the roads. Caltrans has had to close the same section of Pacific Coast Highway about five times so far this year, Madison said.

"It's been a while since we've had to close it down this many times," she said.

A flood watch issued by the National Weather Service remains in effect through Wednesday afternoon. Officials in Costa Mesa, Seal Beach and other communities were urging residents in flood-prone areas to be prepared and have made sandbags to help people divert water away from their property and toward storm drains. And people who go out in the storm are cautioned to watch out for blown debris and falling trees or power lines.

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



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

FORMER CHAMP Bernhard Langer follows the flight path of his ball as he hits from behind a tree on the 11th hole on Sunday. Langer was one of six golfers tied for seventh.

CLASSIC

Continued from page A1

"I just love the place," Els said with a smile after accepting the championship trophy and \$300,000 first-place check, and posing for pictures in a Hoag doctor's jacket as per tradition. "It fits my eye. The grass, the weather, the whole place, just feel at home here. I've always played well over here in California, winning at Riviera and so on. "Yeah, hopefully they keep this tournament going for at least the next six years."

Barron missed a 5-foot birdie putt on No. 18, which would have forced a playoff, wide right. He tied with Stricker, who earned a more-than-solid finish his first time playing the Hoag Classic.

"Challenging little course, you know, because the greens are tough and tough to putt," Stricker said. "You've got a lot of short irons in your hand, but it was hard to get the ball close. But it was fun, it was a great area, fans came out. It was a fun week."

Dicky Pride, Rob Labritz and Miguel Angel Jimenez

finished tied for fourth at -11. Bernhard Langer, the Saturday leader who was trying to earn his PGA Tour Champions record 46th title, carded a final-round 73.

Langer was one of six golfers at -10, tied for seventh.

"The south breeze was a little harder than the westerly breeze for me, made certain holes a lot longer and difficult, and it was cold and wet," Langer said. "But basically came down to the putter, I didn't putt well."

Els, who came into Sunday tied for 14th place, made seven birdies on his round to rally for the title. That included two birdies in the final three holes.

On the par-five No. 18, he found a cross bunker on the left, leading to a difficult third shot. But he got it on the green, then made the birdie putt.

"I think that [third shot] is the shot of the tournament for me," Els said. "Just really raining a bit and I tried to get the second shot as close as possible to the green ... I had a 63-yard shot, which is not a very nice yardage to have, but luckily the greens-keeping's great, it was a nice firm lie. That

shot, we don't really practice those shots, we're kind of going on instinct there."

Els pumped his fist after the final birdie, taking the outright lead into the clubhouse, though he had to wait for the last group of Barron, Langer and Jimenez to finish.

None could catch Els, a former world No. 1 who won four majors on the PGA Tour.

"Getting close and not winning gets a little [old], you know," Els said. "Then having a chance today and missing the short putt [on 15], they were kind of not great feelings coming through me. Then I made the putt on 16 and 18, so good to win."

"Finishing the way I did ... I haven't finished that way for two years, that's why I haven't won. Those are the kind of things I used to do when I was winning events when I was in my prime. So I want to get those feelings back, and this was a really great start."

Like Langer, Newport Beach resident Couples fired a final-round 73. He finished at eight-under, tied for 15th place.

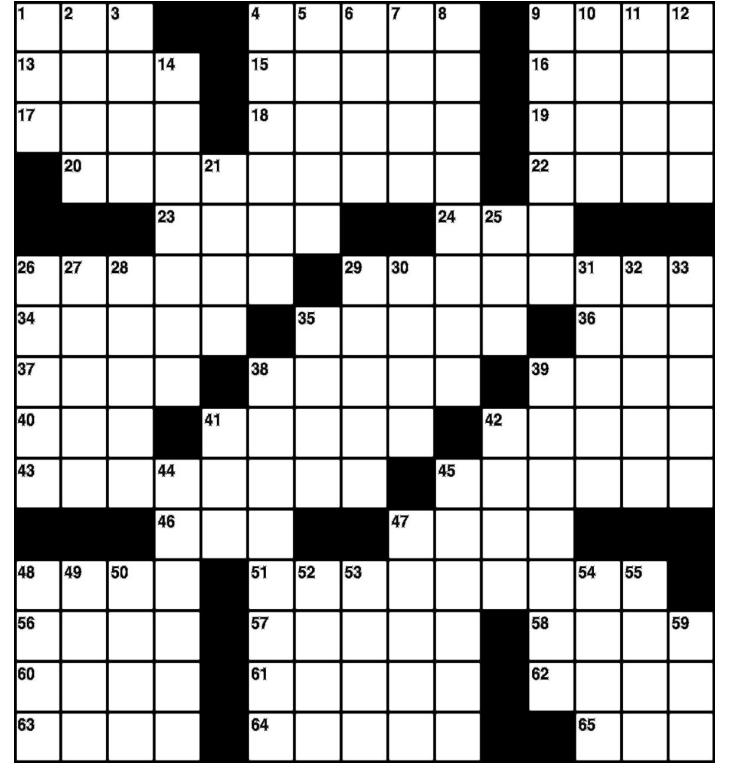
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THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

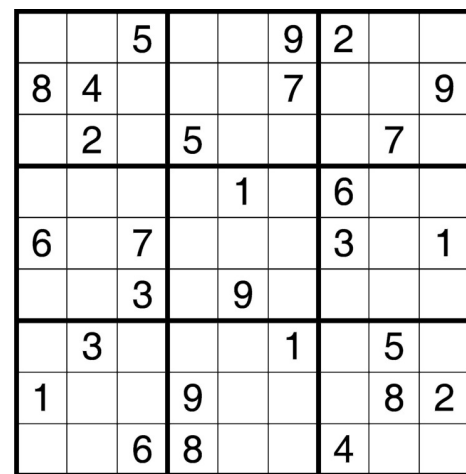
- 1 Desert fruit
- 4 " _ home is his castle"
- 9 As easy as falling _ log
- 13 Stunt pilot's maneuver
- 15 Social no-no
- 16 Be lazy
- 17 Ogden's state
- 18 21st-century U.S. president
- 19 _ in on; visit
- 20 Statue material
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- 23 _ as; for example
- 24 "One Day _ Time"
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- 34 Sciatica symptoms
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- 37 Breathing organ
- 38 Finish _; race endings
- 39 Toward the _; aft
- 40 " _ all downhill from here"
- 41 Gave a monetary penalty to
- 42 Sicker than before
- 43 Many a TikTok user
- 45 Widen; enlarge
- 46 Put _ good word for; recommend
- 47 Collapsed
- 48 Trendy
- 51 Religious house
- 56 Neutral _; area between armies
- 57 Elude capture by
- 58 Regrets
- 60 Richards & Blyth
- 61 Adamant refusal
- 62 Suddenly go nuts
- 63 Take a nap
- 64 Lovers' rendezvous



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.



For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A2.

65 Opposite of forward

- DOWN**
- 2 Letter from Greece
 - 3 Hockey score
 - 4 Bombard
 - 5 Swamp
 - 6 Border on

- 7 Alaska city
- 8 Choir members
- 9 Out-of-date
- 10 Golfer's shout
- 11 Move along smoothly
- 12 Weissshorn's range
- 14 _ out; eliminating gradually

- 21 McDonald's shelf supplies
- 25 Paving substance
- 26 Go separate ways
- 27 _ cuisine; fine food
- 28 Washer cycle
- 29 Not as cuckoo
- 30 Open-_; observant
- 31 "Porgy and Bess," for one
- 32 Rump _; cut of beef
- 33 Shopping binge
- 35 Outfielder's cry
- 38 Connective tissue
- 39 Hair setter's needs
- 41 Aficionado
- 42 Droop in the heat
- 44 Most cordial
- 45 Abandon
- 47 Loses color
- 48 Old Russian title
- 49 Improve, as a skill
- 50 Hotels
- 52 " _ the Rainbow"
- 53 Shade of blue
- 54 Gallops
- 55 Slangy reply
- 59 007, for one

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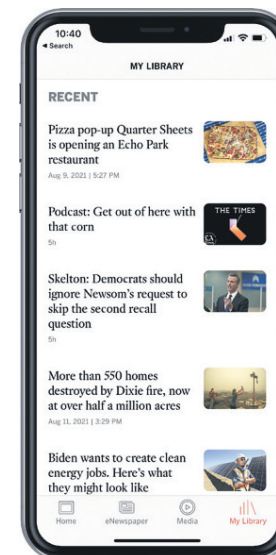
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