

# Daily Pilot

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Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**DEONNE CULLEN**, a vocational nurse from Hoag Medical Group, administers a Pfizer vaccine shot to a client at the Oasis Senior Center clinic.

## Newport opens up its first vaccine clinic for seniors

BY LILLY NGUYEN

As the effort to vaccinate residents throughout Orange County continues, Newport Beach stepped up Tuesday afternoon to help fill the gap for residents who can't make it to vaccine super points-of-dispensing sites.

The city held its first community vaccine clinic at the OASIS Senior Center in partnership with Hoag Presbyterian Hospital, which allocated about 300 doses of the Pfizer vaccine to be distributed to Newport Beach residents older than 65.

Newport Beach spokesman John Pope said city staff reached out to eligible individuals via phone and email and signed them up for appointments.

City officials said there are currently no plans to make the clinic

ongoing. Second doses are scheduled for April 13.

"Today is an important moment for this community and Hoag is privileged to partner with the city of Newport Beach as we provide COVID-19 vaccines to the senior population," said Marcy Brown, the senior vice president and chief hospital operations officer at Hoag in a statement, "especially those who have had limited access to obtaining it."

"We are proud of the passion and commitment of our staff and our city partners to vaccinate community members in need," Brown said. Orange County is currently vaccinating those over the age of 65, first responders and those working in healthcare,

See *Clinic*, page A4



**LIFEGUARD CARLY CHRISTIAN**, left, and Hoag nurse Cullen, right, help a patient to her feet at the Oasis Senior Center community vaccine clinic hosted by the city of Newport Beach on Tuesday.

## 'Days of Dialogue' arrive at Huntington Beach, F.V. highs

BY MATT SZABO

"We fear each other because we don't know each other." — Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Fountain Valley High School senior Ciello Chavarria said she thinks of this quote when she thinks of "Days of Dialogue," the weeklong virtual program being presented to students at Fountain Valley and Huntington Beach high schools this week.

Ciello is the FVHS Barons

Bridge Builders president this year, and the group is coordinating the Days of Dialogue effort along with Huntington Beach High Bridges students.

The two organizations are part of the larger Orange County Human Relations Bridges program, a nonprofit social justice organization in the county. Ciello is one of three student board members on the O.C. Human Relations Bridges board.

"It's really hard to not like

someone and to stereotype someone when you know them and you build compassion for them as a person," Ciello said.

"You begin to understand their experiences, and I think that's what Days of Dialogue is, learning about other experiences and sharing about your experiences. That's why it's been so meaningful to me, because it's been a space where I can learn about my peers on a very deep level and share about my own

experiences, and feel like I belong as well."

Day of Dialogue, which was canceled in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, is typically a daylong event at each of the high schools, Fountain Valley Bridge Builders advisor Janet Marquez said.

About 20 speakers would go classroom to classroom at Fountain Valley, while it was held at

See *Dialogue*, page A2

## Hashing out plan for pot sales, delivery

Costa Mesa planners approve an ordinance defining where and how retail cannabis businesses may operate.

BY SARA CARDINE

After multiple lengthy discussions on regulating retail cannabis businesses in Costa Mesa under Measure Q, passed by voters in November, the city's planning commission on Monday recommended a draft ordinance that will soon go before the City Council for approval.

The ordinance attempts to regulate where dispensaries and marijuana delivery services may operate inside commercial zones, stipulating they would not be allowed within 1,000 feet of child-care centers, K-12 schools, playgrounds and homeless shelters, identified as "sensitive uses."

Planning commissioners removed an explicit direction that retail marijuana sales and delivery may not take place within 600 feet of a youth center — locations where minors learn, study, congregate and socialize — choosing instead to defer to state laws that already imply as much.

Business owners must seek a conditional use permit to open storefronts or non-storefront delivery services which, under the new proposal, cannot open within 500 feet of another existing retail cannabis operation.

One exception would be businesses already processing, manufacturing or distributing cannabis in accordance with 2016 voter-approved Measure X. Should

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## ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**COMMENTARY: IN A POST-COVID WORLD, WHAT'S TO BECOME OF OUR SENIORS?** PAGE A3

**HIGH SCHOOL ROUNDUP: HUNTINGTON BEACH SOFTBALL OPENS SEASON WITH WIN OVER MARINA** PAGE A4

## Newport Beach-based LEAD OC receives \$25,000 donation

The grant was presented Monday by the nonprofit's co-founder Nate Fikse of Northwestern Mutual.

BY MATT SZABO

Nate Fikse may have moved to Colorado about 18 months ago, but he hasn't forgotten that he's from Orange County.

Fikse, an Esperanza High School graduate who went on to play football as a kicker at UCLA and in the NFL, is one of the co-founders of Newport Beach-based nonprofit LEAD OC.

On Monday, Fikse was back in town. The financial advisor presented a \$25,000 check to LEAD OC at the group's charity golf tournament at SeaCliff Country Club in Huntington Beach.

The donation was made as part of Fikse winning a Northwestern Mutual Community Service Award, one of 16 awarded nationwide by the financial company each year.

"It was a no-brainer," said Fikse, a financial advisor with Northwestern Mutual. "When we

originally created the organization, the focus was, how can we organically make sure that Orange County would be taken care of? How can we make sure that our legacy is going to be continued, not only when we're around but our kids?"

LEAD OC was founded in 2012. Co-founder Brian Davis, who lives in Huntington Beach, said the group seeks to alleviate financial burdens of nonprofits in the Orange County area that support children and military families. They seek to provide a platform for local executives to combine resources to support these organizations.

Because LEAD OC technically has no staff and is run on a volunteer basis, the overhead is nonexistent, Davis said.

All of the money raised at Monday's golf event, estimated at

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Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**JOEY PAULK**, left, Brian Davis, Nate Fikse, Ross Bourne and Gary Ghazarian come together on stage during a golf tournament at SeaCliff Country Club to raise money for LEAD OC, a Newport Beach-based nonprofit.



COMMENTARY | HOLLY HAGLER

In a post-COVID world, what's to become of our seniors?

To put it bluntly, a year ago this month, Orange County seniors became "ground zero" of the coronavirus crisis.

A year later, life was turned upside down for our county's older residents. Not only were COVID-19 deaths nationwide mostly among the older and vulnerable, but local support systems in place for seniors ceased to exist.

Older adults in O.C. were now homebound, even if they were previously active. And they were panicked — scared to go out of their homes — and when they did venture out to the store for essentials, they found store shelves bare.

So a year later, what is the new reality for our older citizens? The number of seniors in the county is projected to nearly double in the next 20 years, when one in four residents will be 65 or older.

Many will remain homebound. While younger seniors will return to active social lives, it will be much different for many older seniors. We're seeing some indications of continued fear — even with the vaccines — due to variants and other factors.

More seniors will choose to "age in place." Remaining at home was already a pre-pandemic trend, but there will be steady, increased demand for

more home- and community-based services.

Isolation and loneliness will increase. Prior to COVID-19, approximately 25% of older adults were socially isolated, and this number is growing. After months of sitting at home, many are now relying on walkers and wheelchairs, and we and our partners have observed cognitive deterioration, greater sadness and depression. Other seniors have rapidly deteriorated following the death of a spouse.

And yet there is hope. As a society, we can address these issues.

First, we must continue to expand safety-net services like those we provide at Meals on Wheels O.C. to fight food insecurity. To put this in perspective, we have seen a 600% increase in "grab and go" meals we are serving through senior centers, and we've increased the number receiving traditional home-delivered meals by 40%. The number of older adults living below the poverty level is growing, and these individuals will rely on us long past the pandemic.

Second, there is a growing need to provide social connections and supports for seniors. For all the reasons shared above, many older adults will remain homebound and participation at senior and adult day care centers will be slow to return. This means they will need food, visitation, physical therapy, access to senior-friendly technology and more.



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

VALERY MORENO with Above All Catering, delivers for Meals on Wheels Orange County to Lillian Modzeleski of Costa Mesa on March 3. The number of seniors in the county is projected to nearly double in the next 20 years.

For our part, Meals on Wheels O.C. makes visits and check-ins part of our delivered meals program — a meal and a visit, coupled with case management services. We have expanded our services to include telehealth calls, along with guidance and a listening ear for caregivers.

But we all must do more. A truly healthy society values its older people just as much as it values its children.

The open hearts and generosity of others have been a blessing to so many during this time. We must continue to reach out to our

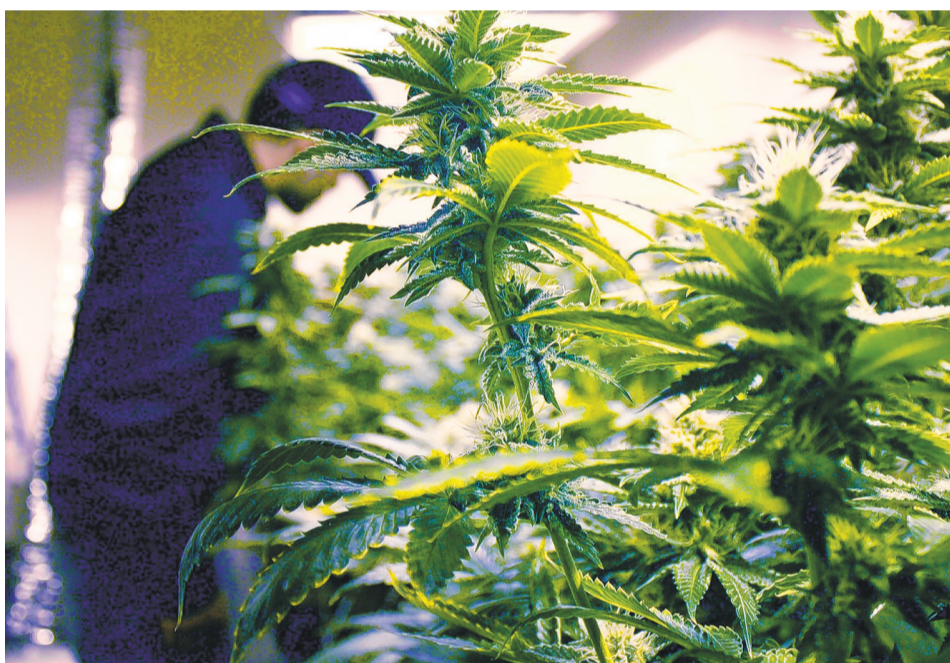
older neighbors — whether by helping an elder we rarely see any more or by volunteering at a senior center or nonprofit that serves older adults. There simply aren't enough government resources to do this without the involvement of the community.

We must also continue to innovate. The pandemic has already been an accelerant for change, including more flexibility with telehealth, relaxed regulations on social services like ours and greater ability to quickly launch new solutions. This must continue. And finally, additional funding

is needed and it needs to come from public and private sources. The recently passed stimulus funding is a much-appreciated boost, but our growing senior population will continue to need resources. Again, in this critical cause, government can only do and provide so much.

To learn how you can help, visit mealsonwheelsOC.org.

HOLLY HAGLER is president and CEO of Meals on Wheels Orange County, a major nonprofit senior nutrition and supportive services provider.



File Photo

MEASURE Q was approved in Costa Mesa, allowing for retail cannabis sales and delivery. On Monday, planning commissioners recommended a draft ordinance for City Council approval.

POT

Continued from page A1

those enterprises wish to add non-storefront delivery to their list of services, permitted owners could seek a minor conditional use permit subject to approval by a director, the commissioners determined.

A proposal to deny applications from property owners or businesses that have conducted illegal cannabis operations in Costa Mesa in the past five years was shaved down Monday to 180 days with the added provision such operators reimburse historic costs incurred by the city in seeking punitive actions.

"If an illegal cannabis dispensary is replaced by a legal cannabis dispensary, it seems like, irrespective of how long the illegal dispensary has been there, what we're trying to achieve," said Commissioner John Stephens.

The panel weighed the merits of additional impositions, such as capping the number of businesses allowed and considering a broader range of sensitive uses but decided against it.

"I'm not in favor of a cap, per se," said Chair Byron de Arakal. "If we have the 500-foot distance buffer, I think the number will kind of regulate itself." Vice Chair Kedarious Colbert said he favored the ordinance in general but could not support a provision in the document that would prohibit business owners from employing people convicted of a felony in the last seven years.

He said that, given the disproportionately high number of minority individuals who have incurred nonviolent drug charges, such a clause would continue to perpetuate unfair policies that have kept people who have paid their debt to society from becoming productive,

contributing citizens.

"The state of California has criminalized, imprisoned and punished a number of Black and brown people mainly for having nonviolent drug offenses, specifically possession of marijuana," Colbert said, adding such citizens may lack access to attorneys who can seek to have felony convictions withdrawn or expunged.

"Until we remove this [language], we create inherent barriers that we already know are barriers to people who don't have access," he said. "If we can't do that, I won't be supporting it."

Commissioner Jon Zich said he understood Colbert's reservations but believed eliminating the prohibition entirely could open the floodgate to violent felons and those with more serious or troublesome drug convictions.

Other commissioners ex-

pressed an interest in possibly minimizing the number of years former felons would have to wait to seek employment but said establishing such parameters seemed outside the purview of the council.

Instead, they advised Colbert to take his concerns directly to the City Council.

"I think there are smarter people and smarter legal minds, and talented guys like you, who are passionate about it and can drive the policy from a different angle," de Arakal told Colbert.

With 4-2 approval (Colbert and Stephens opposed the ordinance, while a late-arriving Commissioner Jenna Tourje abstained) the draft ordinance will be heard at a future meeting of the Costa Mesa City Council.

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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

Crossword grid with answers filled in: MUG, ASTAR, ALSO, PTAS, THOSE, LEAN, GERE, TATAS, CANE, PRESIDENT, ODDS, PACE, ROT, SPRIGS, FRACTURE, CRANE, FRUIT, SAN, RING, FEIGN, QUIT, ACT, VOTES, CURSE, PESTERED, COOPER, ITS, TART, TWIG, ASCENDING, RACE, KARAT, NOON, OVER, EROSE, GINA, TEDS, NICER, REP

Sudoku grid with numbers filled in: 8 3 2 4 5 7 6 1 9, 7 9 5 1 6 3 2 8 4, 6 4 1 9 8 2 7 5 3, 5 1 4 2 7 6 3 9 8, 9 7 8 5 3 1 4 2 6, 2 6 3 8 9 4 1 7 5, 4 5 7 6 2 9 8 3 1, 3 8 6 7 1 5 9 4 2, 1 2 9 3 4 8 5 6 7

Advertisement for South Coast Plaza dining featuring 'indoor DINING', 'OUTDOOR oasis', and 'TO-GO menus' with images of restaurant interiors and food.

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For more information about South Coast Plaza dining, visit southcoastplaza.com/reopen/dining/

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**HIGH SCHOOL ROUNDUP**

# Huntington Beach softball opens season with win over Marina

Devyn Greer struck out 12 over six innings to lead the Huntington Beach High School softball team to an 11-3 victory over visiting Marina on Monday in a season opener.

Emma Francisco had a home run and two runs batted in. Jaylene Duarte and McKenna Zehnder each drove in two runs, and Emma McCraw had a pair of doubles for the Oilers.

Huntington Beach's Zoe Prystajko also struck out the side in her one inning in the pitching circle.



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**HUNTINGTON BEACH'S** Devyn Greer celebrates during a CIF Southern Section Division 1 quarterfinal against Norco in May 2018. On Monday, Greer struck out 12 in a game against Marina.

**BASEBALL**

**Fountain Valley 6, Ocean View 2:** Chris Ouelette went three for four with two runs scored for the Barons in Monday's nonleague game at Fountain Valley High.

Ryder Brooks and Conner DeBenon each drove in two runs for Fountain Valley (2-0). Blake Wentz got the win,

allowing two earned runs in 5½ innings.

Wentz walked one and struck out three. Caleb Hohman went two

for three with a run scored for Ocean View (0-1-1).

**Huntington Beach 7, Marina 4:** Mark Muranaka went two for two with a run

batted in for the Oilers in Monday's nonleague season opener at Huntington Beach High.

Marina fell to 0-1-1.

**BOYS' VOLLEYBALL**

**Calvary Chapel 3, Pacifica Christian 1:** The host Eagles defeated the Tritons 25-17, 25-21, 16-25, 25-16 on Monday to take the rematch in a nonleague home-and-home set.

Pacifica Christian (1-1) will take on Cerritos Valley Christian at home on Wednesday at 7 p.m.

**BOYS' GOLF**

Huntington Beach won the Ayala Tournament on the South Course at Los Serranos Country Club in Chino Hills on Monday.

The Oilers had a team total of 393 strokes on the course, which has a par of 74.

Newport Harbor finished fourth with 397 strokes. Senior Caden Dewey led the Sailors in carding a two-over 76.

Sophomores Nick Thayer (78) and Kenny Swanson (79) and seniors John

Herold (80) and Sam Thayer (84) also competed for Newport Harbor.

**BOYS' SOCCER**

**Edison 3, Ocean View 0:** Luke Slavik had a goal and two assists to lead the visiting Chargers in Monday's nonleague match.

Will Hooper and Grayson Marquez also scored for Edison (4-1), which has won four in a row. Ethan Emerson added an assist.

**GIRLS' LACROSSE**

**Mater Dei 13, Edison 11:** Blakely Malpass and Sydney Hoggard each had four goals and one assist for the Chargers in Monday's nonleague match at home.

Ali Bryant, Anna Beachner and Gwen Ontiveros also scored for Edison (1-1), with Bryant adding two assists.

Cailien Gorsuch made three saves.

— From staff reports

**CLINIC**

Continued from page A1

food or education. It is also now distributing vaccines to those older than 16 with chronic or underlying health conditions at its super points-of-dispensing sites at Disneyland, the Anaheim Convention Center and Soka University.

As of last Thursday, data indicated that about 430,200 people had been fully vaccinated. Numbers are updated every Thursday.

On Tuesday, the Orange County Health Care Agency reported that current numbers meet the three requirements needed to move the county forward into the next tier in the state's reopening guidelines. That progression could happen as early as next week.

Tier assignments depend on a county's adjusted daily case rate for every 100,000 residents, its test positivity rate and its health equity quartile positivity rate.

Current data indicate that Orange County's adjusted daily case rate is now 3.5 for every 100,000 residents, and its positivity rate

has dropped to 2.1%. The health equity quartile positivity rate is 3.2%. Counties must log qualifying numbers for at least two weeks before they are able to progress into the next tier and have to remain in that tier for at least three weeks before they are able to move again.

Moving into the orange tier means bars that don't serve food will be able to reopen outdoors, and indoor capacities can increase for restaurants, museums, zoos, aquariums, places of worship, movie theaters, gyms and fitness centers.

Amusement parks will also be able to expand their capacities to 25%.

Orange County moved into the red tier on March 14.

Below are the coronavirus case counts and COVID-19 deaths for select cities in Orange County:

- Santa Ana: 44,466 cases; 810 deaths
- Anaheim: 41,364 cases; 815 deaths
- Huntington Beach: 10,462 cases; 205 deaths
- Costa Mesa: 8,799 cases; 125 deaths



**HOAG NURSE**

Kristina Kuzma administers a vaccine shot to a patient at the Oasis Senior Center vaccine clinic on Tuesday.

Don Leach Staff Photographer

- Irvine: 10,319 cases; 80 deaths
  - Newport Beach: 3,704 cases; 71 deaths
  - Fountain Valley: 3,445 cases; 80 deaths
  - Laguna Beach: 816 cases; six deaths
- Here are the case counts by age group, followed by deaths:
- 0 to 17: 25,963 cases; one death
  - 18 to 24: 34,513 cases; 10

- deaths
- 25 to 34: 49,721 cases; 48 deaths
- 35 to 44: 38,860 cases; 102 deaths
- 45 to 54: 40,050 cases; 291 deaths
- 55 to 64: 31,506 cases; 649 deaths
- 65 to 74: 15,679 cases; 902 deaths
- 75 to 84: 7,941 cases; 1,142

- deaths
- 85 and older: 5,366 cases; 1,490 deaths

Updated figures are posted daily at [ocovid19.ocaliforniahealthinfo.com/coronavirus-in-oc](https://ocovid19.ocaliforniahealthinfo.com/coronavirus-in-oc).

For information on getting tested, visit [ocovid19.ocaliforniahealthinfo.com/covid-19-testing](https://ocovid19.ocaliforniahealthinfo.com/covid-19-testing).

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