

Little Saigon Freeway dedicated

A stretch of the 405 Freeway in O.C. is renamed for the Vietnamese American community.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

A crowd gathered on the morning of April 18 to designate a stretch of the 405 Freeway as the Little Saigon Freeway.

“This event marks a historic moment for our community,” Assemblymember Tri Ta (R-Westminster) said to a crowd of other elected officials, community leaders and veterans at Carvana Westminster on Springdale Street. From the used car dealership, the audience viewed the portion of the road from Bolsa Chica Street to Bolsa Avenue, as the City of Westminster honored the local Vietnamese community for their contributions to Orange County’s cultural and economy.

The program featured speeches from Ta, as well as Assemblyman Ash Kalra (D-San José), Orange County clerk-recorder Hugh Nguyen, Westminster Mayor Chi Charlie Nguyen, former Assemblyman Van Tran and Trieu Ha, president of the United Viet-



James Carbone

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ASH KALRA (D-San José) of the 25th Assembly District, left, and Assemblymember Tri Ta (R-Westminster) of the 70th State Assembly District unveil the Little Saigon Freeway sign at a section of the 405 Freeway on April 18, 2025.

See **Freeway**, page A9

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Betty Martinez Franco makes history as first Latina elected to the Irvine City Council

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

The balance of power on the Irvine City Council is poised to shift when Betty Martinez Franco takes her seat next month.

The District 5 seat opened up when Larry Agran successfully ran for mayor in November while on the council. Martinez Franco, a Democrat, took an early lead in the April 15 special election — and never looked back. She won roughly 49% of the vote with former Irvine City Councilmember Anthony Kuo, a Republican, placing second with 41.5%.

“As a woman, as a minority, and as a person that was always told that there’s no chance that I could win a race in Irvine, I thought that I needed to be extra prepared,” Martinez Franco said. “I pledged to run the first opportunity that I got, and that first opportunity was the special election.”

Martinez Franco, who said she



BETTY MARTINEZ FRANCO prevailed in Irvine’s District 5 special election earlier this month.

Courtesy of Betty Martinez Franco

will be the first Latina ever seated on the City Council, has a backstory not common to most local politicians.

She immigrated to the U.S. from Mexico without authorization. She

See **History**, page A2

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Courtesy of The Market by the Meat Cellar

‘FAMILY APPROVED’: CHEF PREPARING MEAT DISHES AT SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO COOKING AND WINE CLASS PAGE A5

DECADES AFTER BOMB ATTACK, ARAB AMERICAN ADVOCACY GROUP OPENS NEW ANAHEIM OFFICE PAGE A2

APODACA: WE CAN’T AGREE ON EVERYTHING, BUT WE CAN ALL AGREE ON PENGUINS PAGE A6

Newport Beach teen pieces together swimwear line

NEWPORT BEACH teen Amanda Walcott created a swimwear company, Beachside Bikinis, while recovering from a cheerleading-related injury.



Courtesy of Amanda Walcott

BY SARA CARDINE

In the blink of an eye, life can change without warning, and perhaps nobody knows the truth of that better than Newport Beach 17-year-old Amanda Walcott.

Walcott was a happy-go-lucky varsity cheerleader at Newport Harbor High School, practicing her roundoff handspring tucks in November 2023, when something went horribly awry.

She fell down hard on her hand and so she went to see the team trainer to address the pain. It wasn’t until days later that she started to feel more serious symptoms.

It would take several weeks and numerous doctors appointments and consultations for her to pinpoint the cause of her primary

symptoms — sleeping up to 22 hours a day, severe headaches and stomach pains that made it nearly impossible to eat or drink.

A petite girl, just barely over 5-feet tall, her slight frame began to deteriorate as her weight plummeted from about 115 pounds to just 85.

One day, while viewing a video someone had taken on that fateful day’s practice, Walcott noticed she’d landed on her neck during the tumble.

“I’d actually landed on my neck and my head really bad,” she recalled Wednesday. “I had no clue that I’d even hit my head until I saw the video.”

Finally, a doctor gave the opinion that she could be suffering

See **Swimwear**, page A2

Decades after bomb attack, Arab American advocacy group opens new Anaheim office

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Helena Odeh still holds fond memories of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's first office in Santa Ana as a young girl before tragedy struck.

Her father, Alex Odeh, served as the nascent civil rights group's West Coast regional director during the early 1980s and took her to work with him a few times.

"He loved Triscuits," she recalled. "Those were his favorite crackers. He would always give me Triscuits when we were there."

But the office on 17th Street became a crime scene on the morning of Oct. 11, 1985.

A rigged pipe bomb exploded when Odeh, a prominent Palestinian American activist, opened the door to the office that fateful day. The blast claimed his life at 41.

The FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force descended on the scene by helicopter soon after, discussed the names of known Jewish extremists with Santa Ana police, but the bombing remains unresolved to this day.

Nearly 40 years later, a measure of resolve for the ADC arrived in Anaheim on Wednesday evening when the organization celebrated the opening of its first Southern California office since the attack.

"The objective of the bombing was to keep us out of existence in Orange County and everywhere



ADC CHAIR Dr. Safa Rifka, center, thanks Diane Shammass during the opening of the civil rights group's new Anaheim office.

else," said Abed Ayoub, ADC's national executive director. "But the opposite is happening. We're continuing to grow."

Arab American activists, community leaders and Odeh family members gathered for the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which marked a culmination of a longtime goal for the ADC's trio of chapters in Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego coun-

ties.

A new office in Anaheim not only serves as a central hub for the organization's regional chapters, but also joins the civic and cultural heart of the city's Little Arabia. The ADC teamed with other community groups in successfully advocating for its official designation.

The ADC, which counts nearly 130,000 members nationwide, has maintained

an active presence in Southern California throughout the decades and hosts annual banquet fundraisers in O.C. every October to honor Odeh's legacy.

Its members hope the office opens the door to even more organizing possibilities as a legal clinic and community resource.

Dr. Souhail Toubia, an ADC-OC board member, mentioned the group is

continuing its historic mission of correcting stereotypes about Middle Eastern communities while looking toward new issues to tackle.

"We're working on business certification changes where Arab Americans are not considered, at this time, as disadvantaged minorities," said Dr. Souhail Toubia, an ADC-OC board member. "They are considered white. We're missing

out on a lot of opportunities to benefit from major contracts at the state and federal level."

A team of part-time paralegals and volunteers power the office for now.

As part of its plans for the future, the ADC hopes to add full-time attorneys and staff members to help carry out economic empowerment opportunities and pro bono legal services for hate crime and discrimination cases.

"The office is going to be an open door to the community to meet its needs," Ayoub said. "It's a demand that we've heard. We are working with other groups to provide the services that aren't available yet to the community out here."

As the 40th anniversary of Odeh's murder nears in October, the ADC continues to push the U.S. Attorney's Office to make the case a priority.

For Helena, who is also an ADC-OC board member, the Santa Ana building that once housed her father's old office is traumatic reminder of the cold case. In Anaheim, though, she imagines new possibilities, ones that ensure her father's legacy of activism on behalf of Arab Americans continues.

"He would be so excited to know that there would be another office," Helena said. "This would be a great day for him."

gabriel.sanroman
@latimes.com
Twitter: @gsanroman2

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HISTORY

Continued from page A1

Californian Hotel when it first opened in 2001.

Martinez Franco originally moved to a Section 8 apartment in Irvine more than 20 years ago with the help of Human Options, an Irvine-based nonprofit that works with domestic violence survivors. In 2016, she became a U.S. citizen.

Later on, the pandemic and its unequal strain on the Latino community motivated her to enroll at USC, where she earned a master's degree in public administration. She got involved locally by serving on Irvine's diversity, equity and inclusion committee.

"I have more in common with people that live here," said Martinez Franco. "I am the same as any other person from any other ethnicity with the same experiences, and I think that's what I can offer to my community."

As Irvine makes its full transition to single-member districts, residents in District 5 did not have the opportunity to elect their own council member until the special election.

Straddling both sides of the 405 Freeway, the district leans Democrat. According to Orange County Registrar of Voters data, 40% of registered voters are Democrat while 26% are Republicans and 28% are independents.

The district is 63% white, 14% Latino and 17% Asian American and Pacific Islander.

"We had no track record for what an election would look like for that district," said Lauren Johnson-Norris, executive vice chair of the Democratic Party of Orange County. "Now we have a definitive answer about what the voters care about and want."

A lawsuit and big spending characterized the contentious special election.

Former council member Tammy Kim, also a Democrat, dropped out of the race to settle a suit brought forth by Ron Scolesdang that challenged her eligibility based on residency requirements.

In the aftermath, Kuo outraised Martinez Franco on individual campaign contributions by more than \$10,000. Independent expenditures, which are not coordinated with respective campaigns, also swayed heavily in support of Kuo.

Lincoln Club of Orange County PACs spent more than \$75,000 for the race. Another PAC funded by fast-food franchises spent \$66,500.

The six-figure spending sum did not deter Martinez Franco.

"If I only knock on enough doors, if I only talk to enough people, those are the people that are going to vote for me, not money," she said.

Unite Here Local 11, a hotel workers union, spent an estimated \$25,000 in support of Martinez Franco's campaign.

Even though the City Council is nonpartisan, the race took partisan overtones, especially when a mailer paid for by the 1962 PAC of the Lincoln Club of Orange County featured Kuo pictured between President Donald Trump and Elon Musk.

The mailer suggested "liberals win if conservatives don't vote" and that Kuo would rid Irvine City Hall of "waste, fraud and abuse."

Johnson-Norris, a District 5 voter, claimed the mailer was a huge mistake.

"Why they thought the mailer was going to help, I don't know," she said. "There's no chance it did, especially in this district at this time."

With Martinez Franco set to become Irvine's fifth Democrat on its seven-member council, the local

party is hopeful her victory can spur a number of key policy objectives, from passing a climate action plan to strengthening hotel worker protections.

In January, the council voted 4-2 to strip double pay for heavy workloads from a hotel worker law first passed in 2022.

Having worked as a housekeeper before, Martinez Franco is supportive of revisiting the law.

"I know the struggles that housekeepers go through," she said. "They deserve better protections."

Affordable housing, traffic congestion, parks, libraries and environmentalism are other top priorities.

A factor in how a climate action plan goes forward, Irvine is poised to withdraw from the Orange County Power Authority sometime this year.

Once sworn in, Martinez Franco wants to talk to OCPA and see what they have done, in particular, for low-income communities to meet their clean energy needs at affordable prices.

Before getting to work on the City Council, she hopes that her election stands as an example, one that already inspired a UC Irvine student to consider a future in electoral politics along the campaign trail, a moment Martinez Franco called a "dream."

Latinas have proven to be an emerging force in Orange County politics, with more candidates running for office in recent years than ever before. Next month, Irvine joins the political trend.

"You have the right to run in a city that you love," Martinez Franco said. "If you're going to do better for your community, if you have the passion, nothing can stop you."

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Twitter: @gsanroman2

SWIMWEAR

Continued from page A1

from functional abdominal pain syndrome brought on by physical trauma strong enough to disrupt the body's brain-gut axis and, possibly, the vagus nerve, which controls the body's nervous system.

It would be the beginning of a long medical journey that continues to this day. Walcott was forced to miss four months of school and eventually had to withdraw from Newport Harbor High, signing up for a private academy that would work with her schedule and allow her to take classes both in person and remotely, as needed.

But something else happened during the teen's long road to recovery, something just as unexpected and life-changing, only this time for the better.

Living in Newport, going to the beach and soaking in the sun's rays was a powerfully healing experience for Walcott who, throughout her protracted recuperation, keeps a heating pad on hand for warmth.

"The beach kind of became the first place I could actually enjoy being with people and hanging out," Walcott recalled. "The sun is a natural heating pad, there's fresh air — it was really peaceful."

Even while laid out on various hospital beds, the high schooler shopped online for bikinis, scrolling through pages and pages of styles, brands and variations that she knew were all wrong for her diminutive body.

The suits had straps that were too long and not adjustable, or painful plastic clips that dug into wearers' backs or shoulders, bottoms that tended to sag and pull downward during swimming. Other styles resulted in unusual or unsightly tan lines.

"There are a lot of things



Courtesy of Amanda Walcott

AMANDA WALCOTT sustained a concussion in 2023 while practicing cheer at Newport Harbor High School that caused her to miss months of school.

you don't think about until you've bought the product," she said. "I was researching bikinis to buy, and I'd find a couple of people with their own companies and think, how cool, that's like my dream."

Bored and with a load of time on her hands, Walcott began looking into what it would take to design and manufacture her own bikinis. In the hands of a business-minded kid who was always dreaming up ways to turn a hobby into a company, the homegrown venture began to take off.

After developing the name Beachside Bikinis and purchasing a domain name, Walcott found a sus-

tainable, eco-friendly manufacturer capable of creating designs using recycled fabric. Over months of communications, design notes, spec sheets and the shipping and analysis of fabric samples, the teen created the framework for a swimwear line.

Father and business backer Glenn Walcott, a trained accountant who's applied his own entrepreneurial talents to helping grow numerous businesses, said he's been more than impressed watching his daughter learn the ins and outs of the fashion industry.

"She just has this drive

See *Swimwear*, page A4

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O.C. Supervisors urge DOJ to reassess Andrew Do's plea deal

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

The Orange County Board of Supervisors is asking the U.S. Attorney's Office and the U.S. Department of Justice to review and reassess former Supervisor Andrew Do's potential sentence two months ahead of his next scheduled court date.

In October, Do admitted guilt in steering more than \$10 million in federal pandemic relief funds through a nonprofit connected to his daughter, Rhiannon, for personal gain.

He received more than \$550,000 in bribes from the funds intended to provide meals to elderly Little Saigon residents during the pandemic's early days.

Do pleaded guilty to a single conspiracy charge and faces a maximum of five years in federal prison when he goes before a judge on June 9.

Prior to that, supervisors passed a resolution on Tuesday that called the potential sentencing one "that fails to reflect the full scope of his self-dealing and corruption."

Supervisor Janet Nguyen, who won election to fill Do's vacated seat, helped spearhead the effort earlier this month. But supervisors deadlocked on the original resolution presented during the April 8 Board of Su-



Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

FORMER O.C. Supervisor Andrew Do during a past board meeting. Some supervisors consider his maximum sentencing too "lenient."

pervisors meeting and asked county counsel for guidance.

A revised resolution brought back on Tuesday found more political support as it struck references to the plea deal as "rushed," adding language alleging misconduct by Do in having received privileged emails between supervisors and county counsel related to plea negotiations and

other confidential matters after he resigned.

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento, who wanted county counsel to file an amicus brief and a victim impact statement in the case, spoke in favor of the resolution.

"It is an irregular path that we're taking, but I think these are instances that shock the conscience," he said. "These are in-

stances that are outrageous."

In a statement provided after the meeting, Paul Meyer, an attorney for Andrew Do called the resolution "reprehensible" and "a blatant attempt to assert political influence in a federal matter."

The resolution, in making its case, cited stiffer sentences for other public officials convicted of cor-

ruption and bribery, including former Los Angeles Deputy Mayor Raymond Chan, who received a 12-year sentence last year for accepting more than \$750,000 in bribes.

Supervisor Don Wagner, the lone vote against the resolution, took issue with the cases presented in it as cherry-picked and called back to his time in the State Legislature when former state Sen. Ron Calderon got 42 months in prison for accepting more than \$150,000 in bribes.

"There are cases where elected officials convicted or pleading to crimes similar to this get less," he said. "How come that's not in our resolution? We're only looking for the ones where somebody gets more than Supervisor Do. It isn't a fair comparison."

Nguyen limited her comments during the meeting, but thanked representatives of the Vietnamese American community who came out in support of the resolution.

Phat Bui, a former Garden Grove councilman, shared a letter from the Vietnamese American Federation of Southern California, where he serves as president, when speaking before supervisors.

"Former supervisor Andrew Do is a lawyer [and] husband of a judge," Bui

said. "He should know the law. The crime that he committed is so severe that a five-year plea deal is not suitable."

Wagner pushed back against the email controversy in suggesting what kind of conversations Do had with his attorney prior to the county being informed of the correspondences cannot be known.

"All we know is that at some point, supervisor Do contacts his lawyer and says, 'I'm getting these emails,'" he said. "The district court judge can inquire of the lawyers, and to the extent he can get an answer without breaching attorney-client privilege, he can do it. We cannot."

Wagner found himself in the minority.

Board Chairman Doug Chaffee stated his belief that an amicus brief and victim statement remain as future possibilities.

Until then, the resolution would speak for the county, as it passed 4-1.

"We are a victim and this is a statement from the victim," Chaffee said of the resolution. "Our money was taken and misspent. We do speak for those who were victimized in the community as well."

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SWIMWEAR

Continued from page A2

and focus and attention to detail that's inspiring," he said. "This is her dream, and she's creating everything for it."

Intended for teens and young adults, Beachside Bikinis' product line consists of six matching bikini sets made from two different styles featured in three different cuts, a 100% silk sarong and a bikini bag customers can take to the beach.

The Walcotts hosted an

April 4 launch party at the family's Newport Beach home with a small group of friends and associates who were invited to try on the different styles. It was a huge success.

"Her health journey continues, and it's been a real giant struggle," the proud father said of his daughter's experience. "But the thing that works the best for her is this business — it gets her mind to focus on something besides the pain."

Nearly one and a half years since her injury, Amanda Walcott admits she's not fully healed. Still,

she's hopeful she can return to Newport Harbor High for her senior year.

She wants to continue to develop Beachside Bikinis online, learning more about e-commerce, marketing and search engine optimization, while maybe getting some suits onto the racks of a couple of local retail boutiques. After graduation, she plans to continue learning the business side of her enterprise in college.

"I just want to keep improving every day and, hopefully, hit it from all angles. It's like my baby at this point," she said.

Reflecting on the past year, the 17-year-old says she's grateful to have found an endeavor that helped her rise out of her physical suffering and set her on a brighter path.

"I've definitely grown as a person, and everything has kind of brought me here. Yeah, it's horrible all this has happened, and it sucks I'm still going through stuff. But I feel like I've learned so much," she said. "It gave me hope, I guess, that there's a future."

[sara.cardine@latimes.com](#)
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Courtesy of Glenn Walcott

NEWPORT BEACH resident Glenn Walcott with daughter Amanda at an April 4 launch party for Beachside Bikinis.



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THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Stella Zawistowski

- ACROSS**
- 1 Police alerts: Abbr.
5 " _ girl!" ("You go!")
9 Strappy shirts, for short
14 Uninteresting
15 Chocolate _ cookie
16 "Aida" or "Tosca"
17 Coiffure
19 "Gimme five!": 2 wds.
20 How ballerinas dance: 2 wds.
21 Window inserts
23 Job-seekers' documents
26 "Suits" network
27 Seedy bar
28 Put back into office
32 Casual French eateries
36 Retail transaction
37 "You've got mail" company
38 Rustic hotel
39 Jazz instrument
40 Cole slaw or French fries
42 Indignation
46 Goes by
48 Had on
49 Bratty kid
50 Fame
54 Low wind instrument
58 GIF or JPEG
59 Knight's protection
60 Scottish archipelago
64 Crystal-lined rock
65 Endow
66 Cold summer treats
67 Wise thinkers
68 Gets married
69 Naysay

- DOWN**
- 1 Loathe

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SUDOKU

By the Mephram Group

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [sudoku.org.uk](#).

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

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A7.

- 2 Boeing product
3 Provokes
4 Burial coverings
5 Perform in a play
6 Biblical possessive
7 " _ death do us part"
8 Tailless primates
9 Entrée or
dessert
10 Takes to a higher court
11 Dole (out)
12 Golf club type
13 Tree fluids
18 Round before the finals
22 Social signals
24 Night before a holiday

- 25 Weekly TV program
28 Gets more of a magazine
29 Simplicity
30 Big family
31 Phone message
32 Army outpost
33 Stir up
34 Actor Alan
35 _ and outs
41 TV-show unit
42 Car takeback, for short
43 "Oh no, _ again!"
44 Hiking path
45 Disney's Ariel, for one
47 Campfire sweet treat
51 Samba or tango
52 Utah city
53 Untidy
54 Totes and clutches
55 Locale
56 Visible pollution
57 "Don't read in the office": Abbr.
61 Color
62 Wrap up
63 6-point plays: Abbr.

Tribune Media Services

'Family approved'

Meat master Anthony Villegas walks guests through an eight-course menu with cooking demos and wine tastings.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

The problem with most cooking shows is that after an hour of watching a Brit bake a lovely cake or a contestant miraculously make a meal out of mystery basket ingredients, you can't try the food yourself. At The Market by the Meat Cellar in San Juan Capistrano, founder and meat master Anthony Villegas is doing his version of reality television cooking, in real life.

The hybrid artisan butcher, culinary boutique and steakhouse restaurant hosts a monthly "Meat Master Class" and wine tasting. The unique experience allows guests to have their meat and eat it too.

"Our goal here is to educate and bring our community together," said Villegas. "We really want to strike a blend of community values, Sunday supper feels and a little class too."

Located at the River Street Marketplace, the Market is a one-stop shop for the epicurious with a butcher counter that specializes in hormone and antibiotic-free, humanely raised cuts, a cheese counter with a dedicated cheesemonger and a shop full of kitchen treasures, quality olive oils and hard to find seasonings.

On the other side of the 4,000-square-foot space is a full service restaurant and oyster bar. Co-founded by Villegas and his wife, Sara, the San Juan Capistrano space is the second store for the couple, with the first location, the Meat Cellar, open in Claremont since 2016.

"Everything we sell is Villegas' family-approved," Sara said in a statement. "So we hope that guests will turn to us when setting the table for their loved ones."

At the class, Villegas teaches guest how he uses the various proteins and provisions in the store through an eight-course menu. Villegas' sister and co-owner of Anaheim's Colony Wine Merchant, Sonya Villegas Kelsen, assists with wine pairings. A butcher block positioned at the front of the room serves as the demo table, with a tablet rigged up to project what Villegas is cooking on the screen behind him. A packet with dish descriptions and room to take notes is set on each table with pen, a way for the more studious guests to remember what they learned. Most of the attendees of a recent class were couples on dates, or foodie families and friends.

"Do we have any vegetarians in the house?" Villegas jokingly asks at the start of the class. "I didn't think so."

The first course is an expertly curated cheese tasting dubbed "cheese school," paired with a glass of Huber sparkling rose. While guests savor Spanish olives, house-made honeycomb candy and Mimolette-style Gouda, Villegas starts heating oil to fry soft shell crab. When it's hot enough, he drops the buttermilk soaked crustacean in the hot pan, serving the finished crab as a sandwich on brioche with Meyer lemon aioli. While he explains the preparation, servers bring guests their own soft shell crab sandwich, fully assembled and ready to eat; a 2022 Sauvignon Blanc is poured to pair with it.

Villegas takes diners through each course in this manner, explaining his favorite way to poach lobster (in blood orange Grand Marnier butter) or where he learned his steaming technique for his Wagyu beef cheek taco (in Mexico,



Photos courtesy of The Market by the Meat Cellar

THE MARKET by the Meat Cellar founder and meat master, Anthony Villegas, will lead participants through an eight-course meal in the new "Meat Master Class."

where he was born and raised by his restaurateur parents).

He also touches on the more exotic cuts of meat the store offers and suggest ways the average home cook might use them. A veal cutlet is prepared as bread-crumbed German schnitzel. He uses the sous vide technique on Sonoma Valley lamb rack before searing it off with mint, thyme and extra virgin olive oil. Grilled bison strip loin is served with a blackberry veal demi, giving the lean meat a sweet taste. The final course is a chocolate bread pudding with a dollop of vanilla ice cream.

"This dessert is to live for," Villegas quips. "Because we don't die here; we live."

The recipes for most the dishes go up on the Meat Cellar's website, Villegas said, and he encourages diners to try them at home, armed with their new knowledge. Of course, they can also return to the restaurant and have Ville-

gas and his team cook for them; it's open for lunch, dinner and brunch on special occasions.

The Villegas family wants guests to feel like they were invited to their house for dinner. The casual and intimate setting feels as familiar as watching your favorite cooking show, but with the added bonus of the finished dish presented before you after each demonstration. It is no wonder guests take classes more than once.

"A lot of times, actually a majority of the time, people end up being friends and they come back to the next "Meat Master Class" with those new friends," the Anthony Villegas said.

The "Meat Master Class" at The Market by the Meat Cellar are priced at \$250 per person and held monthly. To book a seat, visit themarketbythemeatcellar.com.

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forum

COLUMN | PATRICE APODACA

We can't agree on everything, but we can all agree on penguins

I have written about some deadly serious topics, including disease outbreaks in under-vaccinated communities, wildfire risks, and funding cuts for education and scientific research, all of which could lead to dire consequences.



I'm also alarmed watching the same developments so many of us worry about — the deteriorating rule of law, the trade war and the hits to retirement accounts. I now know the meaning of a “dead cat bounce,” a morbidly specific phrase for a temporary pause in an otherwise collapsing stock market. We're told we should learn something new every day, but I would have preferred to live without this particular piece of knowledge.

I don't know about everyone else, but I could use a break. Not one of the



Courtesy of UC San Diego's Birch Aquarium

LITTLE BLUE Penguins can dive at least 230 feet deep to search for food.

dead-cat variety, but a meaningful interlude that could bring some cheer to our battered psyches.

After consideration, I think I've found a way to feel better about our circumstances, one that all of us, no matter our wildly divergent views on any

other topic, can finally agree on:

Penguins are awesome. On this point, we can be united.

Of course, the animal kingdom in general is amazing, but other animals that we regard as charming have their detractors.

Otters, for example, might appear cute and playful, but some people consider them murderous psychopaths that are known to kill for sport.

Those pandas that we fawn over? There are more than a few among us who think they are lazy, arro-

gant jerks.

And don't get me started on dolphins, which I used to believe were deserving of the greatest admiration. They're so smart! Flipper, right?

But then I heard that the image of friendly dolphins is more fairy tale than reality, and that some of them murder baby dolphins and commit unspeakable atrocities on the females of their species.

Even sea lions, those endlessly entertaining blubber blobs, are not above some questionable behavior. Surfers in Newport Beach were chased out of the water by one sea lion recently, although I suppose we can't fault the poor animal, which a veterinarian said was probably brain-damaged from a toxic algae bloom.

I get that we shouldn't judge animals by human ethical standards. No matter how we tend to anthropomorphize them, they all engage in instinctual, survival-of-the-fittest, circle-

of-life behavior. But surely one animal can rightly be held up as a paragon of excellence and virtue.

That animal is the penguin.

There are 18 species that hail primarily from the Southern Hemisphere, from the frigid Antarctic to the equatorial Galápagos Islands, ranging in size from 1 to 4 feet tall.

All of them ooze charisma. They are birds that don't fly, but their incredible swimming abilities have been described as “flying through water.”

In fact, they swim so fast and gracefully, often through some of the chilliest waters on Earth, that one variety in particular, the Gentoo, can reach speeds more than three times that of the fastest human. And they do it in formal wear. Try doing that, Michael Phelps.

They're superb walkers too, often covering long distances on land to reach

See **Apodaca**, page A8

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE | REV. PAUL E. CAPETZ

Trauma victims need help beyond the aftermath

I have been thinking a great deal about trauma and its devastating impact on people's lives. The terrible fires in and around Los Angeles made me newly aware of this reality. Although we who live in Orange County did not suffer directly, many of us were indirectly affected by what happened. One of my parishioners had to evacuate her home in Altadena when all the houses on her street were consumed by the blaze. Two other churches ours is affiliated with were burned to the ground. A Jewish friend informed me that his synagogue burned down. Those of us whose homes and places of worship were spared have not been unaffected by these devastating losses of others.

In the summer of 1968, my family faced the real possibility of losing our house to a wildfire that burned out of control in the hills above Glendora where I grew up. My father climbed up onto the roof of our house and watered it with a hose. My mother packed up in preparation for leaving. She put the photo albums in the car, since they contained her most precious memories. Everything else could be replaced — clothes, furniture, utensils — but not

In Newport Beach and elsewhere in Orange County, we have many fine treatment centers that offer the possibility of healing and recovery from trauma. It isn't something anyone has to do alone.

the photos. That night all of us slept in our clothes in the living room, waiting for the police or the fire department to knock on our door ordering us to evacuate. It was frightening and none of us slept soundly that night. Fortunately, we did not have to evacuate. Our house was spared. But the following winter our town faced another crisis caused by an equally destructive force of nature: flooding. Since the wildfires destroyed the trees and the brush on the mountain slopes, there was nothing to prevent the dirt from sliding down into our neighborhood when the powerful rains came. The massive mudslides destroyed 200 houses and killed 34 people. The Presbyterian Church in our town was set up as the evacuation center for families who lost their homes. Volunteers took turns so the evacuation

center remained open around the clock for anyone in need of food, shelter and first aid.

Back then, there wasn't much public discussion about trauma. Today there is more information about it. At a recent local meeting of ministers, I heard a riveting talk by Frank Rogers who teaches Spiritual Formation at Claremont School of Theology. Rogers himself was a victim of trauma. He had been sexually abused as a child, and in a recently published memoir he has narrated his journey of healing from trauma. His words enabled me to understand something that I had long intuited but had never formulated for myself: trauma is an experience so devastating that the brain simply cannot process it in the moment. Yet even after the traumatic event has passed, the

See **Pastor**, page A8

MAILBAG



DAVID FRANCO, shown talking to customers, has sold fresh flowers at the Corona del Mar Certified Farmers Market for 27 years and wants to continue.

Susan Hoffman

Unsatisfied with Corona del Mar farmers market changes

Corona del Mar residents wrote letters in advance of the City Council meeting April 15. We lined up to speak during public comments. No CDM resident favored the change from “Corona del Mar Certified Farmers Market” to a “Community Market.” The current vendors and management more than satisfy. Surprisingly, Councilmember Lauren Kleiman, who represents Corona del Mar, joined with the majority for a 6-1 vote. So much for representative government! Thank you, Councilmember Robyn Grant, for hearing our displeasure with the lack of communication by city staff who selected new management, and the

lack of opportunity for residents to offer input on criteria for farmers market in our village.

The upcoming Community Market will require vendors arrive early to unload all of their wares then find a parking space somewhere in the neighborhood. This is an inconvenience for vendors (extra time) and neighbors (little parking available on the flower streets). Sitting outside in the sun for four hours will affect the condition of the fruits and vegetables. Currently vendors park on-site, set up their table in front of vehicles and replenish produce on the table from stock in their vans as needed. Not mentioned in the Daily

Pilot article is the speaker at the council meeting who alleged that illegal communication occurred between applicants and council members during the bidding and selection period. DP Editor, please follow up! Send an investigative reporter to discover if the bidding process was fair and ethical. Council members, find out where the majority of city residents who want a community market live and locate it to that neighborhood.

For years I have walked to the CdM Certified Farmers Market, but I can vote with my feet (car) and drive to a farmers market

See **Mailbag**, page A7



Benjamin Brown, *Autumn Glory*, circa 1920. Oil on canvas, 28 x 36 1/8 in. UC Irvine Jack and Shanaz Langson Institute and Museum of California Art. Gift of The Irvine Museum.

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Final Weeks

forum

A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE

Beefing over how we use hyphens and adverbs

The beef had been aged dry for 30 days, and it changed my life. Not the way you're thinking. I didn't eat the life-changing meat. I just read about it in an article I was editing — and my relationship with hyphens has never been the same.



Before then, I thought I had hyphens all figured out. Most of the time, they connect two words that work together to describe a noun, as in “heat-seeking missile.” The hyphen makes clear it's not a heat missile. It's not a seeking missile. Neither of those words can describe a missile on its own. They have to work together, to connect, to tell you about the missile.

These are called compound modifiers: words that team up to work like a modifier, usually an adjective, to describe another word. These modifiers are central to hyphenation rules, which say, basically: Hyphenate a compound modifier when doing so can prevent ambiguity. That is, don't let your reader confuse “buffalo-riding birds” with “buffalo riding birds.”

Compound modifiers can be adverbs, too. Often, these compound adverbs come after the



File Photo

DRY-AGED STEAKS for sale at inside a restaurant refrigerator.

verb: She works part-time. And because adverbs can modify adjectives, as in “fabulously wealthy,” compound adverbs do the same: “jaw-droppingly wealthy.”

Nouns like “mock-up,” and verbs like “mass-produce” can also be hyphenated. But a lot of those are in the dictionary, meaning you don't have to figure out

on your own how to write them. Then there are prefixes and suffixes, whose hyphenation rules are a mess, widely disagreed upon and inconsistent, requiring a hyphen in “re-create” but none in “reenact.”

“Use of the hyphen is far from standardized,” the Associated Press Stylebook writes. “It can be a matter of taste, judgment and

style sense. Think of hyphens as an aid to readers' comprehension. If a hyphen makes the meaning clearer, use it. If it just adds clutter and distraction to the sentence, don't use it.”

AP's explanations, exceptions, special circumstances and examples go on for about 900 words, making hyphens one of the longest entries in the style guide. I had referred back to these 900-ish words countless times in the years leading up to that fateful day I learned about that dry old meat. Yet I was stopped in my tracks. Was it 30-day-dry-aged beef or 30-day dry-aged beef? That is, were all those words working as a single adjective to modify “beef”?

“At times, a writer must decide whether words preceding a noun form a single adjective that should be hyphenated as one modifier or whether some terms within are functioning independently,” I wrote in my 2010 book “The Best Punctuation Book, Period.” “For example, in choosing between ‘a discriminating-but-value-conscious shopper’ and ‘a discriminating but value-conscious shopper,’ the writer can decide based on whichever best captures the intended meaning.”

Then I shared the results of a survey I gave to some profes-

sional copy editors, who all agreed that value-conscious should be hyphenated but the rest should not. Yet when I asked them about “30-day-dry-aged,” they disagreed. Two thirds said to hyphenate the whole shebang as a single compound. The remainder said it's “30-day dry-aged.”

There's no wrong answer, but I'm with the majority on this one. It's not 30-day beef that is dry-aged. All four words in that compound build on each other to create a single meaning.

Most often, these “compounds of uncertain scope” appear in phrases like “extreme-heat-related illness.” This came up recently in my copy editing work with just one hyphen. I chose logic over looks. It's not an extreme illness that's heat-related. It's the heat, not the illness, that's extreme.

Hyphens have fallen somewhat out of fashion, so longer compounds are getting rarer. But I'll keep hyphenating 30-day-dry-aged beef and extreme-heat-related illness as long as the rules allow.

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.

MAILBAG

Continued from page A6

in a nearby city when Heritage Wellness Collective re-configures the market. And, I will “vote with my vote” for council members who truly represent their constituency at the next election!

Diane Baker
Corona del Mar

Porn signs ‘new low’ for H.B. City Council

Once again the MAGA Huntington Beach City Council sinks to new lows. They are plastering signs throughout the city in opposition to Measures A and B. These signs, in huge, red letters say “Protect our kids from porn” with text below saying “Vote no on A & B.” For anybody not living in Huntington Beach or not informed about local issues, this would seem to imply the city has sex shops everywhere, filled with pornographic films, books and magazines. The reality is they are referring to the city's award-winning libraries.

I would challenge the City Council (especially Chad Williams) to recite off the top of their heads (without using Google) the legal definition of “pornography.” They can't do it because it does not match their own made up definition of pornography. I urge the community to research objectively the issues on Measures A and B and vote accordingly. As for me and my family, we are voting “yes” on A and B.

James Dowling
Huntington Beach

For more than 100 years, children of all ages have visited the Huntington Beach Public Libraries. Many of those visitors are now adult residents of Huntington Beach. Have they been exposed to the collection of books in the children's library section with sexual content and sexual language? If so, these adults seem to function quite well in our community. I don't see overt, public, inappropriate sexual behavior in my daily interactions with my fellow residents. Are there tens of thousands of our residents who are overly sexualized as a result of their childhood library experience? Is Huntington Beach the nation's hotbed of deviant sexual behavior?

Cathey Ryder
Huntington Beach

“Mama, read.” We were in the children's section. My daughter was not yet 2, but she picked up a book in the public library on military strategy in the Civil War. I laughed. I talked to

HOW TO GET PUBLISHED

Send an email to nicole.charkychami@latimes.com and include your full name, hometown and phone number (for verification purposes). All letters should be kept to 350 words or less and address local issues and events. The Daily Pilot reserves the right to limit the frequency of publication and edit accepted submissions for clarity, accuracy and length.

her about the pictures in an age-appropriate way. We discussed booms and fire, rather than bayonets and bullets.

Is a historical weapons

book suitable for toddlers? Arguably, no. But as an engaged parent, I decided to speak to my child about

See *Mailbag*, page A8

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

A	P	B	S		A	T	T	A		C	A	M	I	S
B	L	A	H		C	H	I	P		O	P	E	R	A
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7	4	6	8	9	5	2	3	1
8	3	1	4	2	7	5	6	9
5	2	3	9	8	1	7	4	6
6	1	8	7	5	4	9	2	3
4	7	9	2	6	3	1	5	8

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CONTACT US

Carol Cormaci
Executive Editor
carol.cormaci@latimes.com

Nicole Charky-Chami
Deputy Editor
nicole.charkychami@latimes.com

Beth Raff
Advertising Manager
(424) 225-9928
beth.raff@latimes.com

Reporters:
Sara Cardine,
Costa Mesa
sara.cardine@latimes.com

Eric Licas,
Newport Beach
eric.licas@latimes.com

Sarah Mosqueda, TimesOC
sarah.mosqueda@latimes.com

Gabriel San Román,
TimesOC

gabriel.sanroman@latimes.com

Matt Szabo,
Huntington Beach and Sports
matthew.szabo@latimes.com

Andrew Turner,
Laguna Beach and Sports
andrew.turner@latimes.com

10540 Talbert Ave.,
Suite 260 West,
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

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MAILBAG

Continued from page A7

a controversial topic in a developmentally appropriate manner that aligned with my family's values. I had other choices at this moment. I could have told her “no” and put the book away, or I could have read it exactly as it was written.

Books have helped my toddler make the biggest adjustments in her life — moving across the country, living away from grandparents, potty training, starting preschool and welcoming a sibling. They provide comfort and guidance because they reflect a child’s world back at them in a way their brains can understand.

“It’s just like in the book!” These were my daughter’s first words upon meeting her little brother. In the haze of welcoming my second child, that moment stands out.

Reading matters. Books matter. A parents’ ability to choose what books their children are exposed to matters. Every parent should have the right to be the decision-maker for their family. Not the City Council. Not a citizen review board. Those people can do it in their own homes, not in our libraries.

Do you know who is inherently at the library? Involved parents. Parents who sing the songs, do the hand motions and read aloud. These are the parents who participate. Yet, these are the children our City Council is so worried about.

An intellectual argument can be made about what government should and should not control, but ultimately, the upcoming special election concerns parents’ rights and the lack of trust that City Council clearly has in the parents of Huntington Beach.

Vote “yes” on Measures A and B by June 10. This is a matter of protecting choice, not precluding it.

Megan Cicurel
Huntington Beach

It is imperative that Huntington Beach residents vote on June 10 to protect our library from future privatization and an appointed panel to approve books.

One of the claims made by the City Council is that pornography is present in the children’s book section and this false claim arose, in part, from the book, “The Big Bath House,” which tells the story of a young girl who is taken by her mom to visit her grandma and aunts in Japan. The young girl does not know what to expect when they announce they will be going to a bath house, which is an accepted Japanese cultural practice she has never experienced before.

Because of all the drama that surrounded this book, I decided to do my own research. It is available for sale on Amazon, recommended for children ages 4 to 8. It was also chosen as a Book of the Year by the New York Public Library, NPR and the American Library Assn. Does this sound like a pornographic book? I think not.

Some City Council members took exception to the



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

POLITICAL SIGNS posted on Pacific Coast Highway and 17th Street in Huntington Beach on Monday advertise opposing positions on Measures A and B that are on the ballot for a special election in June.

nude drawings, almost cartoonish, that depict women bathing in a pool. As men and women bathe in separate areas, there are no nude men present. One criteria used to determine if material is pornographic is if the content is sexually arousing. I hardly think the little girl would be sexually aroused by seeing the sagging breasts of older women!

What does touch her though is that although she does not speak Japanese and many of her relatives do not speak English, the language barrier is not an issue. Family, camaraderie, community, and most importantly, love, are what transcend any language barriers. If all you can focus on are some caricature drawings, then you miss the beautiful message this book conveys. If you don’t want to learn about other cultural practices, then that is your decision; do not make false claims.

It has been said that words matter. Yes, but the truth and facts matter as well.

Kathleen Bunge
Huntington Beach

Some Huntington Beach residents are misinformed about issues involving our public libraries. Their mistrust stems from a lack of accurate information on the City Council’s clumsy ruling authorizing bans on children’s books. For instance, the book “Gender Queer” was removed from the young adult section five years ago. However, former Mayor Gracey Van Der Mark read aloud from it and others in 2023 at a City Council meeting to shock the community about what she stated was in the children’s section. This was grossly misleading.

Previously, the library categorized books into three sections: children, teens and young adults. However, the teen section was eliminated in 2024, and the young adult section has merged with the adult section. It is illogical to restrict high school seniors to the same books as first graders. Yet H.B.’s new restrictions apply equally to everyone under 18.

Why has the city decided

to eliminate different rules for different age groups? Comprehensive sex education begins in middle school. Books on puberty and menstruation may not be appropriate for children under 12, but they are crucial for teenagers.

Furthermore, the members of this 21-member committee (with no specified qualifications) cannot honestly commit to reading every one of the 6,000 books they need to review annually. However, their decisions on any book cannot be appealed!

It appears that this poorly conceived program was hastily assembled as a political statement in support of Moms for Liberty. What is particularly amusing is that it completely contradicts their “we do not co-parent with the government” slogan.

Indeed, this policy does precisely that! Instead of allowing every parent to make decisions for their children, they have established a book committee to restrict the choices available to parents. They are inserting the government between the parent and child. It compels parents to co-parent with the government, whether they desire to or not. This is unacceptable and demonstrates why a “yes” vote on Measures A and B in the Huntington Beach June 10 election is essential.

C “Shammy” Dingus
Huntington Beach

Restore Trestles Beach before LA28

As the 2028 Olympic Games approach, we celebrate your commitment to environmental responsibility. With surfing set to take place at Trestles Beach in San Clemente, California, we urge the IOC to uphold that commitment by funding sand replenishment at this iconic but endangered site.

A recent investigation by the Daily Pilot, part of the Los Angeles Times, laid bare the severity of San Clemente’s coastal erosion crisis. The report documents how decades of development, infrastruc-

ture like the San Juan Creek Watershed, and disrupted sediment flows have left beaches dangerously narrow. Longtime residents and city officials describe a coastline that is vanishing.

Efforts to solve the problem are underway, but far from funded. The city’s Measure BB, which would have secured local dollars for beach nourishment, narrowly failed in 2022. While the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has allocated some federal support, it is not enough to meet the urgent need. Meanwhile, the clock is ticking.

Trestles is not just a surf break — it’s a sensitive coastal habitat within San Onofre State Beach. Hosting an international event will bring weeks of traffic and thousands of spectators, placing serious strain on already-degraded dunes and vegetation. Scientific studies show that this kind of activity can accelerate erosion and damage the very systems that naturally hold sand in place.

The IOC has rightly made sustainability a pillar of the Olympic movement, as reflected in the Paris 2024 Games. But true sustainability means investing in the land, not just offsetting its use.

We ask that the IOC fund sand restoration at Trestles, preserving both the Olympic venue and the legacy of environmental leadership these Games aspire to leave behind. Sign the petition.

Riley Metcalf
San Clemente

NMUSD special election candidates

I have been so focused on national politics that I haven’t had the energy or interest in getting involved in what seems like local, petty politics. After my involvement in Newport Beach City Council races I was turned off by the tribalism often displayed in our otherwise beautiful haven.

There were two letters in the Daily Pilot that brought back painful memories of political situations in Newport Beach, as well as re-

cent problems experienced in the school district where I taught for 37 years in another part of Orange County. For a short period in my former district, our school board was overtaken by a destructive contingency that made some meetings seem like The Jerry Springer Show. Fortunately, the district only suffered a short period before voters restored order.

Regarding Sunday’s letters about the NMUSD school district, the first issue they referenced is the fact that Andrea McElroy was endorsed by both the Newport Beach Police and Fire Assns. In the City Council races, reference was always made to candidates endorsed by those entities, but frankly, I never saw the connection. Instead, a committee of educators selected Kristin Walsh for school board, ahead of several candidates including McElroy.

Believe me, I have the utmost confidence and respect for our Newport Beach police and firefighters but I do not understand how these endorsements would carry more weight than those of parents or community members. In my opinion, they give unfair advantages to candidates.

There are some “catch phrases” that I gleaned from these letters referring to nebulous concerns that seem to be in vogue — mostly phrases without a specific meaning but carry political weight. The issues of “parental rights” include terms such as “transparency between parents and schools,” “a commitment to community values” and “policies that prioritize achievement and well being.” This implies manufactured problems that result from poor communication. Involved parents, constant communication with their children as well as respect for educators would make most of these perceived problems disappear. Attendance at school activities by board members, teachers and parents is a smart way to foster positive exchanges. And that is what Kirstin Walsh has to offer — a constant

commitment to students in the district — the result of her 13 years of NMUSD volunteer service.

Lynn Lorenz
Newport Beach

Andrea McElroy’s school board candidacy offers a refreshing vision for our schools. As a conservative, she believes parents deserve transparency in what their children are taught. Andrea will ensure families have access to curriculum details and school decisions, empowering them to stay engaged in their children’s education. If you know her, you admire her strength, her ability to stand strong when others take the path of least resistance. She knows what has to be done and she will do it.

Public safety is another cornerstone of her platform. Andrea is committed to creating secure school environments so students can focus on learning. Her conservative values emphasize accountability and common sense policies that put students first.

Andrea’s dedication to our community shines through her active involvement and listening ear. She’s not swayed by trends but grounded in principles that support families. Voting for Andrea McElroy means choosing a school board member who respects parents and prioritizes safety. Let’s elect her to build a stronger, more transparent school system.

Linda Lawler
Newport Beach

Our students here in NMUSD all learn at an early age the importance of facts when completing writing assignments. Some community members may need such schooling as well.

FACT: School board races are non-partisan.

FACT: When Michelle Barto ran for reelection to NMUSD District Area 5 as the incumbent she was not endorsed by the Lincoln Club of Orange County, California Parents United, Greater Costa Mesa Republicans, California Patriots, Assembly members Diane Dixon, Steven Choi and Kevin Kiley or the entire O.C. Board of Education. They endorsed her opponent Reina Shebesta — the Parents Rights candidate.

FACT: Michelle Barto won the election. Shortly after she was sworn in she announced she was running for Newport Beach City Council. She won that election as well, leaving an open seat on the school board.

FACT: The trustees followed NMUSD Board “By-laws 9223: Filing Vacancies” as they have in the past. They chose to make a provisional appointment per California Educational Code 5091, 5093.

FACT: The NMUSD posted the opening and solicited candidates to apply. On Jan. 27, 2025 the school board held a special meeting where they publicly interviewed the candidates and selected the provisional appointee, Kirstin Walsh.

FACT: The school board chose a candidate that has very similar qualifications

See **Mailbag**, page A9

APODACA

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their nests and breeding grounds.

Many penguins live in super-cold regions, so they have tons of feathers and fat to keep them warm. The hardy emperor penguins even have two layers of feathers and special fats in their feet to keep them from freezing. Their chicks have been sighted diving off a 50-foot cliff on the

Antarctic Peninsula, plunging into icy waters, and swimming off in search of food — an astonishingly spunky way for young ones to leave the nest.

And get this — a group on land is referred to as a “waddle,” but in the water they are called a “raft.” It doesn’t get more adorable than that.

Do they complain, or engage in murderous rampages? No, they do not.

Indeed, penguins’ most endearing quality is that

they are lovers, not fighters. They look out for each other, huddling together to stay warm and working in communal fashion to enhance their chances of survival.

They stay true to their mates, and they are great parents. Mom and Dad penguins are models for modern co-parenting, as they take turns nurturing and feeding their kids. Emperor males even keep the eggs warm while females go on long fishing

trips.

My only negative observation is that many penguin species are endangered. Of course, they are in no way to blame for this. We are. The peril these remarkable animals face is a result of human-caused climate change, habitat loss, pollution and overfishing.

I don’t want to contemplate a world without penguins. If for no other reason, we should treat our planet better so we can

save these treasures of the animal world.

By now, I’m imagining some readers might be thinking that I’m setting myself up for bitter disappointment. So I’m putting everyone on notice.

If anyone knows anything that could burst my bubble by suggesting that penguins aren’t the magical creatures I consider them to be, then please don’t tell me.

In our current state of upheaval, disillusionment,

and strained relations with our fellow humans, I really need to cling to the picture of penguin perfection.

Come on, admit it. Tuxedo-clad swimming champions who love their families are just the antidote we all need right now.

PATRICE APODACA is a former Los Angeles Times staff writer and is coauthor of “A Boy Named Courage: A Surgeon’s Memoir of Apartheid.” She lives in Newport Beach.

PASTOR

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unprocessed effects remain and leave their trace in the body’s memory. The psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk, who is the world’s leading expert on trauma, succinctly captures this point in the title of his very illuminating book, “The Body Keeps the Score.”

After reading this book, I realized that my father lived with untreated trauma. He had been a prisoner of war in Nazi Germany. After his capture, he was forced to walk miles with a piece of shrapnel in his foot since he knew that he would be shot if he couldn’t walk by himself.

Once inside the prison camp, he languished without food and heat for

months until the war ended. When another prisoner was caught stealing a piece of bread, my father and the rest of the prisoners witnessed his execution by torture. When at last the Soviet army liberated the camp, the Russian soldiers shot all the German prison guards in front of the prisoners. My father was only 19 years old when he experienced

these horrors. He never fully recovered his physical health. He died at 51. And, unbeknownst to him and those closest to him, he lived the rest of his life after the war with undiagnosed post-traumatic stress syndrome. In retrospect, I recognize all the signs.

In Newport Beach and elsewhere in Orange County, we have many fine treatment centers that offer

the possibility of healing and recovery from trauma. It isn’t something anyone has to do alone. Support is available. Two of my parishioners first came to our church as long-term residents of these treatment centers. One was healing from childhood sexual abuse and the other from a botched surgery that permanently ruined his digestive system. Victims of

trauma need our help, not only in the immediacy of the traumatic event, but also long after, so they may heal and have the possibility of living full lives undeterred by the long-term effects of untreated trauma.

REV. PAUL E. CAPETZ is the head pastor at Christ Church by the Sea in Newport Beach.

FREEWAY

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namese American Association of Northern California.

Westminster's business district was officially recognized as "Little Saigon" in the 1980s and many of the officials commented on the growth and support the community has seen since then, noting the freeway signs used to say "Little Saigon next exit," but now reads "Little Saigon next 3 exits."

The dedication was timed ahead of the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. On April 30, 1975, the South Vietnamese capital of Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese Army, ending the Vietnam War.

"Fifty years ago, we lost Saigon, but we did not lose our hope," said Ta. "Today,



VETERANS FROM the Vietnamese National Military Academy salute at the dedication of the Little Saigon Freeway.

we honor the courage and sacrifice of over 58,000 American service members and more than 250,000 South Vietnamese soldiers who fought side by side in the pursuit of freedom."

More than 2.5 million Vietnamese refugees and immigrants fled the coun-

try to escape the communist regime and nearly 800,000 settled in the U.S. A large population settled in Westminster, and later the surrounding Garden Grove area, making Orange County home to one of the largest Vietnamese populations outside of Vietnam.



"This stretch of the 405 Freeway is more than just a road; it represents the journey of thousands of refugees who fled communism in search of freedom," said Westminster councilwoman Amy Phan West.

The designation of the freeway was made possible by AB 2698, authored by Ta

and signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom in 2024. The funding for the sign was raised by private donors and officials noted no taxpayer funds were used for the signage.

After the sign was revealed, members of the community posed for picture in front of the brown

THIS SECTION of the 405 Freeway is now Little Saigon Freeway was recently named in dedication of the Vietnamese community in Westminster on Friday, April 18, 2025.

Photos by James Carbone

and white sign and enjoyed banh mi sandwiches.

"So many in the community came together to make this day happen," said Ta. "This is a community project."

sarah.mosqueda
@latimes.com
Twitter: @SarahNMos

MAILBAG

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to Michelle Barto. Kirstin Walsh has students in our schools and has spent 13 years in service to the Area 5 schools. Kirstin was on the executive boards of the PTA and foundation at Newport Elementary School. She was PTA president of Ensign Middle School and Newport Harbor High School and on their respective foundation boards. She is also serving on the executive board of Harbor Council PTA, as well as the Water Polo Boosters, and the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee.

FACT: The trustees of the NMUSD represent all our students and are elected by area.

FACT: The next scheduled election for this seat is in November 2026.

FACT: Petitioners collected signatures of 1.75% of the registered voters of District Area 5 to force a special election on June 10, 2025.

FACT: The special election for District Area 5 will cost NMUSD between

\$400,000 and \$500,000!

Given all the facts, it appears that this special election is an illogical waste of valuable district funds. Our trustees appointed the best candidate in Kirstin Walsh.

But it's too late to do anything now because a person who was not appointed pulled the trigger on this expensive special election, thereby depriving our students of much needed funds.

I encourage all voters in District Area 5 to vote for Kirstin Walsh!

Suzanne Gauntlett
Newport Beach

Responses to HB City Council

Ever since the MAGA majority members of the Huntington Beach City Council were elected, they have worked hard to deny representation to the sizable segment of the citizenry who oppose their ultra-partisan policies and pronouncements. They have tried mightily to gut the 1st Amendment rights of community members in every way possible. Mayor

Pat Burns has sunk to a new low in the April Fools' Day City Council meeting by restricting time in public comments when there were only 11 announced speakers. This made a municipal mockery of the normal three minutes allotted for citizens to express themselves without a high volume of speakers.

This practice of restricting speaker times was continued at the council's April 15 meeting. The tactic employed by the council's majority of stuffing the volume of speakers with their own supporters guaranteed two things: First, it would give cover to restricting the speaking time of those who have especially questioned the propriety of opposing the petitions on the June ballot (Measures A and B) with inaccurate arguments; second, it would give these rabid supporters an excuse to fulminate with their hyperbolic and jaw-droppingly erroneous rhetoric.

Unfortunately, any attempt to rein in the indiscretions of the now 7-0 MAGA City Council is bound to be unsuccessful since not only the City

Council but the offices of city attorney, city clerk, and city manager are under their sway. There is no counterbalance to the poor judgment and errant decision-making from the dais. This is beginning to cost the Surf City community in many expensive ways. Already Sacramento is breathing down our necks with threats of fines, punishments and restrictions for going against state law on issues like housing and the environment. Our negative local government image might have contributed to Huntington Beach losing any sought-for venues for the upcoming 2028 Olympics. The MAGA crusade against our public library system has earned us national enmity. The only way to make a dent in the disastrous dilemma many of our residents face is at the ballot box this November.

Tim Geddes
Huntington Beach

The right-wing Huntington Beach City Council has been on a mission to target valued institutions and facilities in our city, such as our beloved library and our

beautiful Central Park. But non-profit organizations such as Friends of the Library fought back to maintain the integrity of the publicly managed library and its book collection with successful petitions and now ballot measures A and B in an election scheduled for June 10. And other non-profit organizations and individuals are speaking out against the efforts of the City Council to take over our Central Park by placing a noisy, light-polluting, environmentally damaging nightly light show right in the middle.

Many, many HB residents have spoken out against these divisive and unnecessary changes to beloved city institutions and facilities. But, instead of listening to city residents, the right-wing City Council is taking a page from its MAGA leader in Washington and targeting the nonprofit organizations that are trying so hard to save our library and Central Park.

As reported in a recent article in Voice of OC, the City Council is trying to assert control over volun-

teer-driven non-profit organizations by forcing them into contracts with the city. Council member Casey McKeon was quoted as saying, "We're just trying to formalize everything... so they know what the rules and regulations are on what they can and cannot do." To those of us who have observed the hostility of the right-wing City Council toward these institutions and the volunteers who support them, this is a chilling statement.

The City Council has admitted that the city of Huntington Beach is facing serious budget deficits over the next 10 years, a deficit entirely of their own making. And yet, they want to target volunteer organizations, such as Friends of the Library, who pour thousands of volunteer hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars into keeping the HB library system the jewel of our city. Their time would be better spent looking inward to identify the devastation they are wreaking on our city!

Diane Bentley
Huntington Beach

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