

Measure K makes project possible

Costa Mesa voters' narrow OK of ballot initiative puts 14-acre development before council.

BY SARA CARDINE

What a difference a vote makes. Costa Mesa residents Tuesday got a glimpse of "Hive Live," a 1,050-unit residential development planned for a 14.25-acre parcel currently being used as creative office space and a training field for the Los Angeles Chargers.

The City Council on Tuesday gave the initial go-ahead for staff to begin processing an application submitted by developer Legacy Partners Residential requesting a general plan amendment and other entitlements necessary for the high-density housing community.

However, the phased project — which proposes three five-story buildings with 1,575 parking spaces to accommodate tenants, 2,500 square feet of retail occupancy and 5.05 acres of open space at 3333 Susan St. — would hardly have been possible without voters' approval of Measure K.

Passed in November by the narrow margin of 22 votes, the ballot initiative allowed city planners to effectively "undo," in certain commercial and industrial areas, an

See **Project**, page A8



Screenshot by Sara Cardine

A RENDERING shows one of three residential buildings being planned for the residential development "Hive Live," at 3333 Susan St. in Costa Mesa. Voters in the city narrowly passed Measure K, which makes the proposed development more likely to be built.

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Council's look at human dignity declaration lights fireworks in H.B.

Moser, Van Der Mark spar as members vote to create committee to consider amending or canceling declaration.

BY MATT SZABO

Huntington Beach City Councilwoman Natalie Moser looked down at her notes and took a deep breath.

It was just past 1 a.m. Wednesday, and a marathon City Council meeting that had already lasted more than seven hours was winding down. Besides council members and city staff, only a few people remained in the chambers.

The council was discussing its last agenda item of the night. The seven members were debating an item introduced by Councilman Pat Burns regarding whether they should amend or cancel the city's longstanding "Declaration of Policy on Human Dignity," first introduced in

1996.

What happened next surely woke up anyone who was getting a bit groggy.

Moser had just mentioned the original document talks about the Holocaust. She turned to her left, where Mayor Pro Tem Gracey Van Der Mark was sitting.

"Mayor Pro Tem, in the past it's been brought up that you questioned whether the Holocaust happened," Moser said. "I have never heard you ..."

Van Der Mark interrupted, offering an immediate rebuttal.

"OK, no, I never did that, so stop lying," she responded. "I'm sick of your lying. All you've done is lie about me for years. You sit here and you shake your head up and down every time somebody comes and accuses me of denying the Holocaust, which I never did. They call me a Nazi, and you sit there and you're like, 'Right on.'"

This stunning exchange on

See **Dignity**, page A2

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



James Carbone

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE ORANGE COUNTY BUILDS ON ITS FOUNDATION OF SERVICE PAGE A2



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

TONI KELLENBERG, president of the Laguna Plein Air Painters Assn., chats with guests at the Laguna Plein Air Painters Assn. gallery on Thursday. Winners of the group's latest show were announced that evening.

Plein air painters group crowns winners of its latest juried show

BY ANDREW TURNER

More than a century ago, creatives felt the call to record the natural beauty of Laguna Beach's coastline and rolling hills.

Laguna Beach was an emerging art colony, rich in landscape artists, and it remains a stronghold for the arts.

Since its inception in 1996, the Laguna Plein Air Painters Assn. (LPAPA) has endeavored to preserve the tradition of painting outdoors. The nonprofit organization puts on a series of shows throughout the year.

"From Dusk to Dawn," an annual juried art show of nocturnal subject matter, hung on the walls of the upper level at the LPAPA gallery space on Thursday evening. The winners of the contest, which fielded entries from a national membership, were announced on site and broadcast via livestream.

Toni Kellenberg, president of

See **Painters**, page A9



MICHAEL HILL'S "Flower Fields at Dusk" took first place in LPAPA's "From Dusk to Dawn" juried art show.

Andrew Turner

Ronald McDonald House to add lodging, services

The Orange County location is renovating to serve more families of patients being treated at nearby hospitals.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

In 2000, when Luz and Albert Carrete's then-10-year-old son was rushed to Loma Linda hospital with an enlarged heart, the two parents were distraught.

"We spent many, many weeks at Loma Linda," said Luz. "For the first few days I was staying by his side; I wouldn't leave his side. Dad was sleeping in the car."

A social worker told the family about the Ronald McDonald House, which provides lodging so families can stay close to their children receiving treatment at local hospitals.

"Dad did start staying there, so he could shower up and get some good rest. When he would come and relieve me from staying with Junior, he was fresh and would walk in with a big smile," said Luz. "That would help lift Junior's spirits."

Luz spent all her nights by her son's side, but would head to the Loma Linda Ronald McDonald House in the afternoons to rest and freshen up. She also connected with the other families staying at the house who had a loved one in the hospital.

"It made you feel like you weren't the only one going through this," said Luz.

Eventually, Albert Carrete Jr. underwent heart transplant surgery at UCLA, and the Luzes returned to sleeping in their car so they could be close to their



James Carbone

GUESTS TOUR the Ronald McDonald House Orange County's construction project as it undergoes expansion and renovation on July 26. An outdoor patio with a scenic view will be part of the renovation along with 24 more guest rooms, a larger kitchen, salon and other amenities.

son.

The Ronald McDonald House in Orange County opened in 1989, and in the last year alone hosted 309 families in situations like that

of the Carretes. As demand continues to grow, the Ronald McDonald House of Orange County is expanding and renovating to serve twice as many

families.

Katie Russell, operations director at Orange County Ronald McDonald House, has been with the organization for more than 20

years and said the renovation of the Orange County house has been a passion project of hers.

See **House**, page A8

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DIGNITY

Continued from page A1

the dais demonstrated just how deeply divided the Huntington Beach City Council remains nine months after Van Der Mark, Burns, Mayor Tony Strickland and Casey McKeon were each elected, forming a new conservative majority. Their council colleagues, Moser, Dan Kalmick and Rhonda Bolton, are all Democrats.

The City Council is a non-partisan body, per the California Constitution, so party affiliations do not appear on the ballot during election season. But in Huntington Beach, the political divide is obvious: Nearly every vote is carried by the conservative majority, 4-3, including Tuesday night's votes to introduce 11 possible charter amendments and eliminate certain boards and committees, including the Human Relations Committee.

Burns' agenda item on forming an ad hoc committee to review the Declaration of Policy on Human Dignity also passed with a 4-3 vote. Strickland had selected his fellow conservatives Van Der Mark, Burns and McKeon to serve on the committee, leading Moser to say, "I have questions," and setting up the exchange.

With Moser's query, a member of the council minority group brought up the elephant in the room for the first time. Van Der Mark responded in part to the Holocaust question on Tuesday night by saying that her husband's uncle had been killed by the Nazis in World War II.

"How dare you," she said, responding to Moser again. "You would know that if you would have had a conversation with me, instead of standing here making false accusations all of these years."

Both Strickland and City Atty. Michael Gates stepped in on Van Der Mark's behalf, calling the question inappropriate. But Moser maintained that it was relevant,



James Carbone

SHIRLEY DETTOFF, left, speaks to the Huntington Beach City Council on Tuesday night as Elaine Bauer-Keeley listens. Dettloff and Bauer's father, Ralph, helped form the Huntington Beach Declaration of Policy on Human Dignity as council members in the mid-1990s.

given that Van Der Mark was to be put on the ad hoc committee for a declaration that deals with human rights.

"I don't care about that," she replied during the meeting Tuesday night when Strickland remarked that Van Der Mark's husband was part Jewish, though Moser said in an interview Thursday that she regretted that remark.

"I would take that back," she said. "What I meant was, 'That's not what I'm asking you about' ... I wasn't planning to do this."

The accusations that Van Der Mark was a Holocaust denier have followed her for years. Others have decried her alleged relationships with far-right organizations.

Moser specifically referred to a public playlist on Van Der Mark's YouTube account, titled "Holocaust hoax?," that featured anti-Semitic videos. OC Weekly also reported about the playlist, which was then deleted, in 2018.

"You can be in pictures with people, and that doesn't mean you're doing the same thing," Moser said. "But how many times?"

In May of the same year the playlist was deleted, Van

Der Mark was in the midst of an unsuccessful run for the Ocean View School District Board of Trustees when she was booted from two school district committees after allegedly referring to minorities as "colored people." Van Der Mark, who is Latina, then appeared in front of the City Council and said the videos were on her YouTube account "for research purposes only."

Van Der Mark said five years ago during her public comments that she was questioning the content, not supporting it, while adding that she was not antisemitic and did not deny the Holocaust. She echoed those sentiments in an interview Thursday.

"I've listened to [Moser] libel and slander me for a long time," Van Der Mark said. "None of that is true. If she would have sat down for five seconds, she would have heard my side of the story. But instead, as an elected official, she sits up there and repeats these lies. She's held at a higher standard than most people, given her position. She needs to be very careful ... that was a very personal attack on me."

Van Der Mark said she

had been told that there were people who deny the Holocaust, and she was sent videos. The title of one of the videos was called "The Holocaust Hoax," so that was why she labeled the playlist with a question mark, she said.

"I never even watched the videos," she said. "When you grow up in a low-income, Hispanic community, all you worry about is if you're going to have a roof over your head, are you going to have food on the table for your kids. We don't talk about any of this stuff."

Moser said Thursday that Van Der Mark's past made her seriously question her ability to impartially amend or review the Declaration of Policy on Human Dignity. In 2018, the Anti-Defamation League called for her removal from the Huntington Beach Finance Commission, though the councilman who appointed her, Patrick Brenden, eventually elected not to oust her.

"To me, those things are a red line, especially the Holocaust hoax piece," Moser said. "Those associations, and that history, I think it can be seen as indicative of bias that would compromise her capacity to ensure

"If the council would read [the Declaration of Human Dignity] word by word, they would know that this is the kind of city all of us would like to live in — one that protects everyone that lives in that city."

— Shirley Dettloff

Former Huntington Beach mayor and contributor to the creation of the Declaration of Human Dignity

inclusivity and respect for everyone in the community. In my mind, they undermine her suitability for the role that she was given on that ad hoc [committee], which is what I was speaking to specifically.

"Personally, I think that they undermine her ability to do the role of being a council member, as well, but that's not what I was referring to on Tuesday night. Her past history is public, it's available, and it's relevant to the review, amendment or cancellation of this document."

Van Der Mark said Moser has never sat down with her to have a discussion about any of these issues since she was sworn in, despite the fact that they have an office on the same floor of City Hall.

Moser confirmed that was true Thursday.

"The only person that I've met with personally, from the four, is Tony before the second meeting of council," she said. "I've never met with any of them other than that, and they've never reached out to have any type of dialogue, either. After that first meeting where they were sworn in, frankly, I was so offended by their decorum or lack thereof at that meeting."

"It isn't my place to reach out, at that point. There was no olive branch passed on that night. It was chaos in the room. It was like we were in the Colosseum in Roman times."

As for the Declaration of Policy on Human Dignity, it was expanded in 2021 by the previous City Council. But Burns said during Tuesday night's meeting that it

could be on the chopping block.

"We have equal laws right across the books through our Constitution and every level of government that protects people in the same matter," he said. "That's all I'm doing, equal application of law for everybody."

Shirley Dettloff, who constructed the original declaration with the help of the late Ralph Bauer, then-Huntington Beach Police Chief Ron Lowenberg and city staff, hopes it survives. Bauer and Dettloff were elected mayor in 1996 and '97, respectively.

Dettloff and Bauer's daughter, Elaine Bauer-Keeley, both spoke in favor of saving the declaration during public comments at this week's meeting. The document was created after the 1994 murder of a Black man and the 1996 attempted murder of a Native American, both crimes committed in the city by white supremacists.

"I met with Pat Burns and let him know why this certainly was not the time to dismantle the Human Relations Committee and certainly the Declaration of Human Dignity," Dettloff said Thursday. "I think it's a very strong position, and it's a position that our City Councils and our citizens have accepted since 1996. If the council would read it word by word, they would know that this is the kind of city all of us would like to live in — one that protects everyone that lives in that city."

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forum

COLUMN | PATRICE APODACA

A Daily Pilot columnist learns to find her voice

Every family has its quirks. Lately, I've had reason to reexamine a few of the idiosyncrasies that were ingrained in me from an early age and which have haunted me throughout my life.

When I was a kid, my elementary school-teacher mom got me involved in community theater. Picture

wholesome, youth-oriented plays based on fairy tales, or Christmas-themed productions containing messages about giving being superior to receiving. One summer I even enrolled in mom's summer school theater arts class.

I relished everything about the theater — the chance to show off my acting chops, the camaraderie among cast members, the staging, the hair and makeup — and I fancied myself a promising thespian. So when I entered high school I auditioned for "Fiddler on the Roof," my first musical, and landed a small speaking role. I was thrilled.

But when I told my parents the news, their reaction wasn't what I had hoped for. They burst out laughing. Like, knee-slapping, doubled-over, can't-catch-a-breath guffaws. "You can't sing," they told me. "No one in our family can sing." The prospect of seeing me in a musical was just about the most hilarious thing they could imagine.

Deflated, I nonetheless continued on with the production. I didn't have any solos — of course I didn't, I couldn't sing — and during the big chorus numbers I mouthed the lyrics but didn't emit any sounds and hoped no one would notice.

And that's what I've been doing ever since my nascent thespian career came to an abrupt and humiliating end during my freshman year of high school: not singing.

Sure, over the years I've occasionally slipped and started to hum along with the car radio or joined in when others were singing. These mistakes earned me



Ernie Cowan

A MOCKINGBIRD SINGS. While she comes from a family that can't sing, lessons (and party therapy sessions) are helping Patrice Apodaca make progress she didn't expect.

pained, pitying looks from companions and, I assumed, set off rounds of howling dogs. So I learned to shut down such impulses, sparing the ears of any living thing in my vicinity. What had been a family oddity became a phobia.

Sometimes in my dreams I would imagine myself belting out a ballad to an adoring audience, like Adele or Beyoncé. But, alas, those dreams were meant for another lifetime. In this one, I could only marvel at others' musical talents.

Then recently something strange and wholly unexpected occurred. For my

last birthday, my husband announced that he was giving me singing lessons. What? You did what? I'm going to do what? Something went off-kilter in my brain. The idea of me singing in front of another human being didn't compute.

But it was a thoughtful, generous gift, so I promised to give it a go. I am now about five months along on this surprise journey, and it's been quite an adventure.

Once a week, via Zoom, I meet with my wonderful, endlessly patient teacher. Anyone who has had vocal training will no doubt be familiar with the breathing

exercises, warm-ups and methods of strengthening the vocal cords that I have learned from her, and which I practice religiously.

Miracle of miracles, I am gradually improving. I'll never be Adele; no arias from "Madam Butterfly" are in my future. But so far, no dogs have wailed in agony, and I can now envision the day — not there yet, but I'm on my way — when I will feel comfortable chiming in when others strike up a tune.

I have also discovered that, underlying my halting progress, there's a larger lesson, one that involves banishing the ghosts from my past and being brave enough to try for something I once considered beyond my reach. Indeed, my singing lessons are also part therapy sessions, with my teacher continually counseling me to quiet my "critical mind."

You can sing, she assures me. You are singing. Each time she says it, I believe it a little more.

Though not as significant as my musical adventure, another oddity from my childhood has resurfaced recently courtesy of the blockbuster "Barbie" movie.

That's because I never had a Barbie doll.

I wanted one in the worst way. All my friends had them, along with the various accoutrements — the clothes, the cars, the Dreamhouse, the whole deal. To my child's eye, they represented the fantasy of ideal womanhood that we all yearned to real-

ize.

Not that I didn't have dolls. In fact, I had lots. But they weren't fun, they were educational, like the dour pair in Hungarian peasant dresses that my aunt brought back from her travels. They sat on a shelf, never to be played with. Far better to learn about another culture than become distracted by frivolous Barbie.

As with the singing aversion, I know my parents meant well, and I don't begrudge their attempts to steer me toward what they believed were suitable activities. Singing and girly-girl dolls, no. Books and intellectual pursuits, yes. I'm more interested in "Oppenheimer." I have my family to thank for that preference.

But at some point, we can choose to bust loose from the past and venture into new territory. What is life without a few leaps into the unknown?

That's why, even though I lack the deep connection that drives pink-garbed throngs into spasms of Barbie worship, I do plan on seeing the film. Will I understand every inside-Barbie reference? Probably not. Will I still enjoy it? I'm sure I will.

I hear it has some catchy musical numbers. Maybe I'll sing along.

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.

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MAILBAG



James Carbone

THE HUNTINGTON BEACH City Council meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 1, addressed changes to the city charter and the dismantling of longstanding committees and boards.

H.B. council majority's moves are reactionary

Some members of the Huntington Beach City Council are attempting to require voters to present an identification card of some sort prior to casting a ballot in city elections. Why are these council members attempting to eradicate a problem — voter fraud — the Orange County Registrar of Voters has determined is virtually nonexistent?

Additionally, this council majority has disbanded several municipal commissions, including the Huntington Beach Human Relations Commission and the Mobile Home Advisory Board, which allow for greater citizen participation in our municipal government.

This council majority seems intent on diminishing democracy in Surf City. Will these moves against voters and commissions composed of the grassroots citizenry reduce resistance to their reactionary agenda?

Ben Miles
Huntington Beach

The July 29 Daily Pilot headline (“Huntington Beach could axe 2 longstanding boards and committees, change city charter”) regarding the Huntington Beach City Council agenda made me hopeful that you would publicize the council majority’s heinous proposals to amend the city charter. I was extremely disap-

pointed to see that you did not write one word about the proposed charter amendments in the article.

Dismantling of the Mobile Home Advisory Board and Human Relations Commission is definitely unfortunate. It reflects the council majority’s effort to silence all opinions other than their own. But given the fact that the council has now packed those forums with their own lackeys, they have already been rendered ineffective so there is little left to save during the offices of the current council majority.

It is the proposed charter amendments that should be of most concern to the community. It appears that you failed to read the agenda supporting document, intentionally hidden behind a benign sounding agenda title, the contents of which pose a threat to democracy in Huntington Beach. The “Charter Review Ad Hoc Committee Proposals” (from a committee made up of the newly elected council members) of most concern are No. 5: Change the election cycles of the Clerk and Treasurer to the Gubernatorial election, obviously to reduce participation; No. 6: Modify the qualifications required for city clerk candidates to remove all training and education require-

See *Mailbag*, page A7

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Courtesy of Chipotle Mexican Grill, Inc.

AUTOCADO IS a collaborative robot prototype that cuts, cores and peels avocados before they are hand-mashed to create Chipotle's guacamole.

Chipotle tests automation tech prototype in Irvine

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Avocados are a popular add-on at build-your-own-burrito chain Chipotle. In restaurants across the U.S., Canada and Europe this year, the company is expected to use approximately 4.5 million cases of avocados. Cutting, coring pitting and mashing that much green fruit can be time consuming. As a possible solution Chipotle Mexican Grill an-

nounced the Autocado, an avocado processing robotic prototype that cuts, cores and peels avocados before they are hand-mashed into guacamole.

"Autocado is currently being tested at the Chipotle Cultivate Center in Irvine, and it will continue to go through Chipotle's stage-gate process before being utilized in a restaurant," Curt Garner, chief customer and technology

officer at Chipotle, said in an interview with Time-SOC. "We hope to bring Autocado to a Chipotle restaurant later this year."

The Autocado is part of a collaboration between Chipotle and Vebu, a product development company that works with food industry leaders to co-create intelligent automation and technology solutions.

See **Tests**, page A7

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

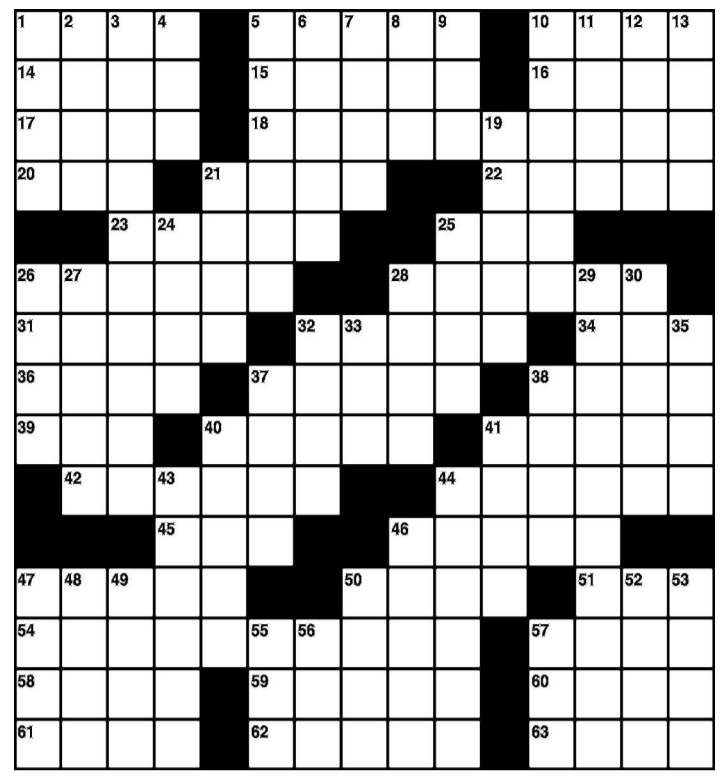
By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

- 1 Shopper's paper
- 5 Dental filling
- 10 First of zillions
- 14 Mr. Preminger
- 15 Small rodent
- 16 Actor _
- Gooding Jr.
- 17 Hang around
- 18 Wallet snatcher
- 20 Bawl
- 21 Small barrel
- 22 Requirements
- 23 In an unfriendly way
- 25 Get-up-and-go
- 26 Widen, as the pupils
- 28 Give comfort to
- 31 Bring together
- 32 Deep sadness
- 34 Spanish cheer
- 36 Woodworker's tool
- 37 Tin Man's desire
- 38 Pastor's advice
- 39 Bear false witness
- 40 Landlord's collections
- 41 Keep turkey moist
- 42 Have high hopes
- 44 Delhi dollars
- 45 ICU personnel
- 46 Wheat flake cereal
- 47 Bit of parsley
- 50 _ and cons
- 51 Promos
- 54 Polo player
- 57 Maui meal
- 58 Uno y dos
- 59 Spaghetti topper
- 60 Meanie
- 61 Helper: abbr.
- 62 Irksome
- 63 Molt

DOWN

- 1 Gambler's woe
- 2 "Leave _ Beaver"
- 3 Stops fluctuating
- 4 Plaything
- 5 Puncture with a skewer



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.

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

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

- 6 Boisterous
- 7 Good fortune
- 8 Seek answers
- 9 Slangy affirmative
- 10 Agree to take
- 11 University in North Carolina
- 12 All tucked in

- 13 Floor pads
- 19 _ these days; eventually
- 21 Word after Carson or Jefferson
- 24 Small eatery
- 25 Walt Whitman, e.g.

- 26 Serving two purposes
- 27 Gandhi's land
- 28 Gentlemen
- 29 Guffaw
- 30 Thrill
- 32 Cowboy Autry
- 33 Traitor
- 35 "Bright _"; Shirley Temple film
- 37 Is _; belongs to that lady
- 38 One of the Three Bears
- 40 Pieces of jewelry
- 41 No ifs, ands, or _
- 43 Clergyman
- 44 Actor Mickey
- 46 Train rails
- 47 _ good example; be a role model
- 48 Followers of O
- 49 Feels remorse about
- 50 Name for 12 popes
- 52 Show courage
- 53 Took to court
- 55 Recipe amt.
- 56 TV's Charlotte _
- 57 Spanish article

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TESTS

Continued from page A6

“Our purpose as a robotic company is to leverage automation technology to give workers more flexibility in their day-to-day work,” said Buck Jordan, chief executive officer at Vebu.

Garner said Chipotle is also interested in leveraging automation technology to its staff.

“We are committed to exploring collaborative robotics to drive efficiencies and ease pain points for our employees,” said Garner.

The widespread use of the machine could have significant impacts on the Chipotle chain as a whole.

“The Vebu team is aiming to improve the device’s processing speeds, which could ultimately reduce guacamole prep time by 50%, allowing Chipotle employees to focus on serving guests and providing great hospitality,” said Garner.

Garner went on to say the Autocado could also assist Chipotle restaurants in maintaining sustainability initiatives and waste-reduction efforts.

“Autocado also aims to increase avocado fruit yield through precision processing, which could lead to millions of dollars in annual food cost savings if the cobot is successfully developed and deployed widely.”

The wide use of machines like Autocado could lead to more application of A.I. in the food industry. In

fact, Garner said Vebu is currently developing an artificial intelligence and machine-learning stack to be connected to all its robotic solutions, where applicable.

“The goal is for future iterations of Autocado to use machine learning and sensor fusion to evaluate the quality of the avocados and quantify waste reduction as well as the efficiency of the cutting, coring and peeling processes,” Garner said.

The Autocado isn’t the only artificial intelligence appliance being tested. Chippy, an autonomous kitchen assistant trained to cook tortilla chips and season them with the right amount of salt and fresh lime juice is already being put to work at an Orange County Chipotle restaurant.

“Chippy is fully operational at our Brookhurst Street restaurant in Fountain Valley,” said Garner.

Chipotle is also investing in Vebu through its Cultivate Next venture fund to explore additional innovation opportunities in the restaurant space. Cultivate Next, the company’s \$50-million venture fund, intends to make “early-stage investments into strategically aligned companies that further its mission to Cultivate a Better World,” according to a news release from the company.

Through Cultivate Next, Chipotle previously invested in Hyphen, a food service platform designed to help restaurant op-

erators, owners and chefs by automating kitchen operations. Hyphen’s first product, the Makeline, is being tested as a system that uses advanced software and robotics to automate meal production for all digital orders under the counter while allowing staff to assemble in-house orders on the top of the counter.

Garner said the company sees other areas that could benefit from technology like Autocado, Chippy and Makeline.

“We see opportunities for more automation in food prep and dish washing. These are areas that consistently come up in conversations with crew members,” Garner said. “We also see potential in leveraging A.I. to help our managers be more precise in the amount of food they’re prepping for their restaurants. Anything we can do to help our teams more easily recover from a strong sales day is an area we’re prioritizing.”

Garner assures machines will not be replacing workers at your local Chipotle anytime soon.

“The intensive labor of cutting, coring and scooping avocados could be relieved with Autocado,” said Garner, “but we still maintain the essential culinary experience of hand-mashing and hand-preparing the guacamole to our exacting standards.”

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MAILBAG

Continued from page A5

ments, except for any four-year bachelor’s degree (this appears to clear the way for the unqualified wife of the city attorney to run for the office); and most disturbingly, No. 7, which seeks to assert local control over municipal elections, removing them from the guardrails of the State Elections Code as to “all aspects of elections.” The proposal seeks to impose council directed voter identification, the operation of city located polling places and provide for “monitoring of ballot drop boxes.”

Obviously, if requirements for voting in city elections varied from the state-mandated rules, separate elections would be required to enforce the ID verification process and ballot box monitoring provisions. And how would the less qualified clerk handle the vote counting process? Clearly, what is intended here is voter suppression and total control by the newly elected members and their anointed candidates. While it is doubtful that these efforts to take over elections would be deemed legal by the state or even workable, public opposition will be required to stop the ball from rolling in the intended direction.

This sort of heavy-handed effort to take total control of government operations is a key element of fascism, which seems to be the direction this council majority is taking. I do hope that you will carefully read the proposed charter amendments and publish them with the same level of importance you afforded to removal of boards and commissions.

Linda Sapiro Moon
Huntington Beach

I attended the Aug. 1 Huntington Beach City Council meeting, spoke in

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opposition to the proposed changes, and naturally was outraged at the results. It is a date that will live in infamy for not only myself but all of the many dozens of board, commission and committee members and their supporters who witnessed this bludgeoning of our civic democracy.

The right-wing council majority demonstrated that they do not care for

community wishes that run counter to their warped authoritarian ideology. They have effectively hijacked local government. If it wasn’t obvious before, it is now. Other issues like Pride flags and library services were the prelude. Now, it is cutting our city to the bone. Next they will remake the city charter in their own image and control all of us outright.

Several speakers at the council meeting pleaded with the council majority not to gut the volunteer bodies that had represented the city well, but those pleas fell on deaf ears. No mercy. It will doubtless take years to repair and reverse the damage these iconoclasts have done to our local government, but the wake-up call has been sounded. We deserve real representation and not the fakery foisted upon us by these impostors. We will rise again.

Tim Geddes
Huntington Beach

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Bay Area fish house Pacific Catch brings 'passion for sustaining the ocean' to O.C.



Photos by Albert Law | Pork Belly Studio

PACIFIC CATCH offers a range of flavors, like aloha-inspired poke. The restaurant recently opened a location in Tustin.



THE RESTAURANT'S West Coast-style fish tacos.



THE MARKET Place in Tustin hosts the happy hour spot.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

On a recent weeknight at Pacific Catch at the Market Place in Tustin, the bar and covered patio buzzed with activity. The location is the Bay Area-based fish house's second in Southern California, following its 12 restaurants in Northern California. Since opening in late May, the seafood restaurant has become a happy hour hot spot.

Pacific Catch was founded in 2003 in San Francisco by co-founders Keith Cox and Aaron Noveshen with a menu developed by culinary director Rowena Rillo.

"Pacific Catch was conceived to share the inspiration we drew from our adventures around the Pacific Rim," said Cox, the restaurant's chief executive.

Pacific Catch in Tustin has a large and diverse menu, with dishes influenced by the West Coast, Baja, traditional Japanese sushi, Korean barbecue and the Hawaiian islands. Signature dishes the brand has become known for like Pupu platter, ceviches sushi, pokes, fish tacos and the option to build a Fresh Catch plate, with a choice of fish any style and two sides, can all be found on the menu.

The beverage program features tiki cocktails, margaritas, zero proof options and twists on classic cocktails, like a Yuzu Pisco Sour that adds juice from yuzu, an east Asian fruit, to Barsol pisco with egg whites and Angostura bitters.

Happy hour, served from 3 to 6 p.m. is when the 56-seat bar area and 60-seat outdoor patio are the most lively with a menu that

offers \$10 poke and ceviche, along with \$10 cocktails, \$9 wines by the glass and \$6 16-ounce beers.

Pacific Catch was founded on a commitment to sustainability and ocean conservation.

"Combining our love for the flavors and culture with our passion for sustaining the ocean," said Cox, "we offer guests an imaginative yet familiar take on seafood with a commitment to sustainability."

Nearly 90% of the world's fisheries are either fully fished or overfished. Pacific Catch hopes to help conserve the ocean and its fish population for future generations by sourcing seafood from environmentally responsible sources and aims for a menu that has a wide variety of sustainable species at all times. Any at-risk species are sourced from certified sustainable suppliers only. The restaurant has had partnerships with Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch, Ocean Friendly Restaurants and the Surfrider Foundation, a nonprofit environmental organization headquartered in San Clemente that works to protect the world's oceans and beaches. In 2020, Pacific Catch became a James Beard Foundation Smart Catch Leader, receiving training and support from the foundation on serving seafood fished or farmed in environmentally responsible ways.

Two more Pacific Catch locations in Orange County are planned to open in late 2024.

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PROJECT

Continued from page A1

earlier citizen-backed initiative requiring such projects be approved by voters.

Developers and pro-housing city officials maintained the erstwhile Measure Y hindered growth in the city and cited a complete lack of building projects since Y's 2016 passage as evidence.

In fact, the developers of a project very similar to Hive Live — One Metro West — sought approval for a 1,057-unit mixed use housing community on a 15-acre property at 1683

Sunflower Ave. in 2020, got approved by the Planning Commission and City Council but have yet to make significant progress on the site.

Tim O'Brien, a senior managing director at Legacy Partners, said his firm decided to submit the general plan screening application after the city identified the Hive area in its housing element as a location where residential units might be built and Measure K passed.

The Irvine-based developer also built 580 Anton, a 240-unit luxury apartment building in Costa Mesa's South Coast Metro

district, before Measure Y was passed, as well as nearby Bloom South Coast in Santa Ana.

"This site is actionable," O'Brien said of the Hive Live site. "It's a real opportunity to assist the city in fulfilling its [state housing] obligations as well as the community's goal for inclusionary affordable housing."

He described a community with its own sense of place that would appeal to young professionals ages 20 to 40, likely including those employed by defense contractor Anduril, which opened up operations in an adjacent parcel in 2022.

Residents who campaigned against Measure K, including those who had helped ensure the passage of the restrictive Measure Y, spoke against the Hive Live proposal Tuesday, criticizing a potential lack of affordable units and impacts to residents.

Invoking a mythical sea monster in her imagery, resident Cynthia McDonald told the City Council, "Well, you've unleashed the kraken. This project is exactly what was predicted when you rushed Measure K to the ballot, and here it is slapping residents with its ugly tentacles."

"You're allowing devel-

opers to plan the city for us without any regard for what is wanted or needed by the residents."

Others approved of the project as a solution to the city's housing crisis but asked that developers and city officials consider reducing the 1.5-per-unit parking requirement, include affordable units and promote active transportation as the proposal moved through the planning process.

Council members made no bones about the fact that the passage of Measure K, by allowing for the rezoning of industrial parcels north of the 405

Freeway, had effectively paved the way for projects like Hive Live to find a home in Costa Mesa.

"Thank you to Legacy for creating housing, which is why we worked to pass Measure K. It's why I ran for City Council and why, in my district, people voted for me twice, because they understand the importance of building housing," said west side Councilman Manuel Chavez.

"This is a very beautiful project — I'm excited to see it progress."

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HOUSE

Continued from page A2

"In 2007, we started the very first capital campaign, if you will, where we knew we needed to grow to meet the need," said Russell.

A hard hat tour on July 26 revealed the progress of the renovations to media, volunteers, donors and Ronald McDonald House alumni like the Carretes.

"It's comforting to know there is a place like this for families out there," said Luz.

Orange County Assemblyman Avelino Valencia, who represents the 68th district covering Anaheim, Orange and Santa Ana, also joined the tour.

"I am proud to have organizations in the district I



ALBERT AND LUZ Carrete, of Corona, slept in their car near the hospital as their son was going through heart surgery in 2001. Today they are donors and supporters of the Ronald McDonald House Orange County.

represent that provide families of severely ill children receiving treatment in Orange County hospitals, with a home away from home," said Valencia.

The expansion of RMHOC is set to be completed in early 2024 and will add 24 new guest rooms.

In addition to the extra rooms, the facility will include a sensory room, sa-

lon, renovated and expanded kitchen and other amenities, like a shopping experience inspired by a sister Ronald McDonald house in Chicago.

"We are going to do the same thing here. So when our little ones check in, they're going to get Ronald bucks," said Russell, which can be used to "buy" toys at the store.

"Bandai has made a commitment to donate toys," said Russell. "They are also a sponsor of our playroom that we will see on the third floor."

The expansion is made possible by local McDonald's owner and operators, who have contributed more than \$2.3 million to the expansion, via in-restaurant initiatives like Round-up for RMHOC, donation boxes and Happy Meal sales.

"The fact that we have McDonald's franchise owners who have contributed \$2.3 million financially to the expansion shows how business gives back to the



Photos by James Carbone

GUESTS IN hard hats tour the Ronald McDonald House Orange County's construction project on July 26 as the facility undergoes expansion and renovation.

community," said Valencia. To honor them, a wing of guest rooms will be dedicated to Southern California owner/operators.

Besides raising funds, local McDonald's owner/operators also volunteer their time at RMHOC. Local McDonald franchise owner/operator Brad Horner said he plans events with his management teams to come out and cook meals for the families staying in the house.

"We usually do it here," Horner said at the RMHOC, "and at the L.A. house, mostly."

Horner owns McDonald's restaurants in Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties with his brothers, Todd and

David Horner, and said the volunteer nights are a way for McDonald's team members to familiarize themselves with the charity.

"We do round-up campaigns in the restaurants now, so we ask our customers to round up their change to raise money that gets donated back to the Ronald McDonald House charity," said Horner. "For our employees, the hard thing is explaining what the charity is a way that has meaning."

Horner said volunteering creates a real connection between team members and the Ronald McDonald House the donations are supporting.

"It is a good way for them to feel like they are giving

back to the communities they serve," said Horner.

The Carretes lost Albert Carrete Jr. last year but continue to support the Ronald McDonald House charity through donations in their son's name because they know what an impact the house can have, Luz said.

"As difficult as it is, when you do have a chance to rest a little bit, maybe get a good meal, you find strength to keep going," said Luz. "It makes a big difference."

Donations to the Ronald McDonald House can be made at rmhsc.org/orange-county/page/donate.

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State bill bans sale and transport of invasive algae

BY LILLY NGUYEN

A new bill prohibiting the sale, transport and possession of any species under the *Caulerpa* genus in California has just been signed into law late last month. The genus includes both *Caulerpa taxifolia*, which infested part of Huntington Beach and Carlsbad's waters in the early 2000s, and *Caulerpa prolifera*, which has been battled in Newport Harbor in recent years.

The bill, AB655, was proposed by Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine), who confirmed Thursday local environmentalist groups OC Coastkeeper and the California Coastkeeper Alliance reached out to her in January to partner on it.

"We want to thank Gov. [Gavin] Newsom for signing AB 655 into law," said Sean Bothwell, executive director of California Coastkeeper Alliance in a

statement announcing the bill's passage. "Invasive species are a pervasive problem in California, but banning *Caulerpa* is a simple fix to a very serious and expensive problem."

Prior existing law already prohibited the sale of some species of the genus, but the law Newsom signed in late July expands that to all saltwater *Caulerpa* plants.

The genus is a group of hardy green algae typically found in shallow tropical and subtropical waters that carries characteristics allowing for "great invasive potential," according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

While the plant may not be harmful to humans, it can damage the native flora and fauna of California's waters.

With the exception of scientific research, individuals who possess the algae without express permission from the state's Fish and Wildlife Department

face fines of \$500 to \$10,000 for each violation, according to the bill's text.

OC Coastkeeper spokesman Matt Sylvester said AB655 builds off of the previous law, and the main thrust behind rallying for the bill to legislators was what happened in Newport Bay, which continues to face complete removal challenges.

In March 2021, a diver discovered the algae in China Cove and reported it to the Orange County Department of Agriculture and later the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Divers attempted to remove much of the algae in July of that same year, but it continues to persist in part because of its asexual reproduction through fragmentation. The Southern California Caulerpa Action Team, which includes OC Coastkeeper, continues to survey the bay.

Petrie-Norris said she was "shocked and horri-



File Photo

FIELD MANAGER Robert Mooney shares pieces of an invasive algae species, *Caulerpa prolifera*, that was filtered through a filtration system set up at China Cove Beach.

field" to hear that eradication of the 2000 infestation cost about \$7 million and took six years, but not before serious damage to native eelgrass.

"I was really pleased to get that call from the governor's office [about the bill's approval]. AB655 is a really simple fix to a very

serious threat to California's coast. AB655 bans *Caulerpa* ... because it poses a serious risk to our coastal ecosystems. Getting this signed into law is a huge win for our coastal Orange County communities," said Petrie-Norris.

Sylvester said parts of SCCAT's team were faring

well with acquiring funding but that OC Coastkeeper was uniquely positioned for communication. Legislation prohibiting *Caulerpa* has been a two- to three-year process, he said, but the organization is grateful for its passage.

"It's an interesting issue because it's not as grabby as an oil spill, let's say. Oil, if left in the water long enough, will dissipate. But, if you leave a *Caulerpa*, it's going to only get worse. That's why we ended up having to be proactive with this," Sylvester said. "There's seepage from the ground after the last five to six decades [of oil drilling], but with *Caulerpa* — it's really only us that causes the issue."

"With the bill, we can reduce the chances we have for someone to make that mistake and to keep it out of our waters for good."

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PAINTERS

Continued from page A1

LPAPA, said the show began as a City Hall exhibition. Next month will mark two years since the group moved into its current location, allowing LPAPA to hang the finalists for the show in its gallery. Kellenberg added that City Hall will continue to display artwork from the show, specifically the pieces produced by the top-scoring semifinalists.

Three judges scored the entries, critiquing composition, palette, subject matter and execution. Pieces shown at the gallery featured scenes of city life, moonlit shimmering lakes, sunsets and light fading over fields.

Denise Busony, a Huntington Beach resident, claimed the third-place prize. Heading back home again to Indiana, Busony captured a number of pic-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

DENISE BUSONY, with her piece "Almost There," claimed third place in LPAPA's "From Dusk to Dawn" juried art show.

tures of the setting sun during a road trip, then put oil to canvas to create her painting, "Almost There."

"I love sunsets and clouds," said Busony, who was also juried into the Art-A-Fair show this summer. "I grew up on a farm in Indiana, and so that's what our family did. We sat outside in the summer every night

and watched the sunset, so I'm always drawn to doing sunsets, and the clouds, especially. ... My husband and I were driving. We drive to Indiana every now and then, instead of flying to go home, and when we were driving back this last time, Colorado always has the most beautiful clouds, so I'm like, 'Click, click, click,

click, click.'

"When I got home, I kind of did a mash-up, it was kind of an overview of the whole trip. It wasn't any specific place. It was kind of an overview, that feeling of you're almost there. It kind of encapsulated the whole trip back home."

Michael Hill, of Escondido, submitted the first-place entry, "Flower Fields at Dusk." David Marty, from Edmonds, Wash., claimed second with "Evening Serenity." Honorable mention went to Linda Glover Gooch, of Mesa, Ariz., for "Evening Treasure."

Mikyong Osburn, of Los Angeles, earned the People's Choice honor for "Sunset on the Hill." She said in looking for a subject, she tends to shy away from the familiar that has been captured by the masses. The recognized work depicted a single house on a hill, which she said she saw while traveling through Sonoma.

"My painting is always trying to capture the moment of what I felt," Osburn said.

"That's my real goal to paint, so if other people can see that feeling or emotional expression through my painting, then I'm so happy. That's my motivation to paint another one, to get that moment to show to other people."

Osburn was thrilled to be juried into the show and to be recognized for her work, expressing that it made her feel like she is on the right track.

"Being a nonprofit, a lot of our motivation is to put back into our community of artists by providing opportunity and our education programs," Kellenberg said. "We are a member-based organization, and since we opened the gallery, our membership has grown because the artists will see the value, not only of supporting our nonprofit, but now there's even

greater opportunity for their work to be seen. We hang a new show every month, and so there's an ongoing opportunity for the artists and members to have their work seen, whether it's here or online."

The awards reception for the "From Dusk to Dawn" show saw people pour into the gallery as part of the First Thursday Art Walk in Laguna Beach. More than 40 local galleries participate in the monthly events.

"I think it's fabulous because I think it gives everybody, whether you be a local or a visitor, it gives you a reason to come out and go for an evening walk and enjoy mingling and socializing on your way to dinner," Kellenberg said.

"It's just a nice social atmosphere, so I think it's been a really good way for the community to connect."

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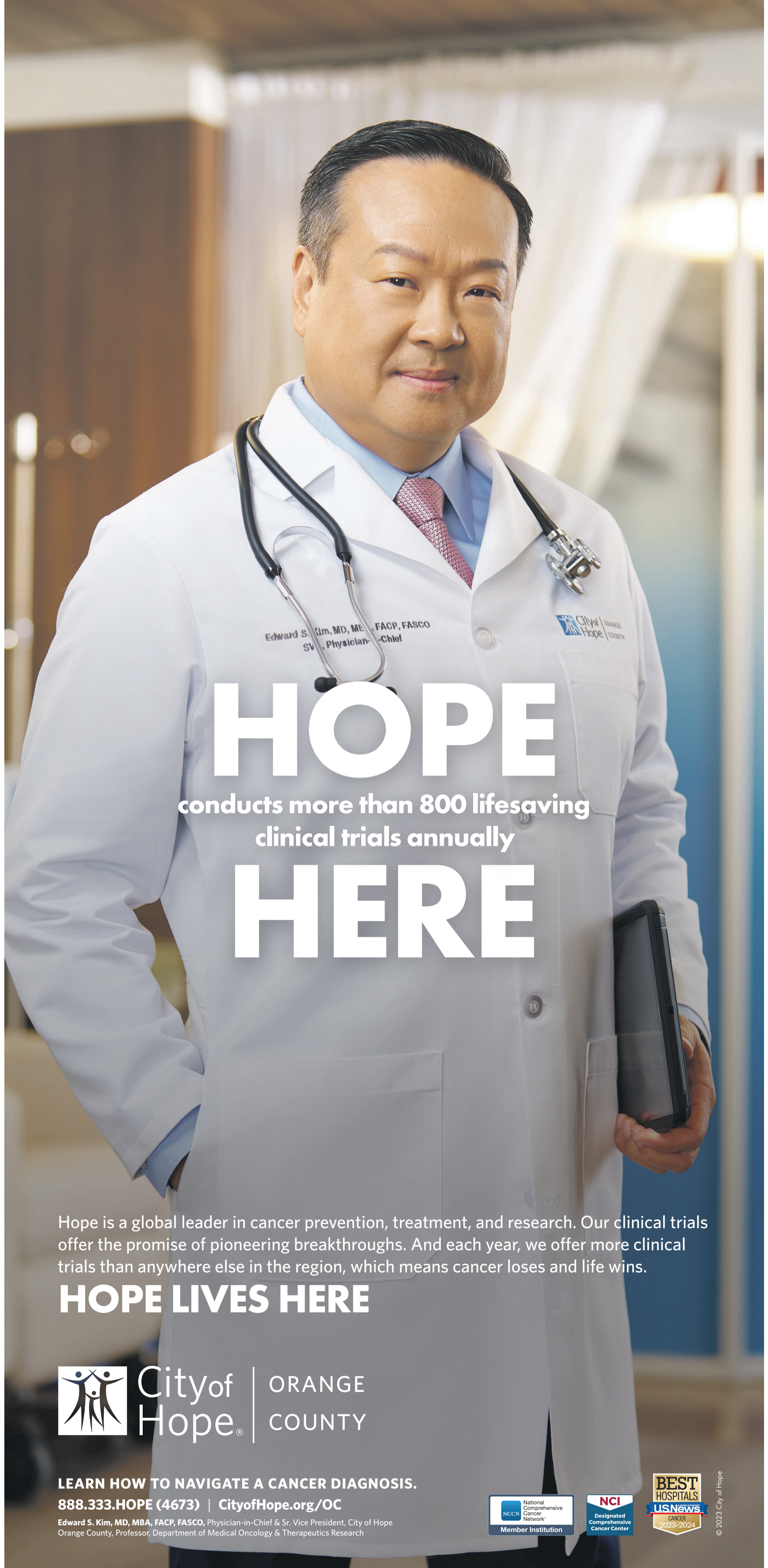
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