

Daily Pilot & Times OC

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Musicians to meld East and West

Pacific Symphony will celebrate the Year of the Dragon at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall Feb. 10.

BY MATT SZABO

The dragon is considered the most powerful of all of the Chinese zodiac signs.

As we enter the Year of the Dragon in 2024, the Pacific Symphony has prepared a powerful experience for the ears.

Pacific Symphony's seventh annual Lunar New Year celebration concert will take place Saturday, Feb. 10, at the Renée and

Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa. Joyful music, festive dances and a fusion of East and West musical traditions are on the agenda.

The program will be conducted by longtime Pacific Symphony music director Carl St. Clair. After the two-hour celebration of Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese cultures, it will end with a presentation of "America the Beautiful" by the Pacific Chorale.

"I want everybody to spend the time to promote great culture together," said Charlie Zhang, who serves on the board of directors for Pacific Symphony, at a

See *Concert*, page A8



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

"I want everybody to spend the time to promote great culture together. Here in the United States, most of the people immigrate from different places, and we're united together as one."

— Charlie Zhang
board of directors for Pacific Symphony

VIOLINIST DENNIS KIM and pianist Jin Kyung perform an example of the concert music that will be part of the seventh annual Lunar New Year celebration concert at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall.



Coming soon
to Irvine
UCI Health

Adult learners boost English skills at Newport Beach library

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Eun-jeung Kang has aspirations of becoming a nurse's assistant.

Kang, an Irvine resident whose native language is Korean, said she took English classes at a local community college, but the lessons didn't take. One of her friends suggested she look into Project Adult Literacy, a free program held at the Newport Beach Public Library that provides one-on-one tutoring and small-group classes to native English speakers with low literacy skills or those learning English as a second language.

Kang is now one of about 80 "learners" in the Newport Beach program.

Project Adult Literacy started in 1986 with Carol Hazelwood, who has stepped back from the program in the last decade. Literacy coordinator Gabriela Leman said the project began with just one student and one tutor out of the comfort of Hazelwood's house be-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

EUN-JEUNG "EJ" KANG and instructor-tutor Ray Johnston practice using challenging words in a sentence. The program tutors in conversational English as well as reading and writing.

fore she later applied for a state grant.

"The rest was history," Leman said. "The program was later in-

corporated into the Newport Beach Public Library, in 1988 and,

See *Skills*, page A4

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Jessica Peralta

KNOTT'S PEANUTS CELEBRATION OPENS WITH NEW HISTORIC EXHIBIT, ROCK SHOW AND LOTS OF MAC AND CHEESE

Franklin gets the spotlight in an exhibit as Knott's Berry Farm celebrates the "Peanuts" comic strip with music, food and more through Feb. 25. *PAGE A5*

Plans maturing for housing on senior center parking lot



James Carbone

TISH KELLY, senior vice president of development for Jamboree Housing Corp., right, at an outreach meeting Thursday, discusses plans for a project at the Costa Mesa Senior Center.

BY SARA CARDINE

As Costa Mesa seeks to free up more space for affordable housing through rezoning, those who build low-income units are beginning to see promise in parcels that for years have been underutilized.

Take, for instance, the parking lot of the city-owned and operated Costa Mesa Senior Center on West 19th Street, which comprises 145 spaces for staff members and the visiting public, along with the occasional overnight vehicle.

Figuring the vast asphalt lot might be put to better use, city officials in 2020 entered into an agreement with the Irvine-based nonprofit Jamboree Housing Corp. to assess whether the site might support low-income housing for seniors.

Since its formation in 1990, the development organization has partnered with local municipalities and community partners to create more than 10,000 units of affordable housing for families, veterans and those experiencing or at-risk for homelessness.

Kelsey Brewer, vice president of business development, said Jamboree spoke with city leaders just before the pandemic about the need for housing and where a redevelop-

ment project, using state and federal grants and program dollars, would make sense.

"They called us to come to Costa Mesa and drive around and look at a few sites," Brewer recalled of a 2019 visit. "We happened to drive by this site. We looked at them and said, that's a lot of parking. You can probably build something on that."

Brewer recalled the suggestion being met with some incredulity. But that was then and this is now.

Today, plans are moving forward for a four-story building that would accommodate a total of 60 units designed for individuals 55 and older who either earn 50% or less of Orange County's Area Median Income (\$127,800 for a four-person household) or face the threat of homelessness.

The project would allow residents to live independently but would offer wraparound services — such as case management, mental health counseling, food assistance and enrichment activities — specially tailored to the needs of seniors.

The four-story site would include an internal courtyard area that could accommodate a community garden for residents,

See *Housing*, page A2

Students learn education challenge at monument

BY ANDREW TURNER

Mendez Tribute Monument Park opened in Westminister just over a year ago, and its visitors are already considering how its subject matter might be brought to future generations.

The park recognizes the importance of Mendez, et al vs. Westminister School District of Orange County, et al, a 1947 case in which five Mexican American families challenged school segregation.

Gonzalo Mendez served as a lead plaintiff in the case after his children were not allowed to attend the Seventeenth Street School in Westminister, instead having to enroll at Hoover Elementary, the Mexican school.

A statue of Gonzalo and his wife, Felicitas, created by artist Ignacio Gomez, now keeps watch over the park at 7371 Westminister Blvd. Another statue at the southern entrance to the memorial site depicts schoolchildren with books in hand.

Teaching-credential candidates at Vanguard University have been visiting the park each semester since it opened Dec. 1, 2022. The future educators received a special treat, as Sylvia Mendez, 87, was on hand to share her childhood story, including the long walk she and her brothers faced each day to attend school.



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

SYLVIA MENDEZ shares her stories and history at Mendez Tribute Monument Park to Vanguard teaching-credential students in Westminister on Wednesday. Mendez's parents are remembered for their desegregation efforts as the subjects for the statue in the background.

Addressing the students, Mendez encouraged them to go the extra mile to help their students. She shared that a teacher would visit her home and teach her to read, adding that parents often are unable to assist their children in learning due to reasons like a language barrier or because they were working outside the home.

"They send you home with the homework, and if you can't read the homework, how can you do it?" Mendez said. "It was a teacher that helped me, so I know that here, you are go-

ing to be future teachers, and you're the ones that are going to be helping the students. What does that do? It just helps to make our country greater, doesn't it, to have educated students and to have happy people."

Mendez considers herself a storyteller and an activist for education. Her parents' efforts to secure equal educational opportunities for their children have more recently come to the surface. Some are hoping that it will also be taught alongside Brown vs. Board of Education, the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision

that ruled separate but equal educational facilities were unconstitutional.

State legislation has been introduced in the form of Assembly Bill 1805 to bring Mendez vs. Westminister School District of Orange County into the curriculum for public schools.

"California has a framework for every subject area, like history [and] social studies, there's a framework," said Jeff Hittenberger, dean of the School of Education at Vanguard. "The case is already mentioned in the framework, but it's kind of optional,



VANGUARD TEACHING-CREDENTIAL students take a tour of Mendez Tribute Monument Park in Westminister.



JEFF HITTEBERGER, dean of the School of Education at Vanguard University, introduces Sylvia Mendez.

and it's not super highlighted, so this [bill] would put it more at the core of the framework and the standards, so that it would be required to be taught in all California schools."

Luz Chavez, 25, a first-generation Mexican Ameri-

can in the teaching credential program at Vanguard, said she drew inspiration from Mendez's perseverance. Learning about the case made her reflect on her own opportunities.

See **Learn**, page A4



Joe C. Wen & Family Center for Advanced Care

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HOUSING

Continued from page A1

barbecue area, fitness center and computer room, and would sit atop an entry-level parking garage designed to exactly replace the parking stalls taken up by the 40,000-square-foot building.

"There are 145 parking spots here today, and there's going to be 145 parking spots when we're done building," Brewer explained.

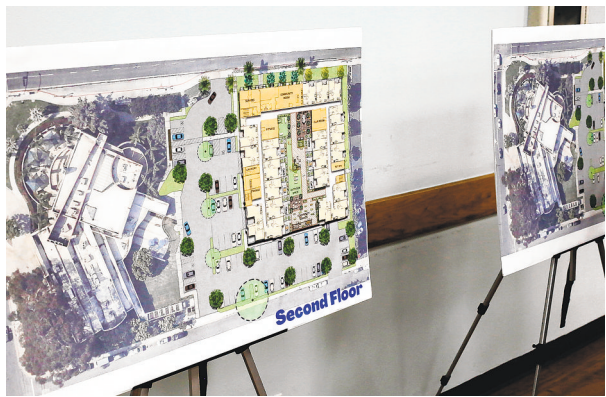
Jamboree representatives held a community outreach meeting Thursday at the Costa Mesa Senior Center to explain the project, the population it would serve and the programs that could be offered there.

In a Q&A session, attendees grilled the presenters about safety and security, room size and how utilities would be paid.

Brewer explained roughly 50% of tenants would be people identified by a care coordination system for at-risk individuals within a geographical service plan area that includes Costa Mesa and nearby cities. Those residents would be prioritized for placement into units and would pay for rent and utilities through housing vouchers.

The other half would be expected to pay 30% of their income for rent and utilities, the latter of which would be discounted through a utilities allowance, and would be housed on a first-come, first-served basis. The amount those tenants would pay could be as high as around \$1,300 per month or as low as zero, if they were not receiving any income.

Although the city of Costa Mesa owns the 2.6-acre senior center property and runs the programs offered there, the yet-to-be-named senior housing development would be operated by Jamboree through a ground lease with a 55-year covenant. After that time, the city



James Carbone

DIAGRAMS SHOW how a housing project might be situated on the Costa Mesa Senior Center's parking lot.

could decide to extend its agreement with the non-profit, find another operator or take over ownership of the site and enter into some other real estate arrangement.

As such, the city is not paying for the development itself. Instead, its estimated \$45-million price tag would be funded through a combination of federal tax credits, gap financing and loans taken out by Jamboree.

Some who attended Thursday's meeting were skeptical about whether the project would be safe and secure and whether Costa Mesa residents would be first in line for units.

Costa Mesa resident Carol Shahandeh, who volunteers with the local nonprofit Polio Survivors Plus, said she came to learn more about nonprofit-run housing and how it's financed. She said she appreciated hearing something is being done to create more housing options for older individuals.

"It sounds like a good project, especially for the people it's designed for," the 83-year-old said. "Rents and housing prices are unbelievable these days."

City Councilwoman Arlis Reynolds, who represents the 5th Council District where the senior center is located, attended Thursday's meeting. She said the project stands to bring a lot of public benefits to an area that, through the center and

nearby towers on 19th Street already serve older residents.

"More and more we hear seniors are facing affordability issues, isolation and issues with access to resources," she said. "So this project kind of checks all those boxes in a way that I think will also bring some general community benefits."

Mayor John Stephens on Friday recalled the 2019 van ride that touched off the entire process, saying Jamboree's plan could help revitalize the 19th Street corridor.

"It would bring needed affordable housing to seniors and would be one of the elements of creating a vibrant senior village on the west side," he said.

Thursday's outreach meeting comes ahead of the Costa Mesa City Council's next regular meeting Tuesday, where officials will consider Jamboree's proposal in a plan screening. There, council members and the public will have the chance to ask questions and provide input on the project.

All plans will ultimately have to be approved by the Planning Commission. If all goes well, construction could begin sometime in 2025 and would take 18 to 20 months to complete.

For more information on the proposal and its progress, visit jamboreehousing.com/seniorhousingwestsidecostamesa.

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THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

- 1 Sale labels
- 5 Online game creation
- 11 " : Miami"
- 14 Dinner bread
- 15 France's continent
- 16 Sing without words
- 17 Surroundings
- 18 Produced, as a play
- 19 Rock band's box
- 20 Holiday at home
- 22 Rotary phone part
- 23 Cuban sandwich meat
- 24 Actor Alda
- 25 Advertising company
- 27 Even score
- 28 Gator's relative
- 29 Regarding
- 32 Elaborate way of asking a teen to a dance
- 37 Injured
- 38 Fuzzy images
- 39 Casino cubes
- 40 Lawyer who's not a partner
- 42 Bring back to zero
- 43 Red gem
- 44 _ de deux
- 45 Jewish village
- 48 Film's Joel or Ethan
- 50 Fuss
- 53 Not easy
- 54 "Help me understand"
- 57 Broad street: Abbr.
- 58 Instantly memorable
- 59 Jacob's first wife
- 60 Barbie's beau
- 61 Salsa shaker
- 62 Lion feature
- 63 Finish
- 64 Mercury or Mars
- 65 Celebrity

DOWN

- 1 Refuse in a bin
- 2 Big blood vessel

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14					15							16		
17					18							19		
20				21						22				
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45	46	47					48	49				50	51	52
53					54	55						56		
57					58							59		
60					61							62		
63					64							65		

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.

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

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A6.

- 3 Flicker of light
- 4 Kill it like a comedian
- 5 Ebay transaction, often
- 6 "I'm _ here!"
- 7 Hippocampus's organ
- 8 Corporate symbol
- 9 Sign of welcome
- 10 Crossed (out)
- 11 Necklace part
- 12 Middle Eastern spice
- 13 Say without saying
- 21 "I Am _" (2010s reality show)
- 22 Solves, as a cipher
- 26 Rep. group

- 27 Taught privately
- 28 Apple's center
- 29 Puzzle-solver's cry
- 30 Mass transit option
- 31 Surg. sites
- 32 Work written for the stage
- 33 Stuck in a _
- 34 Girl sibling, for short
- 35 Power pitcher
- 36 Allow
- 38 Scripture-related
- 41 Agent's take
- 42 Pealed
- 44 Indoor kitty, e.g.
- 45 Dairy Queen order
- 46 Safe space
- 47 Fashionable fad
- 48 TV's O'Brien
- 49 Being kept cold
- 50 Really bothered
- 51 Artemis, to Romans
- 52 "Not now, some _ time"
- 55 Cartoon explorer
- 56 Stately trees
- 58 Troublemaking kid

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VANGUARD TEACHING-CREDENTIAL students take in educational materials at Mendez Tribute Monument Park in Westminster.



Don Leach Staff Photographer

LEARN

Continued from page A2

"I think [Mendez vs. Westminster School District of Orange County] should be taught in schools because I feel like Orange County and Southern California, there's such a high Hispanic population in schools," Chavez said. "I feel like this is part of their ethnicity, their culture that got impacted because the whole school system would have been different, I feel, had this case not gone forward at all. It put into perspective my whole life, all the

opportunities that I had growing up. It would have been different." Asked about students getting the chance to learn from a source like Mendez, Hittenberger noted it's not every day they get to meet a "civil rights legend." "You're meeting [someone like civil rights activist] Rosa Parks, you're meeting somebody who was part of a historic moment that will be remembered in the United States for 100 years," Hittenberger said. "That's part of the reason our candidates are so excited to meet her." After reading the informational panels at the park, the students

set off on a tour, walking a portion of the path that the Mendez siblings took on their way to school. Westminster Assistant City Manager Adolfo Ozaeta joined the walk, sharing with the students how grant funding has helped bring the park to life. A new project — Mendez Freedom Trail — is expected to break ground in the coming weeks. It will provide more educational material along the route that the Mendez children took to attend Hoover Elementary.

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SKILLS

Continued from page A1

since then, we've been serving the community." Today, almost 40 years after the program started, Leman said it boasts a student population of 76 and about 60 tutors plus 10 volunteers. Leman said most of their volunteers come from Newport Beach, but students like Kang can come from everywhere. They just need to be able to participate once a week. "We have a whole orientation that learners are asked to come to and they need to sign learning agreements where they commit to learning and working with a tutor for one hour a week for a year. Then, at the end of the year, they're reassessed to see how their skills have improved," Leman said. "There's no one-size-fits-all approach and some learners need to work with their tutors more long-term.

"We have some legacy learners that have been with the program for three to four years and some that have been with the program for 10 years because they just love the classes and are life-long learners who love meeting people that have the same goals

and coming into the library to be a part of something bigger than themselves." For Kang, a big reason she's stayed is because she's so satisfied with the classes that are made available cyclically by the program and the teachers. "The curriculum is very interesting. One class is on speaking and another has a book club that's exploring California [literature]," Kang said. "I love reading books."

She also likes the teachers. She's been working with her own tutor, Ray Johnston, every Thursday for up to four hours a week. Johnston said he's been a tutor since 2018 and first came across the program when he was newly retired and looking for something to do with his free time. Before he retired, he owned a company that sold materials to contractors. Previously he managed a bookstore on the UCLA campus for a number of years. He found Project Adult Literacy after an internet search.

"It's a community," Johnston said. "There's a sense of knowing other people, and there's an opportunity to share some of the things about the language and the culture with someone else." He said he's worked with about 30 learners and that Kang is his primary learner right now. During the pandemic he taught the program's courses and worked with people online in groups of five to six. Many of his learners are women,



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

EUNJEUNG "EJ" KANG and instructor-tutor Ray Johnston stand inside the Newport Beach Public Library.

and the books they read tend to be by successful women like Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Michelle Obama and Melinda Gates.

"[Project Adult Literacy] gives them some content as a social experience. They'll meet other people in the class, and it's a chance to practice their English with them. There's an aspect of the culture that they learn, whether it's in conversation, dealing with the DMV or financial things that people need to know," he said. He's found feedback to be generally positive from those that he's tutored, describing the program as a "stepping stone for them to join the larger community, getting a job or attending to a specific career objective."

Leman said the program caters to a number of international learners who may be conversational in English but may not be able to read or write. They receive many referrals, Leman said. There does not seem to be any stigma

attached to signing up for the program, she said. Rather, potential students might have concerns about how they are perceived in daily life because of their lack of English literacy.

The program is competitive and funded not only by the state but also by the city and local businesses and sponsors.

"There is that lack of confidence. Our program does a great job of building them up where they can get jobs and have the confidence to talk to their children's teachers about challenges ... and wouldn't have had that ability before," she said. "Getting a job, being a citizen, going to school, communicating with educators — overall, our mission, and I'm reading our mission statement, is to empower adults to achieve greater success in their lives through literacy skill development."

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CONCERTS AT



The Laguna Playhouse

Knott's celebration highlights Franklin

BY JESSICA PERALTA

In 1968, Charles Schulz's character, Franklin, made history when he met Charlie Brown at the beach. Today, Knott's Berry Farm's annual Peanuts Celebration spotlights this meeting and the details surrounding it with a new exhibit that debuted on Jan. 27 in Calico Town Hall, located in the Ghost Town area of the park.

"The creation of Franklin can be traced back to a Los Angeles school teacher, Harriet Glickman," said Knott's Entertainment Producer Christopher Do. "Shortly after the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Glickman wrote to Charles Schulz in April of 1968, asking him to consider introducing a black character to his comic strip as a way to positively influence attitudes on race. They had ongoing correspondence and in the summer of 1968, Schulz introduced Franklin and he has remained an important member of the 'Peanuts' gang ever since."

The exhibit includes newspaper clippings of Franklin's comic strip debut, letters congratulating Schulz for including Franklin in "Peanuts," reproductions from original art and the initial correspondence between Glickman and Schulz. In the middle of the exhibit, a children's activity encourages them to trace images to create their own comic strip using "Peanuts" characters as well as a character meet-and-greet and photo opportunity with Franklin himself.

"Whenever there are chances to blend fun and learning at our park, we love the combination," Do said. "Be it spending quality time waiting for a ride, interacting with the residents of Ghost Town or sparking meaningful conversations through exhibits like this, it's about offering the perfect setting to create



Photos by Jessica Peralta

"FRANKLIN" POINTS OUT a "Peanuts" comic strip featuring his character at Knott's Berry Farm's Peanuts Celebration.

those special moments and shared experiences."

Do said that since 2020, Knott's has partnered with the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center to display one of their exhibitions during the Peanuts Celebration.

"The park's exhibit offers a unique chance to combine fun with education," he said. "Previous displays have covered topics, including exploration and space, team sports, taking care of each other and the environment."

Jasmine Huerta, of Perris, visited Knott's and the Franklin exhibit on Jan. 28.

"It's really nice," she said. "It's really cool for the kids."

She said she didn't know about Franklin's history prior to the exhibit and enjoyed learning about him.

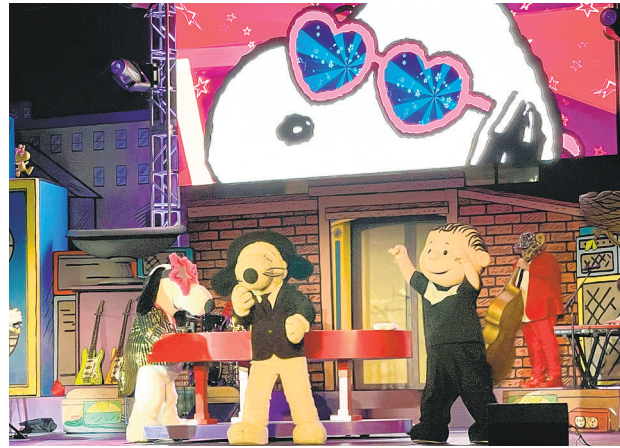
"I was reading along," she said. "I think it was

really nice to know about him, his background story."

Throughout the rest of the park, the Peanuts Celebration, which runs daily through Feb. 25, returns with plenty of themed entertainment and food.

During the day, "Peanuts" characters take the Calico Mine Stage with a musical game show, "It's Your Life, Charlie Brown." At night, the stage hosts "Snoopy's Legendary Rooftop Concert," featuring the "Peanuts" gang and indie band, the Jelly of the Month Club, for a rock show covering hits from Prince to Queen and Bob Marley — and themed with rock star-type costumes and headlines on a large screen above the stage including names like Dog Marley, Birdie Van Halen and Fido Mercury.

The Bird Cage Theatre has Peanuts Sketch School



"LINUS" PERFORMS as part of "Snoopy's Legendary Rooftop Concert" at Knott's Berry Farm.

with a Knott's resident art teacher offering step-by-step instructions on drawing "Peanuts" characters, as well as Charlie Brown's Trivia Challenge, an interactive experience where guests are quizzed on their knowledge of the "Peanuts"

universe. Other activities include the Peanuts Cowboy Jamboree, where Franklin and Linus are cowboys at Calico Park and play some games with guests, and Pig-Pen's Pig Pen at the Knott's Livery Stables, with a character

meet-and-greet/photo opportunity with Pig-Pen, horses and even some baby pigs.

In terms of food, Knott's goes the way of mac and cheese, with everything from Franklin's Mac and Cheesy Noodle Cheddar and Broccoli Soup to Schroeder's Fluffy Breakfast Mac and Cheese Pancake served with a side of bacon and maple syrup.

"We went with a whole new menu this time because we wanted to play on a fun food idea kids love — mac and cheese," said Knott's Director of Food and Beverage Laura Brubaker.

Playing off "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" TV special, Knott's launched "It's the Great Mac and Cheese, Charlie Brown" tasting card, offering six tastes for \$45.

"We have never done a tasting card for 'Peanuts,' but we thought it would be fun to create something where families could try most of the — six out of 10 — tasting card items at a reduced price," Brubaker said. "With Camp Snoopy currently undergoing renovation, we wanted to encourage guests to move around the park to experience the Peanuts Celebration. We put mac in many different facets, like pancakes, burgers, soup and burritos. The one dessert we did was a play on the word cheese with our Woodstock's Cheesecake."

Regarding current construction at Knott's, plans are to debut a renovated Camp Snoopy this summer.

"Camp Snoopy will be reimagined to allow campers of all ages to become full-fledged Beagle Scouts as they explore new rides, new character experiences, new entertainment, a new dining hall, a new camp store, plus more seating and ambiance," Do said.

Jessica Peralta is a contributor to iTimesOC.

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forum

MAILBAG



James Carbone

HUNTINGTON BEACH residents cheer and hold signs after public comments on the proposal to screen children's books before they are shelved at the Huntington Beach Central Library at a Huntington Beach City Council meeting in October.

Book board, voter ID measure rile readers

The conservative four have created another solution to a problem that doesn't exist. The panel of 21 citizens to review books for us is their dumbest idea yet, and that is saying something for these political lightweights! How about actually serving the citizens of Huntington Beach and stop laying your personal political agenda on us? Get out and fix a pothole or do something that actually moves Surf City forward, instead of this type of thing.

I have lived in this wonderful city for over 40 years, and this is the first time I have been embarrassed for my city. Stop finding solutions to problems that don't exist!

Thomas Barry
Huntington Beach

I am mystified that the Huntington Beach City Council has placed Amendment A, the voter ID measure, on the ballot without a cost analysis. City Atty. Michael Gates has stated that adoption of this measure *may* result in additional, currently undetermined costs to the city because the city does not currently

perform the election activities. But then he goes on to contradict himself and say that if adopted it *will* increase the city's election-related costs in an amount that cannot be *precisely* determined at this time.

Can costs be estimated to the nearest \$500,000 or \$1,000,000? Can Gates put a range on it? Initial estimates by the city to implement Measure A were in excess of \$1M but did not include all the costs. And what about potential litigation costs? We know that this measure violates state voting laws.

Is Gates unwilling to estimate the costs for fear that the residents will be unwilling to vote for this unnecessary, ill-conceived idea? Estimating the costs cannot be that difficult.

This City Council needs to get about the business of running the city, one that has a growing deficit that will require cuts to services. The council should stop spending money we don't have. It is bad city governance.

Tony Daus
Huntington Beach

COMMENTARY | ERIK SKINDRUD

Atomic veteran's experience with 31-kiloton nuke is worth recalling as 'Doomsday Clock' resets

Ray Calloway is active, articulate and mostly free from the chronic health conditions that can dog aging citizens.

Most weeks, the 92-year-old travels from his home near Golden West College to the Huntington Beach Tree Society's Urban Forest off Ellis Avenue, where he spreads mulch and waters the younger plants.

Ray likes the fresh air that blows off the Pacific and is mostly free of contaminants.

He can recall other days when the air was dirtier — like April 22, 1952, for instance.

On that morning, Ray crouched in a foxhole at the Nevada Test Site as a B-50 (a souped-up B-29 bomber) passed overhead. A little after 9:30 a.m., the aircraft dropped a device that fell to a point 4,000 feet over the desert about 3 and two-thirds miles from where Ray crouched. There it detonated — releasing 31 kilotons of explosive energy.

Dubbed Charlie, the device unleashed double the yield released by the bomb that leveled Hiroshi-



Erik Skindrud

RAY CALLOWAY holds up a notebook with a sketch of an atomic blast he witnessed at the Nevada Test Site in 1952.

ma. Ray turns eloquent when he recalls the blast and its aftermath. It's obvious that the experience remains vivid.

"The most beautiful crimson I've ever seen," he recalls of the mushroom cloud. "Shaped like a doughnut, with white clouds coming out of the center, rolling over the outside and back up through the center. Just like it was boiling up there in the sky."

What most surprised him was the eerie silence that followed the initial flash.

"How come no sound?," he recalls thinking. "I was just amazed that I didn't feel and sense an enormous blast wave."

In our chat, Ray quickly reviews the physics. With the speed of sound around 700 miles an hour, it took about 13 or 14 seconds for the blast wave to reach the

See *Resets*, page A8



Patrick Semansky | Associated Press

SIEGFRIED HECKER, from left, Daniel Holz, Sharon Squassoni, Mary Robinson and Elbegdorj Tsakhia with the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, remove a cloth covering the Doomsday Clock at the National Press Club in Washington on Jan. 24, 2023.

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

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8	6	5	9	1	2	3	7	4
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CONCERT

Continued from page A1

recent media event. “Here in the United States, most of the people immigrate from different places, and we’re united together as one.”

Zhang came to America with \$20 in his pocket and dreams of playing the clarinet, after receiving a music scholarship to Pasadena City College. Those plans were dashed after he injured a finger working in a restaurant. That industry soon became his passion — he founded the restaurant chain Pick Up Stix in 1989 — but his love for music has continued over the years. Last year, he received an honorary doctorate from Cal State Fullerton.

He and his wife, Ling, are sponsors of the concert, as is the Jade Society, which helps support the symphony by opening “avenues of engagement to the Chinese communities of Orange County,” according to its web page.

Charlie Zhang worked with Eileen Jeanette, Pacific Symphony’s senior vice president of artistic planning, to put together the program.

“He’s like the nuclear fission of this project,” Pacific Symphony President John Forsyte said, add-

ing that Charlie had the idea for the concert early on in his tenure on the symphony’s board of directors. “He imagined an event that really was very inclusive. He’s almost like an impresario. He loves bringing together children and professionals, so we took his cue and have worked very closely with him.”

The show itself is a mix of internationally recognized and local Orange County talent. Yu Liu will play the pipa, a traditional Chinese wooden instrument. Fei-Fei Dong will play piano on a Beethoven “Choral fantasy” piece.

Wendy Hua’s Violin Studio at Orange County Music and Dance, as well as the Yaya Dance Academy, also have pieces they’ll perform. The violin studio will play “The Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto,” one of the most famous Chinese orchestral pieces. The dance academy will tackle two pieces, “Polonaise from 2046” as well as “Wanquan River.”

Concertmaster Dennis Kim, who was born in Korea, raised in Canada and educated in the United States, said he appreciates the Pacific Symphony’s commitment to such a show.

“For me, this Lunar New Year celebration at Pacific Symphony



PIPA PLAYER

Yu Liu, board member Charlie Zhang, Pacific Symphony President John Forsyte and concert violinist Dennis Kim discuss the upcoming concert.

Don Leach
Staff
Photographer

is very special, to have our music director be a part of this,” said Kim, who serves on the faculty of UC Irvine and the Orange County School of the Arts. “I know a lot of other places, the music director, he or she would never do a Lunar New Year concert. It’s kind of like a show on the side. But here, I feel like it’s one of the concerts that Carl really takes seriously and he understands the importance for our community. So for me, it’s great to be part of this important annual event.”

John Forsyte said that with hundreds of performers, it’s the largest American orchestra production for Lunar New Year. He said the concert’s goal is to unite the community as much as possible, adding that it’s one of Pacific Symphony’s greatest nights of the year.

“What has been joyous is to bring together Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, countries that have traditionally celebrated the Lunar New Year,” Forsyte said. “That has grown over the years, to be more inclusive in the programming. At

the same time, I think it’s wonderful for audiences that don’t come from Asia to experience an absolutely beautiful cultural tradition. It’s been a joy for me personally to be part of it.”

Pacific Symphony is also holding a free Lunar New Year Lantern Festival on March 2 at the Segerstrom Concert Hall. Guests are encouraged to reserve their free tickets at PacificSymphony.org.

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RESETS

Continued from page A6

men. By that time, most, including Ray, had emerged from their foxholes and were staring at the spectacle.

“I experienced a lot of dirt and dust in my face as a result,” he recalls.

In the film “Oppenheimer,” the blast wave takes more than a minute to engulf the famous scientist. That’s a bit of artistic license. (Observers were about 6 miles from the Trinity test and would have felt the blast wave after roughly 30 seconds.)

As with the film, Calloway’s story provokes thought. What would it be like to experience such a blast in person?

His tale brings to life the immense power of nuclear explosions. And the weapon he witnessed is relatively small compared to today’s — many use atomic explosions to spark secondary fusion reactions. Their power ranges into the hundreds of kilotons.

If Ray’s bomb went off at the Huntington Beach Pier, the house I grew up in at Beach Boulevard and Atlanta Avenue would immediately ignite — then be swept away by the blast wave several seconds later. That thought gives me pause when I think of it.

Reliable defense against a determined nuclear attack does not exist, most experts agree.

A 2022 New York City civil defense video famously told residents “You’ve got this” after sharing tips for surviving thermonuclear war. It was widely ridiculed.

“Civil defense campaigns [like this] undermine public trust,” responded Jeffrey Lewis of the East Asia Nonproliferation Project at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Montreux.

“The advice ... is so obviously inadequate,” Lewis added. “You definitely do not ‘got this.’”

In 1980, during the height of the Cold War, Huntington Beach civil defense and emergency services director George Thyden advised yacht-owners to stock food and water — and head for

the far side of Catalina Island if war loomed.

There “they would be protected against the blast, thermal threat and fallout,” Thyden told the L.A. Times in 1980.

Thyden’s advice for non-boat-owners? Ask a boat owner to invite you aboard.

After an hour with Calloway, a bigger picture emerged of Operation Tumbler-Snapper and Desert Rock IV — code names for the nuclear test series and troop maneuvers he took part in.

The series (and several that followed) were comprehensive dress rehearsals for using tactical nuclear weapons in battle.

Ray and other soldiers were monitored during the tests (and interviewed afterward) to detect any fear or reluctance to participate. Did he detect any fear or reluctance?

“I did not,” he recalls. With the current state of the world, and its ongoing conflicts, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists on Jan. 23 confirmed its famous Doomsday Clock scale at 90 seconds to midnight — the most urgent setting since it de-

buted in 1947.

“China, Russia and the United States are all spending huge sums to expand or modernize their nuclear arsenals, adding to the ever-present danger of nuclear war through mistake or miscalculation,” the Chicago-based organization’s statement read.

Calloway thinks full-scale simulations of nuclear war like the one he took part in can only encourage leaders to pull the trigger.

“As unfortunate as it may seem, [tests like mine] make it more likely that [these weapons] will be used.

“That was the purpose of our exercise — to prove to the world that the U.S. has people trained in the use of tactical nuclear weapons. That they have experience and know how to use [nukes] on the battlefield.”

Decades without atmospheric testing and reported close calls have likely lulled the public into thinking nukes aren’t much of a threat today, journalist Abe Streeper mused in the publication *Scientific American* last year.

“We’ve forgotten how to think

about [nuclear weapons],” Streeper wrote in his story about the U.S. government’s plan to spend \$1.5 trillion on a new generation of modernized nukes.

Among Calloway’s memories is marching toward ground zero an hour after the explosion. Along the way soldiers passed cages where sheep had endured broiling before they succumbed to the blast.

Calloway knows he is lucky. He’s one of the 235,000 atomic veterans exposed to radiation during the atmospheric testing era that did not develop cancer. An unknown number of thousands did.

At the end of our conversation, Calloway expressed gratitude for the aircraft crew that placed the bomb at its target. If they had been off by a mile or two, the outcome would have been very different for him.

“We would have been wiped out,” he said with a chuckle.

ERIK SKINDRUD grew up in Huntington Beach. He lives in Long Beach. Follow him at @Erik_Bookman.

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