

Daily Pilot

THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021 /// Now including Coastline Pilot and Huntington Beach Independent /// dailypilot.com



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

STUDENTS ARRIVE for in-person instruction at Laguna Beach High School Wednesday after the school closed a year ago due to the pandemic.

Secondary school students back on campus in Laguna

BY ANDREW TURNER

The Laguna Beach Unified School District welcomed students back to its secondary school campuses Wednesday for the first time since distance learning began a year ago due to the coronavirus pandemic.

At Laguna Beach High School, students began arriving around 8:30 a.m. at three designated points of entry, where they had their temperatures checked before making their return to physical classrooms.

The district's reopening plan called for hybrid learning to take place in cohorts, so about 350 students returned to campus Wednesday. A second group of a similar size will participate in in-person learning



A STAFF MEMBER checks students with a thermometer at one of the entrances to Laguna Beach High. Students arrived for in-person instruction Wednesday after the school closed one year ago due to the pandemic.

on Thursday.

Laguna Beach Principal Dr. Jason Allemann said about 200 of the district's high school students remain in distance learning full time through the virtual academy.

Allemann was among those who welcomed students at the front entrance to the school near the Artists Theatre, along with a display of school pride in the form of several cheerleaders in uniform.

"You just can't beat the energy of a high school campus with kids on it," Allemann said. "It's indescribable and it just keeps you young."

Allemann sympathized with students regarding what they have lost over the last year,

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C.M. council names mayor

John Stephens lost a reelection bid but on Tuesday was appointed to replace outgoing Katrina Foley.

BY SARA CARDINE

Forgoing a special election and seeking applicants to replace outgoing Mayor Katrina Foley — who will be sworn in to the Orange County Board of Supervisors on March 22 — Costa Mesa City Council members Tuesday appointed John Stephens the city's new mayor.

A former District 1 councilman who lost his reelection bid in November to conservative challenger Don Harper, Stephens has been serving on the city's planning commission since being appointed by the council in January.

Tuesday's 5-1 vote (Harper opposed and Foley abstained) came well after midnight and followed a long discussion on the merits of making an outright appointment or soliciting applications from residents interested in filling out the two-year, at-large mayoral term.

California's Government Code states municipal leaders must appoint a replacement, even for an elected mayor. If council members had failed to name Foley's replacement within 60 days, a special election would have to have been conducted before

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Former prosecutor to take on county D.A.

Peter Hardin announces that he will run against Todd Spitzer next year.

BY HANNAH FRY

A former prosecutor and U.S. Marine Corps veteran said Tuesday that he will challenge Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer to become Orange County's top prosecutor next year in a race that is poised to test the climate for justice reform in a county that has historically favored tough-on-crime policies.

Peter Hardin, 42, announced his candidacy at a media briefing outside the Lamoreaux Justice Center and Juvenile Hall in Orange on Tuesday afternoon, surrounded by dozens of supporters holding blue and orange signs bearing the attorney's name.

With his son by his side, Hardin outlined his catalog of ideas, including ending cash bail, halting the practice of prosecuting children as adults and abolishing the use of the death penalty.

These policies, he says, will help bring the county's justice system into the 21st century.

"I'm running to enhance public safety, heal and restore our vic-

See **Hardin**, page A3

Police seek attempted murder suspect

Officers responded to reports of shots fired on March 2 in Costa Mesa.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Costa Mesa police are currently seeking Max Diamond, a 29-year-old resident of Norwalk who allegedly shot a man earlier this month.

Officers responded to a call about shots fired at around 5:40 a.m. on March 2 in the 2000 block of Harbor Boulevard. Upon arrival, officers discovered a 30-year-old man from Costa Mesa had been shot. He was taken to a local hospital where he was treated for a gunshot wound to the neck.

The victim survived the injury and has since been released from the hospital, officials said.

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Facility beckons animal lovers with goal of restoring life to pets

BY SUSAN HOFFMAN

Tessa, 11 years old and some pounds overweight, lumbered up the ramp toward the indoor swimming pool with determination and in clear anticipation of her weekly swim.

Her aquatic workout came about after Jennifer Herzer of Newport Beach sought some help for her black Labrador. Tessa was suffering from arthritis pain in all four leg joints, making exercise on land impossible.

After an internet search for alternative therapies for dogs with arthritis, she discovered Animal Wellness Center of OC, located in Costa Mesa.

"I just love this place, there's nothing like it for miles," said Herzer, who originally brought Tessa in for the introductory swim.

"I've added other services to the swim therapy such as chiropractic, acupuncture and cold laser. We are still keeping our vet," she said, "just enhancing



Susan Hoffman

ERIN HALE, a volunteer with Animal Wellness Center of OC, blow-dries Tessa's fur while Jennifer Herzer holds her leash.

the quality of life of our dog."

It was actually because of their own dogs' health issues that the owners of the facility discovered the world of holistic health therapies for animals. Co-owner Barb West's chocolate Labrador, Kona, was diagnosed with a form of blindness, sudden acquired retinal degener-

ation and after receiving chiropractic and acupuncture, lived another five years.

"A lot of things can be done to help animals outside the typical Western medicine realm," said West.

West's partner, Lourdes Bi-

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YOUR MARGARITA ADVENTURE AWAITS

Margarita Crawl is an event for Margarita lovers to Taste, Explore & Enjoy Margaritas & Bites

March 21 – 27, 2021

For restaurants and margarita menus visit:

MargaritaCrawl.com



