

# Daily Pilot

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023 /// dailypilot.com

## Mourners hold vigil for slain 'friend to everyone'



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE**, including the late Tatum Goodwin's best friend, Madison Moyer, gather to remember the 27-year-old during a candlelight vigil at the end of the San Clemente pier on Wednesday. Goodwin was found dead in downtown Laguna Beach early Sunday morning.

## Arrest made in killing, bail set at \$1M

Laguna Beach police take Dino Rojas-Moreno, 26, into custody on suspicion of homicide.

BY ANDREW TURNER

Laguna Beach police detectives arrested Dino Rojas-Moreno in connection with the killing of Tatum Goodwin, authorities said Wednesday night.

The body of Goodwin, a 27-year-old resident of San Clemente, was discovered in a secluded area near the 200 block of Ocean Avenue on Sunday by a construction crew member at 8:20 a.m.

Police opened a homicide investigation into the incident, which led to Rojas-Moreno, 26, being taken into custody in Laguna Hills. Rojas-Moreno was being held with his bail set at \$1

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**FRIENDS GATHER** around a shrine and pay respects to Tatum Goodwin during a candlelight vigil at the end of the San Clemente pier.



**CANDLES AND FLOWERS** make up a memorial during a candlelight vigil in honor of Tatum Goodwin, who was found dead on Sunday.

Friends and family praise the life of Tatum Goodwin, a 27-year-old found dead in Laguna Beach Sunday morning.

BY ANDREW TURNER

It mattered not that rain was falling as the designated hour for a candlelight vigil planned for Tatum Goodwin approached. The remembrance event would carry on.

Hundreds gathered at the end of the San Clemente pier Wednesday night to pay tribute to Goodwin, a 27-year-old resident of the town whose body was found last weekend in Laguna Beach, launching a murder investigation.

Family and friends attending the vigil described Goodwin as "genuine" and as a "friend to everyone."

The minutes passed as the crowd filled in, encircling a canopy under which a batch of candles lit up a portrait of Goodwin. As reflective music played, including "Count On Me" by Bruno Mars, flowers were passed around to those in attendance.

Madison Moyer and Georgette Schuda, close friends of Goodwin's, wore matching green sweaters with the words "You deserve to be loved" prominently displayed on the back.

Then Moyer broke the somber silence, sharing a poetic eulogy that personalized her relation-

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Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**HUNTINGTON BEACH** Mayor Tony Strickland, far left, shakes hands with Jack Dupont as he greets a crew of police and fire Explorers after Thursday's groundbreaking ceremony.

## Youth training center to guide future

H.B. officials Thursday held a groundbreaking for a new \$2M police and fire department facility for Explorers.

BY MATT SZABO

The Explorers programs of Huntington Beach's police and fire departments will soon have a brand-new place to call their own.

The city held a groundbreaking ceremony Thursday morning for its new Joint Youth Training Center facility.

Located on Gothard Street next to the Central Net Training Center, the 4,693-square-foot facility is scheduled to open next year.

It will cost about \$2 million, Huntington Beach Fire Chief Scott Haberle said, to be paid for by American Rescue Plan Act funds that the City Council allocated for use two years ago.

"It is imperative that we invest, not only in our community but also in the future of Huntington Beach and its leaders," Mayor Tony Strickland said during the ceremony. "The training facility will foster a positive environment for our police and fire Explorers as they gain experience and leadership skills that will last a lifetime."

Haberle added that the Explorers programs run by both the police and fire departments have been growing in recent years, and the new facility will help develop the two departments from within. It will include a 50-seat training classroom as well as new administrative offices and a break room, and the new layout also includes covered parking for five city vehicles.

The current facility has housed the Fire Department's Explorers program since the early 1980s. Haberle said he started as a fire Explorer when he was 16, growing up in the fire service through the program.

"I'm excited to say just in the Fire Explorer program, we have

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## Church marks its 40th anniversary of hosting blood drives

BY SUSAN HOFFMAN

For decades, Mesa Verde United Methodist Church has done its part in organizing blood drives on behalf of the American Red Cross.

Originally held in various locations around the church campus, including classrooms, the fellowship hall and even the sanctuary, today the drives are conducted in a self-contained mobile unit.

Since November 1983, when the mission began at Mesa Verde, the church is credited with arranging for the collection of more than 588 gallons of life-saving blood. The latest drive was held Monday and marked the effort's 40th anniversary.

Coordinator Lynda Wood of Costa Mesa said she started working blood drives in 1955 when she was a 16-year-old high school stu-

dent.

"My mother told me during one summer vacation that since I wasn't doing anything that day, 'You can work a blood drive,'" said Wood. "Back then the nurses wore white caps and white dresses, and they took blood into glass bottles instead of bags."

Costa Mesa resident and veteran donor of over 100 times, Laura Lane customarily donates five times a year.

"I started because Lynda [Wood] was my Sunday school teacher," Lane said. "She's been setting a good example for all of us to donate."

Christine Welch Sypowicz, regional communications director of the American Red Cross Southern California Region, expressed her organization's gratitude for

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**DONOR LAURA LANE** gives blood Monday during the Mesa Verde United Methodist Church 40th anniversary blood drive held at the Costa Mesa church.

Susan Hoffman



# Driver robbed at gunpoint on 405 freeway on-ramp

BY CITY NEWS SERVICE

Authorities sought the public's help this week to locate several suspects who staged a collision and robbed a victim at gunpoint on a Huntington Beach freeway on-ramp.

Officers responded to the southbound Beach Boulevard on-ramp to the northbound San Diego (405) Freeway to a report of a collision and armed robbery Tuesday around 1:15

p.m., according to the California Highway Patrol.

The robbery involved a staged collision with a maroon Infiniti SUV and a white Ford Explorer, the CHP reported. Several suspects dressed in dark clothing and wearing masks approached the victim's vehicle and robbed the driver at gunpoint of cash and jewelry before fleeing in the Ford Explorer, according to the CHP.

The CHP Border Division Major Crimes Unit is continuing an ongoing investigation of the robbery.

Anyone with information regarding the robbery is urged to call the CHP Border Division Investigative Service Unit Major Crimes Unit at (657) 391-4017 or Investigator Joaquin Gill at (714) 240-3754.

dailypilot@latimes.com  
Twitter: @TheDailyPilot



**THE CHP BORDER** Division Major Crimes Unit is looking for several suspects in the armed robbery of a driver after a staged collision on the southbound Beach Boulevard on-ramp to the northbound San Diego (405) Freeway Tuesday afternoon.

File Photo

## VIGIL

Continued from page A1

ship with Goodwin. She said her friend had loved the ocean and talked about being a "pirate" in her past life.

"Tatum was so much more than my best friend," Moyer said. "She was a friend to everyone. She was a hug-you-from-behind and rest-your-head-on-your-shoulder friend. She was a wake-you-up-in-the-morning-with-your-favorite-coffee friend. She was a surprise-you-with-balloon-and-flowers-on-your-birthday and show-up-where-you're-at or just-to-cheer-you-up-on-a-bad-day friend.

"She was a grab-you-by-the-arm-and-make-you-dance-anywhere-you-are friend. She was a see-you-upset-and-buy-you-a-shot ... friend. ... She was a just-wants-to-spread-love-light-and-happiness friend."

Moyer added that Goodwin left a legacy of love, before Schuda took a turn to share her thoughts.

"The person who did this to her, I want you to know that I [expletive] hate you for the rest of my life because she doesn't deserve that," Schuda said. "Not an ounce of that person deserves to have life, but also, I hope they spend the rest of their life regretting what they did and feeling pain the way that she felt pain because it is unacceptable what happened to her.

"But I want all people that cared about her to know that she was happy, and that's what matters."

Following their remarks, the friends encouraged attendees to raise their flowers high and then cast them into the sea below. Before doing so, they said, "Cheers to our pirate!"

Goodwin worked for four years at Carmelita's restaurant in Laguna Beach, where she was an assistant manager. She was found dead in a remote



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**MOURNERS GATHER** around a shrine created in memory of Tatum Goodwin during a candlelight vigil at the San Clemente pier on Wednesday.

area near Ocean Avenue at 8:20 a.m. Sunday.

Authorities announced late Wednesday that 26-year-old Dino Rojas-Moreno had been arrested as a suspect in connection with Goodwin's killing.

Goodwin is survived by her parents, Bill and Stacy Goodwin-Pitino, and her siblings Kaylee, Alex, Jacob and Weston. She also had a dog named Brody.

"I'm sorry I wasn't there to protect her, but she

didn't deserve this," Tatum's older sister, Kaylee, said through tears.

Tatum's mom said she was "overwhelmed" by the large turnout on a rainy fall night.

"She's just a happy-go-

lucky person that would give you the shirt off her back," Stacy said. "Tatum's just like that. She's just really special."

A GoFundMe aiming to raise money for memorial services and to assist in the

creation of a memorial for Goodwin in Laguna Beach had raised nearly \$28,000 as of 2:30 p.m. on Thursday.

andrew.turner@latimes.com  
Twitter: @AndrewTurnerTCN



**STACY GOODWIN-PITINO**, left, Tatum Goodwin's mom, and Madison Moyer, at the candlelight vigil on Wednesday.

## ARREST

Continued from page A1

million.

The Anaheim and Newport Beach police departments assisted Laguna Beach police in the efforts that led to the arrest.

"This arrest was the result of outstanding police work by our investigations team that worked tirelessly with our law enforcement partners to bring justice to Tatum Goodwin and her family," Laguna Beach Police Chief Jeff Calvert said in a statement.

Goodwin had worked for four years at Carmelita's, where she was an assistant manager for the restaurant.

Family and friends held a candlelight vigil for Goodwin at the end of the San Clemente Pier on Wednesday night.

andrew.turner@latimes.com  
Twitter: @AndrewTurnerTCN

## Daily Pilot

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### CONTACT US

**Carol Cormaci**  
Executive Editor  
carol.cormaci@latimes.com

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

10540 Talbert Ave.,  
Suite 300 West,  
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

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

**Lilly Nguyen**,  
Newport Beach  
lilly.nguyen@latimes.com

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

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

**Sarah Mosqueda**, TimesOC  
sarah.mosqueda@latimes.com

Send Letters to the Editor  
to erik.haugli@latimes.com.  
See Mailbag for guidelines.

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## CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

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