

Daily Pilot & Times OC

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2024 /// Serving the coastal cities of Orange County and beyond /// dailypilot.com



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

RUBY MAZUR stands with a variety of his work on display at the Bill Mack Gallery in Laguna Beach, including, directly behind his head, one of his iconic tongue-in-mouth paintings, made famous by an appearance on a Rolling Stones' album.

Loss to fire doesn't snuff out passion for painting

Rock 'n' roll artist Ruby Mazur moved to SoCal after losing his gallery to the wildfire on Maui.

BY ANDREW TURNER

Ruby Mazur has always fashioned himself as a survivor, so it's no surprise that he titled his autobiography after the words he lives by: "Get up ... and move on."

The renowned rock 'n' roll artist has dealt with all kinds of adversity throughout his life, from serious illness — cancer and childhood polio — to seeing his work go up in smoke on more than one occasion.

In this journey filled with twists and turns, Mazur has found himself in Southern California, back to painting after losing his gallery on Lahaina's Front Street to an Aug. 8 wildfire on the island of Maui.

Mazur is now appearing regularly on Sundays in the Bill Mack



See **Painting**, page A8 **FINE ARTIST** and art consultant David Vaughn with his mixed-media "Guitar way to Heaven" piece.

School district weighs fate of acreage

Citizens advisory group will seek public input Feb. 5 regarding 11.36 acres adjacent to newly named Randall Preserve.

BY SARA CARDINE

Most would jump at the chance to own 11.36 acres of coastally zoned Orange County real estate, but Newport-Mesa Unified School District, which has owned such a parcel for decades, is considering the possibility of liquidating the acreage.

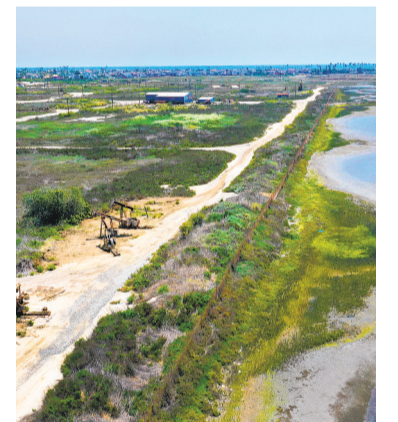
That's just one scenario for what could happen to the property, which sits adjacent to Banning Ranch, a 384-acre erstwhile oilfield being cleaned up by conservationists and preserved as open space under the new moniker Randall Preserve.

Since October, a citizens advisory group — the Banning Ranch Surplus Land Committee — has been learning more about the parcel, its history and zoning and discussing possible options for the site, located at the western terminus of Costa Mesa's 16th Street.

Panelists are due to make a recommendation to the school district's Board of Trustees in the coming months, and the public will have an opportunity to provide input during a Feb. 5 meeting.

Newport-Mesa Unified purchased the property from Security

See **Acreege**, page A2



Carolyn Cole | Los Angeles Times

AN AERIAL SHOT of Banning Ranch, located along Pacific Coast Highway in Newport Beach.

Once behind bars as a convicted murderer, a student looks ahead

Shawn Khalifa was sentenced to 25 years to life when he was 15. At 31, he's poised to graduate from UC Irvine.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

When Shawn Khalifa was growing up in Perris, he was more focused on the local gangs than on anything else. With both his parents working, he spent his days working at what he considered

"victimless" crimes — things he thought he could do without physically harming anyone, such as burglaries.

"It was just a complete norm in my life," Khalifa, now 31, said.

He knew kids who would steal bikes from other kids through violence. And though his peers didn't think anything of behaving that way, he said he didn't want any part of it.

His refusal to do so, he thinks, is part of the reason he's standing outside of a correctional facility

today, even though Khalifa was convicted of the first-degree murder of Hubert Love, 77, during an attempted home invasion on Jan. 27, 2004.

Khalifa, who had just turned 15, was a lookout that night while two of the three boys with him, Juan Pena and Fernando Rivera, were inside of the house. The fourth teen at the scene that night was Mark Gardner.

"The backyard was open. So,

See **Student**, page A2

SHAWN KHALIFA

is a student with the Underground Scholars program at UC Irvine and will graduate this summer with a degree in sociology. The program aims to help incarcerated or formerly incarcerated students access their goals of higher education.



Don Leach Staff Photographer

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

PARKINSON'S DISEASE PATIENTS SHOW THEIR ARTISTIC SIDE The "Painting with Parkinson's" program at Hoag, which started last summer, has quickly become very popular. A gallery night reception was held this week. **PAGE A3**

ACREAGE

Continued from page A1

First National Bank in 1965, paying \$473,999 when the thought a school might one day be built on the property, according to Assistant Supt. Jeff Trader. But in the decades that followed, the prospect of developing the land became more complicated.

Today, the site is subject to the Coastal Act of 1976 and falls under the jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission, meaning agency review and approval is necessary before any ground can be broken. Meanwhile, a shrinking student population hardly necessitates additional school facilities.

“We are, like essentially all school districts in California, experiencing declining enrollment, and enrollments are expected to decline [further] in the future,” Trader said. “Because of that, we’re looking at properties we have that possibly could be determined surplus, and this is one of them.”

The district is currently using a portion of the site for storage and pays around \$20,000 each year for basic maintenance of the grounds, according to district spokeswoman Annette Franco.

Assembled in October through an application and selection process, the 11-person Banning Ranch Surplus Land Committee comprises members who represent a cross-section of constituent interests and backgrounds.

Panelists convened in November and December to review and analyze NMUSD’s options, which include retaining the property and keeping it vacant or building on it or selling or leasing the site to an interested party.

A third public meeting — on Feb. 5 at 5:30 p.m. at NMUSD’s district headquarters in Costa Mesa — will be the last opportunity for community members to learn about the land and provide input to the committee before it drafts a resolution compiling its recommendations to submit to school district’s Board of Trustees.

Trader said panelists have established a priority list that places ground lease and development at the highest and best use value of the land at the top, followed by a sale of the property.

“The committee’s recom-

mendations will be fairly open,” he said, adding that it will ultimately be up to school board members to decide which actions to take.

If the district were to lease all or a portion of the property, any development plans would have to be reviewed by the city of Costa Mesa. A surplus land sale, which Trader said hasn’t happened since the 1980s or ‘90s, would be handled within Newport-Mesa Unified.

Some in the local community, however, say they’d like to see a different possibility prioritized — a no-build option.

Terry Welsh is president of the Coastal Corridor Alliance, formerly named the Banning Ranch Conservancy, which began as an effort to preserve the larger Newport Beach property but has since morphed into a wider conservation effort to preserve parcels adjacent to Randall Preserve.

Welsh and other volunteers with the nonprofit are very familiar with the Newport-Mesa Unified property and would like the land committee and district officials to consider keeping the site as open space that might also serve an educational purpose.

The property, he added, contains rare vernal pools that, when exposed to sufficient rainfall, fill up with fairy shrimp that serve as a valuable food source for migrating and foraging birds. And while it may not be a home to endangered species, several notable animals, including burrowing owls and gnatcatchers, have been spied in the vicinity.

Preserving the site, especially as ecologists work to clean up the soil on Randall Preserve in preparation for site work that will make the larger property a public benefit, would be one way to expand conservation efforts in Orange County.

“We would love to see the school district utilize it and make it a nature lab or something like that. You could bring kids out there and show them a vernal pool,” Welsh said Thursday. “This is a treasure in our community — why not teach young people about that and teach them to be stewards?”

Welsh said he applied to serve on the committee, which was seeking someone with environmental expertise but was not selected by the district. The Coastal Corridor Alliance has been



NEWPORT-MESA Unified School District is considering what to do with a surplus 11.36-acre property adjacent to the formerly named Banning Ranch.

Courtesy of Newport-Mesa Unified School District

circulating a letter seeking backing for an open-space option that has so far garnered about 150 signatures. Members plan to appear at the next committee meeting, likely their last oppor-

tunity to be heard. “I wish there was a true, hardcore Randall Preserve activist on that committee who, at every meeting, would stand up and say we need to save that space,” he

said. “That’s what we’re going to work toward.”

The next meeting of the Banning Ranch Surplus Land Committee takes place Feb. 5 at 5:30 p.m. at Newport-Mesa Unified

School District headquarters, 2985 Bear St., Costa Mesa.

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Dr. Daniela A. Bota, a neuro-oncologist at UCI Health



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

AT END OF West 16th Street in Costa Mesa sits an unused 11.36-acre parcel owned by Newport-Mesa Unified School District. The district is currently determining what to do with the surplus land.

STUDENT

Continued from page A1

we walked in through the backyard. We snuck into this home. That was my lifestyle. The 17-year-old that’s with me knocks on the door ... I got scared. I was thinking, ‘He’s going to get us in so much trouble. It’s quiet. Someone’s going to call the police and I want to run away.’ But because he stayed; I went back,” Khalifa recalled. “He says, ‘They’re going to open the door.’ I go back and they yank me in violently. I have to navigate this 18-year-old yelling at me, showing me a weapon, going, ‘What do you think you’re doing here?’

“And I’m thinking, ‘How do I get out of this?’”

Khalifa said the two older teenagers, Rivera and Pena, showed him Love, who appeared severely injured from a beating. At that point, he said, he was less concerned about Love than he was about getting out of what he realized was becoming an increasingly dangerous situation. He



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

SHAWN KHALIFA, right, greets a student who recognized him from a campus podcast. Khalifa went through the Underground Scholars program at UC Irvine and will graduate this summer with a sociology degree.

stole some chocolate candies off of a counter then left, telling Gardner that he wanted to separate

from the other two teens. “We’re going to separate from these guys. They assaulted that guy,” he re-

called saying to Gardner. “They hurt this dude. We’re going to jail.” He learned afterward that

Love was not just injured but dead. According to reports, Khalifa did not witness Rivera later shooting

Pena in the head using a gun stolen from Love that night.

Gardner pleaded guilty to manslaughter and robbery in exchange for testimony. Rivera and Khalifa were convicted of Love’s murder.

Khalifa spent the next 16 years in prison.

Today, Khalifa is a program coordinator at Irvine Valley College, a father and a soon-to-be graduate of UC Irvine. He said he wanted to share his story to represent a population of students that aren’t often heard from on campuses. He took advantage of the Underground Scholars program, which helps provide resources and support to formerly incarcerated students on campus and guidance for community college students who want to transfer to a university. The program was established in 2021.

Khalifa said he first started attending classes through Southwestern College when he was at the Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility in San Diego,

See **Student**, page A3



NGOCLAN HOANG of Orange stands next to her self-portrait during the Hoag "Painting With Parkinson's" support group gallery night reception on Wednesday in Newport Beach.

Parkinson's disease patients at Hoag show their artistic side

BY MATT SZABO

Living with intention is a big thing for those who suffer from Parkinson's disease.

As automatic movements become more impaired, intentional movements become more critical.

A group of several Parkinson's patients at Hoag's Pickup Family Neurosciences Institute have been attending the "Painting With Parkinson's" program since it launched last July.

The patients got to celebrate some of the fruits of their labor on Wednesday, as Hoag held a gallery night on campus in Newport Beach to showcase some of their artwork.

"They surprise me every time," said Joey Nesler, a medical clinical social worker for the institute who's the group instructor. "I think that they're amazing. They're fearless. Not all of them have artistic training, but they just jump in. I ask them what they want to do often, and one of the responses was, 'We want to do self-portraits.' That's one of the hardest things to do."

Nesler leads the 60- to 90-minute class at the Melinda Hoag Smith Center for Healthy Living once a month. The course is based on the work of Nancy Tingey, an Australian who founded a Parkinson's painting program in 1994 to support her husband who had the neurodegenerative disorder.

Nesler said she was approached by Belinda Stewart-Burger, the nursing navigator for movement disorders at Hoag, about starting a similar program.

"I really wasn't sure how that was going to work, but I do know about the healing power of making art," Nesler said. "Based on the Australian curriculum we keep it small, because Parkinson's patients do not do well in a crowded or chaotic environment. Keeping it a small group of calm vibes is really the key to it."

Parkinson's symptoms

have been found to improve with art, according to the Parkinson's Foundation. Creative activity can reduce tremors, and making art is a powerful non-verbal activity for those with impaired speech. Meanwhile, the social aspect helps those who may battle with isolation or depression.

It's made a difference for Ngoclan Hoang of Orange, 63, who is taken to the class by her daughter, Jennifer.

Jennifer Hoang said her mother has dealt with Parkinson's for about 15 years. It's fairly debilitating for her, with a lot of pain and stiffness. She used to love to do sewing and embroidery, as well as painting, but it just got too painful for her hands.

The "Painting With Parkinson's" class has allowed Ngoclan to rediscover her passion. She's working with watercolors for the first time and really enjoying it.

"When she's painting, she really doesn't have so many of the symptoms that she struggles with all day," Jennifer Hoang said. "She's able to just zone in and flow ... it's been amazing to see her rediscover that she has that ability. It's brought her so much joy. She's so proud that she can still make beautiful things."

Paintings at Wednesday's gallery night event included watercolor and oil-based creations, and were typically made based on prompts like "paint your brain" or "paint an ocean reef." Patients come up with a new painting at each session.

"They're just trying to forget about Parkinson's and get back to life," said Dr. Saulena Shafer, a neurologist who's the director of the Salsbury Family Movement Disorders Program. "That's kind of where the art program comes in, and we're doing some other exercise programs. Instead of allowing the Parkinson's to rule their lives, they're trying to forget that they have Parkinson's."

See **Artistic**, page A8

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STUDENT

Continued from page A2

after slowly earning trust and improving his security status during his time in prison.

College gave him confidence, he said. It gave him hope. He was released in 2020 after then-Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation that set new limits on who could be charged with felony murder. The change rolled back California's felony murder rule that allowed for an individual to be charged if the victim died during the commission of a felony even if the individual did not intend to kill or did not know the homicide took place.

Underground Scholars program director Hector Cervantes said Khalifa was initially supposed to be a part of the first LIFTED — Leveraging Inspiring Futures Through Educational Degrees — cohort, but was released before the term started. The two later connected, and Cervantes helped Khalifa navigate the UC application process.



UNDERGROUND SCHOLARS program director Hector Cervantes and sociology major Shawn Khalifa, from left, chat outside the Student Services Center at UC Irvine on Thursday.

"For me, it's rewarding to see him come this far," Cervantes said. "I remember when we initially connected, he was hesitant on applying to UCI. I had to sell him and just share with him, 'You have all these re-

sources when you get here. Guaranteed housing, groceries, meal swipes, transportation, healthcare."

"Now he's at Irvine Valley College, and I just submitted a letter of recommendation for his graduate

program. It's rewarding to see him go full circle, and I'm excited to see what he's going to do at Irvine Valley College," Cervantes said.

Khalifa said education has given him tools he needs for life, although he

acknowledges he still faces challenges due to his status as a formerly incarcerated person. There are jobs he's been barred from and some people have told him he is never going to amount to anything after spending

half his life behind bars.

He said education is a necessary good to help reduce recidivism, as it allows people who have served their time to build a foundation for their lives that's not rooted in crime.

"Education gives you ownership over your intelligence and abilities. No one's going to take these degrees from me and people want to hire people with knowledge. Not too many of our experts and researchers lived in Pelican Bay [State Prison] or functioned and overcame drug and substance use. I was a full-fledged criminal and transitioned into a Christian," he said. "It's about the health of our community."

"Who do you want to sit next to on a train? Sit next to someone who will hurt you because they're hurt because we don't have equity in all of our communities? That's what [Underground Scholars and LIFTED] do. We level the playing field and let people know what's out there."

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PAINTINGS PRINTED on cards on display at the Hoag "Painting With Parkinson's" gallery night reception.

Don Leach | Staff Photographer

forum

COLUMN | **PATRICE APODACA**



Myung J. Chun | Los Angeles Times

GOV. GAVIN NEWSOM signed into law a bill passed with near-unanimous support of the Legislature mandating media-literacy instruction at K-12 public schools.

Fact or fiction? A new state law hopes to help schoolchildren determine what's real

A new education policy has so far flown largely under the radar among the general public, but it's worth paying attention because it could have far-ranging benefits if schools do a good job of implementation.

This year California joins a handful of other states in requiring all K-12 public schools to provide instruction in media literacy, thanks to a bill sponsored by Assemblyman Marc

Berman that passed last fall with near-unanimous bipartisan support.

The new law does not require separate courses in media literacy but mandates that schools weave a set of skills into general instruction, such as how to recognize fake or manipulated data, identify false news reports and generate responsible internet content.

I suspect some observers might be skeptical about



the need for such instruction. They might wonder if this is the right time to impose new requirements on schools, which are still reeling from pandemic-related learning losses. Do teachers really need this extra burden, and can students absorb any more changes after all they've been through?

But, if anything, this move has been sorely needed for some time, and

now more than ever.

Our society — including school-aged kids in particular — is now completely given over to digital media. Nearly all of us get most of our information, whether directly or indirectly, from digital media platforms.

To be sure, there are many benefits associated with easy access to endless troves of information. Unfortunately, these digital

See *Apodaca*, page A6

A WORD, PLEASE
JUNE CASAGRANDE

There are needless words that harm sentence structure. You've just read three of them.

Good news, kind of. I discovered a new sentence structure I hate. It's a pattern I see often but only recently, while editing an article, realized it belongs in my writing hall of shame.

Why would I bother hating certain sentence structures, you may wonder? Well, the better structured your sentence, the better you can get your message across. So bad sentences are roadblocks to effective communication.

In fact, this is what I love most about English grammar: It affords a mechanical understanding of how sentences perform — some of them like expertly engineered race cars, others like AMC Gremlins. So when a sentence is stalling and sputtering and straining, grammar is the toolbox you draw from as you get under the hood to fix it.

Here's an example of the sentence structure I just learned to hate: "There are lye-based products that clear debris out of pipes."

You may not see anything odious about that perfectly common sentence structure. But when you compare it to a version that's been revised by a professional editor, the



problem becomes clear. Here's the edited version: "Lye-based products clear debris out of pipes."

Looking at the two versions, you immediately see that "there are" is unnecessary. Just extra words. Worse, these words force you to add one more word: "that." Instead of saying the products clear out debris, you must say these are products "that" clear out debris. So the structure creates a wordier-than-necessary sentence.

True, shorter sentences aren't always better. But they usually are. They make the best use of readers' time and attention, wasting none of it on unnecessary words.

But needless words aren't the only problem with the longer sentence. A closer look at the syntax reveals deeper problems.

In our revised version, the main clause has a tangible subject: lye-based products. Tangible subjects have a sensory effect on readers, evoking images, sounds or smells. Lye evokes burning and stinging and danger and a certain power. Even pairing it up with a bland, vague noun like "products" doesn't diminish its

See *Word*, page A6

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Los Angeles Times

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California State Parks seasonal lifeguard Sierra Fockler discovered a 14-inch Pacific football fish around 2:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 13, near the lifeguard station located at Crystal Cve State Park in Orange County. It's the second such case of the fish washing ashore over the last three years. (Courtesy of California State Parks)

Good morning. It's Wednesday, Oct. 25. I'm Carol Cormaci, bringing you this week's [TimesOC newsletter](#) with a look at the latest local news and events.

Watch where you're stepping on O.C.'s famed sands, because you may encounter a rare specimen of marine life. One, in fact, that has very sharp teeth.

That's what happened on a recent afternoon to lifeguard Sierra Fockler, who found a spooky-looking black angler fish, specifically a Pacific football fish, while she was walking near the lifeguard headquarters building on Moro Beach, located within Crystal Cove State Park.

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H.B. can't win against state's housing mandates

The days of "trust but verify" ended in December 2022. The current Huntington Beach City Council majority might cobble together a Housing Element that satisfies in some formal way the planning for new housing units required by the consensus of local Southern California city governments. They might, but only if they are scared enough of astronomical fines and the backlash created by affordable by-right housing projects popping up in the exclusive neighborhoods of Edwards Hill and Huntington Harbour. But any such Housing Element would only be smoke and mirrors.

One need look no further than the whirlwind that accompanied the proposal for a top-shelf senior living project. This council will never approve the actual projects that would build the actual units that would address the affordability and homelessness issues confronting the region. Indeed, the current council attempted to undo the good work done by the 2020 council by proposing to rescind an affordable-housing overlay in the Beach-Edinger corridor that eventually resulted in the city standing up our Housing Navigation Center. I urge the Department of Housing and Community

Development against making any assumptions about the political reasonableness of any of the council majority or their hand-picked candidates for 2024. Rather, consider their manifest and perverse political will to undermine any agreement that might have been reached with a more reasonable city government or indeed the council as it stood before December 2022.

Galen Pickett Huntington Beach

The Los Angeles Times recently endorsed two candidates, Dave Min for Congress and Adam Schiff for the Senate. They both face the scrutiny of a primary election which allows the two candidates drawing the most votes the right to go onto the November election. It is not a satisfactory way to select candidates, especially if the major contenders split the vote, while the third candidate, drawing the least amount of votes, moves on. Such is the case with the four-person race for the House seat abandoned by Rep. Katie Porter. Min, also endorsed by Porter and the California Democratic Party, has introduced bills in Sacramento dealing with gun control, climate change and phasing out offshore drilling in state waters.



Courtesy of CallisonRTKL

A RENDERING of the proposed Bolsa Chica Senior Living Community in Huntington Beach.

Also running from the Democratic Party is lesser known Joanna Weiss, an attorney and founder of a social and political-action nonprofit. She has excited local support for her involvement in supporting womens' rights and role in politics. The main Republican contender is Scott Baugh, a former state assemblyman who has run for Congress twice and lost. With the splitting of the vote, Baugh could make it to the election in November against Min or Weiss.

Residents in Orange County voting for the above-mentioned congressional race for the 47th District need to be mindful of the trouble spot in Min's recent history that people will try to use against him

— that of pleading guilty last May to a misdemeanor charge after being arrested on suspicion of drunk driving. It wasn't trivial and Min did not treat it that way, immediately acknowledging his mistake in a straightforward public statement. His L.A. Times endorsement reads that Min "inspires confidence that he won't repeat that mistake." The authors go on to say that Min would be "an excellent member of Congress."

Certainly this should not be used against him by his own party, as Baugh has innumerable vulnerabilities of his own. In the 1990s he faced federal felony charges over campaign finance violations later reduced to civil violations for which he

paid close to \$50,000. And as the district has changed he has become out of touch with local values. Democrats and independents need to be mindful of the many questionable and even disdainful tactics of the election practices of the far right.

Lynn Lorenz Newport Beach

Former Laguna Beach resident and presidential advisor Peter Navarro was sentenced Thursday to four months in prison and fined \$9,500 for refusing to testify before the House Select Committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the Capitol. Claiming executive privilege, Navarro stonewalled the committee. Looking back, I wonder if

the former UC Irvine professor and White House trade advisor believes he made the right decision. Clearly, had he appeared before the committee, Navarro most likely would be walking Laguna's beaches today instead of potentially heading off to prison. I say "potentially" because Navarro has appealed his sentence.

Denny Freidenrich Laguna Beach

As the Daily Pilot article "Skepticism remains over H.B. book review board," Jan. 25, seems to reinforce that Huntington Beach has a City Council majority who can't shoot straight. However, this is no comedy; it is a profound civic tragedy. Our city staff seems to be caught in the administrative crossfire. Kudos to Ocean View School District trustee Gina Clayton-Tarvin for calling out the misfires. The parental review committee for children's books in our public library has always been more than a bad idea, it has been dubbed the "book banning" committee by its opponents. Regardless of how it is structured, it will be the creature of the council majority who will maintain control of the process. For a decision-

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APODACA

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platforms operate in a vast ocean where there is little oversight or accountability.

This has fostered an environment in which misinformation runs rampant.

We now live in an age in which most people distrust the media in general and tend to lump together legitimate providers of information with those sources that promote false and misleading content. Yet, despite that distrust — or perhaps, in part, because of it — conspiracy theories and fact-free, agenda-driven disinformation campaigns have proliferated, luring in readers by appealing to their pre-existing biases and suspicions about "what is really going on."

The pandemic provided us with a spot-on case in point. Anti-vaccine rhetoric

existed long before COVID-19, but the pandemic sent it into overdrive. Now what we have is not only a dangerous level of skepticism when it comes to the safety and efficacy of vaccines but a powerful, scary movement to delegitimize science itself.

There are many more negative consequences. Notably, the growth of social media has become one of the leading contributors to escalating mental health issues among children and teens. Bullying, risky fads and online predators are wildly prevalent in certain corners of the internet, and they're hard to contain; for kids, this is the new, unsafe normal.

"Teaching media literacy is a key strategy to support our children, their families and our society that are inundated with misinformation and disinformation on social media networks and digital platforms," Berman said in a statement

released after Gov. Gavin Newsom signed the bill into law.

"We have a responsibility to teach the next generation to be more critical consumers of online content and more guarded against misinformation, propaganda and conspiracy theories. In addition, this instruction will help students to be more responsible digital citizens, more intentional about what they put online, and better understand online safety and privacy."

Even before the law passed, some school districts had already begun to incorporate media literacy into overall education, and a previous state law made materials available to schools. But the new law ensures that all students will now receive some level of this type of instruction.

Boosters of the new law emphasize that the instruction will go far beyond just teaching students how to

fact-check. The aim is to foster critical thinking and analytical skills that can be used to identify, examine and counter misinformation. Another goal is to teach kids how to be responsible digital citizens.

The law gives schools and teachers wide latitude regarding implementation. They will be expected to incorporate digital literacy lessons into existing subjects such as English, history/social science, math and science, and approved sources of curriculum will be made available. But the decisions about how to proceed will occur at the individual school-site level.

Of course, that lends itself to questions about whether the law is too lax or vague. There are also worries that this could become just another instance in which school districts with inadequate resources will struggle to keep up.

Those are legitimate concerns, and they should not be taken lightly. As with any law — including even the most thoughtfully crafted, well-intended

legislation — there will be complicating factors. As always, the devil will be in the details, and this likely won't be the final answer when it comes to infusing media literacy into general education.

But it's a hopeful step. Implementation will likely be slow-going, and many parents might not even notice the discreet instructional changes rolling out in their children's classrooms. But if some do pick up on it, they might benefit by asking specific questions about how the students are learning to discern what misinformation looks like and whether they are becoming more thoughtful about how they use the internet.

If that's the case, a side benefit might be that adults learn a bit about digital literacy right along with their kids.

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.

WORD

Continued from page A4

effect on readers.

In the original sentence, the subject was the pronoun "there." Technically, this is called the "existential there," which is just a structure we use to say something exists. As a subject, "there" is a real yawner — as devoid of specificity as a word can be.

Existential "there" always uses a form of the verb "be," in this case "are." Forms of "be" are among the least-dynamic verbs you'll find. Being is always less action-packed than doing. Yes, sometimes "there are" is the best wording, especially when your main point is that these things exist. But often, it's a weak choice — much weaker than a motion-oriented verb like "clear" in "clear debris."

But perhaps the worst thing about this sentence structure is that, through the use of "that," it demotes the verb phrase "clear debris" to the status of an adjective. That's the nature of relative clauses.

A relative clause is any clause hinged on one of the relative pronouns — that, which, who or whom — and used to modify a noun. As you already know, that's what adjectives do. They modify nouns. So relative clauses are adjective clauses. Consider "The car that I drove is in the parking lot." The relative clause "that I drove" isn't about driving, really, it's about specifying which car you're talking about. So it's basically an adjective.

"Clear debris" by itself is a verb phrase, but when you put "that" in front of it, the phrase is just modifying the noun "products." So our original sentence turns a dynamic, sensory action into a static adjective.

If you want to keep your readers awake, avoid sentences that start with "there is" or "there are" — especially if a "that" clause comes later in the sentence. Instead, consider making the noun the subject of the sentence and taking out "that" to make the relative clause into a true verb.

JUNE CASAGRANDE is the author of "The Joy of Syntax: A Simple Guide to All the Grammar You Know You Should Know." She can be reached at JuneTCN@aol.com.

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

Crossword grid with answers: SEAL, BEES, DRAWN, INCA, LATE, NOLIE, EDEN, ECHO, DOORS, GOLDENHOUR, MEET, ERASED, SLEPT, COEN, REFER, BRA, DOES, OMEGA, COUPE, STU, SPRAY, HOTEL, EARN, END, INHALE, FAIR, RESET, TRAVIS, CHAT, CIRCUS, TENT, LEWIS, DIOR, UNTO, AROSE, ETNA, RUER, DELTA, REEL, EELY

Sudoku grid with numbers: 4 1 9 8 7 2 6 5 3, 5 8 2 4 6 3 1 9 7, 7 6 3 5 9 1 4 2 8, 8 5 6 2 1 9 7 3 4, 3 2 1 7 4 6 5 8 9, 9 4 7 3 8 5 2 6 1, 2 9 5 1 3 7 8 4 6, 6 7 4 9 5 8 3 1 2, 1 3 8 6 2 4 9 7 5

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Daily Pilot advertisement: A Times Community News publication. CONTACT US: Carol Cormaci, Matt Szabo, Andrew Turner, Beth Raff, Sara Cardine, Lilly Nguyen

MARKETPLACE advertisement: To place an ad, go to http://timescommunityadvertising.com/. Includes sections for Merchandise 800, Employment 1500, Vinyl Records Wanted, and Classified is Convenient.

Mark's Painting & Handyman Service advertisement: 714-222-3055, Wood Restoration Specialist

Shop's holiday events support charity

Bands for Arms in Anaheim gears its latest theme toward Valentine's Day and pop culture.

BY JESSICA PERALTA

One week, Nick Mendoza III was at Primetime Emmy Awards events rubbing shoulders with celebrities like Ron Howard. The next, he was outfitting himself with a large costume he made for some meet-and-greets.

Mendoza's career paths span acting in commercials, reality TV and pilots, and singing as well as serving in the military. More recently, he's an Anaheim-based Funko pop culture shop owner with a passion for giving back. His latest endeavor is called the Valentine's Kove, a free photo op, short walk-through and meet-and-greet he's hosting in front of his shop, named Bands For Arms, with an emphasis on pop-culture items including Pokémon and Hello Kitty. His first event like this was the Grinchmas House, featuring the Grinch for some photo ops and free hot cocoa, that happened over the holidays.

"We wanted to venture and try another holiday-themed event, and we felt Hello Kitty would go really well for Valentine's Day since it has a large fan base, and a lot of people adore Hello Kitty in general," Mendoza said.

The Valentine's Kove opened to the public Jan. 19 and runs through Feb. 18, Fridays through Sundays from 5 to 9 p.m. It's also open Valentine's Day. There is free hot cocoa and a game guests can play to get a gift card to use in the shop. There's Hello Kitty merchandise in the store Mendoza brought in for the event.

Denise Taylor, of Anaheim, learned about Men-

doza's shop and events through her son.

"My son wanted to get into collecting Funko Pops, so we went to check out the shop," Taylor said. "My son and I entered their costume contest in October and won. I then started to follow Nick and all the activities he does with the shop."

They visited the Grinchmas House and plan to check out Hello Kitty too.

"We got a chance to spin the wheel for a chance to win a prize," she said. "My son is a teen but was still willing to take a picture with the Grinch. I do plan to go to the event. I can't wait to see what Nick creates this time. I know there are a lot of families that struggle to make ends meet so free events like this are great [for] families on a budget."

The Grinchmas House began on Black Friday and ran until Dec. 30 last year. It ended up having more than 6,000 guests. Mendoza thinks the Valentine's Kove could bring in more.

Mendoza donates 50% of net sales of his Funko/pop culture novelty shop during events to various charities, including CHOC and organizations that support the military. He plans a combined donation from the Valentine's Kove and the upcoming Pokémon Egg Hunt Adventures Easter pop-up for CHOC or the Los Angeles Mission.

Giving back is why he started Bands For Arms on Jan. 8, 2010. Bands For Arms are bracelets designed for each military branch with 50% of the sale price going to charities that support the military, as well as those supporting disaster relief programs, autism and cancer research.

"I began Bands For Arms in 2010 for a friend who was killed in action in 2009," said Mendoza, who served in the U.S. Navy in



Photos by Jessica Peralta

NICK MENDOZA III runs a Funko shop called Bands for Arms in Anaheim. Bands for Arms are bracelets made in honor of a friend killed in action in the military.

Naval Intelligence in Explosive Ordnance Disposal from 2006 to 2016. "The friend, a Marine who was bullied in his platoon aboard my first duty station in 2007 in Yokosuka, Japan. ... I took him under my wing and I became his mentor. We would always hang out on the ship during deployments and off the ship wherever we ported."

He said that over time they became friends with the other Marines.

"At the end of the Marines' time aboard my command ship, my friend, the bullied Marine, befriended 17 Marines that used to once bully him," Mendoza said. "He asked for a piece of their uniform to create a bracelet. Before they left, he presented me with the bracelet he made, describing it as such: The body of the

bracelet, made with 17 pieces of uniforms, symbolizes the 17 Marines that were once bullies to him."

One end had a hoop, representing Mendoza, and the other end had a button, representing the Marine himself.

"When latched together, it represented the friendship that was formed and developed because of me," Mendoza said. "He made a promise with me to continue helping others that come into my life and always look at the bracelet he made me, to remind me of what I have done for him."

Mendoza said his friend grew as a leader in the Marine Corps and was deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 when he was killed.

"When I found this out, I was devastated and wanted to do something



BANDS FOR ARMS on Lemon Street in Anaheim sells pop culture items and specializes in holiday theme events.



PIKACHU AND Hello Kitty are among pop culture items available for fans at Bands for Arms.

for his family," Mendoza said. "In January 2010, I launched Bands For Arms, taking his idea of the military uniform bracelet and returning back the sales of each bracelet sold toward charities that support the military."

Though he launched Bands For Arms in 2010, Mendoza has owned the physical store at 754 N. Lemon Street — which is also part home — since September 2016. During the Halloween season he hosts a free haunted walk-through for the community on Halloween night and Haunted Basement Tours for paranormal investigation at \$15 per person.

In addition to the Pokémon Egg Hunt Adventures event for the Easter sea-

son, Mendoza is planning A Winter Nightmare Before Christmas for the holidays. The Halloween walk-through this year will be called Circus of Screams Haunted House.

Michelle Tung, of La Habra and who works for the city of Anaheim, said she found Bands For Arms on Instagram. She plans on attending the Valentine's Kove.

"I think events like these are important because it brings together people with common interests and gives them time to bond," Tung said. "I'm a Hello Kitty fan, and Nick's story about bullying hit a chord with me."

Jessica Peralta is a contributor to TimesOC.

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ENTRÉE SELECTIONS

select one

Prime Filet Mignon

8 oz. prime filet mignon, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, fried shallots

Bone-In Rib Eye

16 oz. prime bone-in rib eye, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, fried onion strings
(Twenty-Five Dollar Supplement)

California Chicken Breast

Pan-seared chicken breast, oven-roasted tomatoes, avocado, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes

King & Blue Crab-Crusted Scottish Salmon

Herb-roasted red potatoes, broccolini, Meyer lemon beurre blanc

Miso-Marinated Chilean Sea Bass

Soy glaze, coconut rice, stir-fried vegetables, mushrooms, lemongrass ginger beurre blanc

Double Pork Chop

Thick-cut grilled all natural pork chop, creamy caramelized onion barley risotto, creamed kale, sherry sauce

Australian Lobster Tail

10 oz. drawn butter, grilled lemon, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes
(Twenty Dollar Supplement)

DESSERT

select one

New York-Style Cheesecake

Fresh whipped cream, raspberry coulis

Chocolate Bread Pudding

Crème anglaise, vanilla bean ice cream, whipped cream, chocolate sauce

Vanilla Crème Brûlée

Vanilla custard, fresh raspberries

Berries & Ice Cream

Fresh seasonal berries, vanilla bean ice cream

20% Gratuity will be added to parties of eight or more.
A 3% processing fee will be added to all credit card transactions. For guests that choose to pay with cash, the 3% fee will be waived.
*Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase your risk of food-borne illness.

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Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

MARILYN AND Glenn Salsbury of Newport Beach, the namesakes of the Salsbury Family Movement Disorders Program, attend the Hoag "Painting With Parkinson's" support group's gallery reception on Wednesday.

ARTISTIC

Continued from page A3

Glenn and Marilyn Salsbury, who live on Balboa Island, also enjoyed the event. They are the namesakes of the Salsbury Family Movement Disorders Program, after making a \$500,000 gift to Hoag in 2021.

Glenn Salsbury, who turns 80 this year, has been dealing with Parkinson's for the last four years and is a patient there. He hasn't joined the art class but is well aware of its benefits.

"My daughter, Alison, paints all the time," he said. "She says, 'I get out of my worries and just let it go.'"

That's the idea for the Parkinson's patients, too. There's now a waiting list for "Painting With Parkinson's," and Nesler said she's hopeful that a second class might be added soon.



A PAINTING BY Sally Bright at the "Painting With Parkinson's" exhibit.

Shafer said she'd like to see a true gallery night for the program in the future, where the artists' work could be auctioned off as a fundraiser.

"That's the next step," Shafer said. "We're starting small, and building up."

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PAINTING

Continued from page A1

Gallery in Laguna Beach, where his work is being displayed and sold. In between, he said he is painting 16 hours a day — in a pitch-black room with an LED light and fluorescent paint.

Best known for his iconic mouth-and-tongue design that graced the cover of the Rolling Stones' "Tumbling Dice" album, Mazur said he now includes an original mouth-and-tongue with a dedication on the back of the work he sells.

Mazur, who played clarinet and saxophone, was always surrounded by music in his youth. As the packaging for music became more compact, Mazur found his calling.

"When I started doing album covers and then it went down to CDs, it took my canvas away," Mazur said. "That's when I decided, 'You know what, I'm going to paint classic rock artists' because that's my love. Like Toulouse-Lautrec used to paint the cabaret dancers and the show girls, I'm going to be painting classic rock artists, which will go down in history, and I will be the classic rock artist. I've built that genre and collectors from all over the world."

"I've got my own niche. I don't paint dolphins. I don't paint whales. I don't paint tikis. I paint classic rock, and when I do a painting, I want the people to hear the music that I'm actually painting."

Those who purchase Mazur's work receive an LED light bulb and a remote control, bringing the work to life with a color-changing experience.

"You're getting high without doing drugs," said Mazur while demonstrating the phenomenon.

Mazur recalled losing 30 paintings in an apartment fire in New York just ahead of an exhibition decades ago. His resilience showed up then, too, as he painted all day for two weeks until he had enough pieces to still put on the show.

When the Lahaina fire broke out last summer, Mazur, his three sons and four dogs lived out of two U-Haul trucks in an airport parking lot before learning that the area was gone. Mazur later went back to his home to see if it was still there.

"I'm driving up, and there's smoke from the trees, embers," Mazur said. "I was thinking, 'This is dangerous, but I got to see.' I drive up to my house. The fire stopped right at the fence. ... Everything was burnt right up to the fence, and the house was standing. I walked into my house, and there was the 'Rock 'n' Roll Last Supper' hanging on the wall and the



RUBY MAZUR sits behind his "20 Licks" piece at the Bill Mack Gallery in Laguna Beach. "I've got my own niche," the iconic artist says. "I don't paint dolphins."

Don Leach Staff Photographer

rest of my paintings.

"For a month, I sat in my living room and just cried every morning and said, 'How can I live here? Lahaina's gone.'"

David Michael Vaughn, an art consultant at the Bill Mack Gallery, has struck up a friendship with Mazur, who referred to the former as a younger version of himself, a "sponge" eager to learn. Their connection has grown out of respect for each other as survivors and as lovers of music.

"You see somebody that has been incredibly successful with their career," Vaughn said. "All of that glitz is super awesome, and it's what you aspire to, and you hope that you have those things, but to me, what was so important was to see the underside of it. I read Ruby's book from cover to cover, and after reading that, [I am] really understanding that Ruby is a survivor."

"He's been through so many points of adversity in his life, but it was his art, and his passion for making art and bringing happiness to people that would continuously bring the next angel around, and the next good experience would come."

The joy of being in a gallery, in part, comes from hearing the appreciation of his work from potential customers, said Mazur, who likened those interactions to a standing ovation for a musician.

"The greatest thing is when people walk away and say, 'Wow, I not only bought that piece of art, but I got rock 'n' roll history stories,'" Mazur said of his interactions with the public. "We chat and have a great time, so they're getting an experience in

buying the art."

Cristi Olson, the owner of the Bill Mack Gallery, said she opened the Laguna Beach location — at 574 South Coast Highway — in February last year.

"I just decided to open up down in Laguna Beach because we love the town," Olson said. "I love the city of Laguna Beach, and we want to be part of it and add some beauty."

Olson, who met Mazur in Maui years ago, called him "the best storyteller," adding, "He knows all these rock stars. He's got stories."

"His poor gallery burned down on the day he was opening," Olson said. "That was just so sad. That was just horrific. I had mourned for them so long. It was horrible. So many of my friends lost all their galleries."

Vaughn, who exhibits eclectic mixed-media art in the gallery that incorporates musical instruments among its materials, is grateful to Olson for including him among the team.

"She has been an amazing spirit and supporter and mentor," Vaughn said. "I feel incredibly lucky to be learning the nuts and bolts of the art business. It's like the old saying, 'Give them fish and they can eat for a day. Teach them how to fish and they can eat for a lifetime.'"

"Cristi is doing that with me, in some ways, and I feel incredibly blessed. That blessing — I want that to come through in my art. I know it comes through in Ruby's art, and it also comes through in the way that we do business in this gallery."

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MAILBAG

Continued from page A6

making body dominated by autocrats and amateurs (what I call "autoteurs"), this is a frightening prospect for the citizenry. Taking away authority from trained and seasoned library professionals and allowing interference from decidedly partisan and prejudiced parental puppets is no

way to run a railroad in my book. Unless "railroading" is the intent. This is another example of how badly the current council majority is serving and representing our community. We need to turn the page on this irresponsible attempt to control us, and, especially not leave it up to the misguided aim of "autoteurs,"

Tim Geddes
Huntington Beach

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

- 1 __ of approval
- 5 Swarming insects
- 9 Created with a pencil
- 14 Ancient Peruvian
- 15 Not in time
- 16 "Honest!"
- 17 Biblical paradise
- 18 Reverberate
- 19 Entryways
- 20 "Colorful" time just after sunset
- 23 Come together
- 24 Removed data from
- 25 Took a nap
- 27 Director Joel or Ethan
- 29 Like better
- 33 Undergarment with underwires
- 35 Performs
- 38 Watch brand whose name is a Greek letter
- 39 Two-seater
- 41 Disco __ ("The Simpsons" character)
- 42 Aerosol, for example
- 43 Place to stay on a trip
- 44 Deserve
- 46 Be-all and __all
- 47 Eat really, really fast
- 49 Impartial
- 51 Put back to factory settings
- 54 NFL star Kelce
- 58 Informal talk
- 61 "Big top" enclosure
- 63 Narnia's creator
- 65 Creator of the "New Look" in fashion
- 66 Golden Rule preposition
- 67 Stood up
- 68 Sicilian volcano
- 69 Regretful one
- 70 Airline whose name is a Greek letter
- 71 See stars
- 72 Hard to pin

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20				21					22	23				
24						25			26					
			27			28			29			30	31	32
	33	34			35	36	37		38					
39				40		41			42					
43					44		45		46					
47					48		49	50						
			51			52	53		54			55	56	57
58	59	60			61		62							
63				64		65			66					
67						68			69					
70						71				72				

SUDOKU

By the Mephram Group

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

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

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A8.

down

DOWN

- 1 Protracted attack
- 2 "Star Wars" moon
- 3 Amtrak offering
- 4 Plein-air painter
- 5 Mixed together
- 6 A pop
- 7 Moral philosophy

- 8 South Korea's capital
- 9 Game with mages, for short
- 10 Neither heated nor chilled
- 11 Lotion ingredient
- 12 Send money, in a way
- 13 Bird's home
- 21 Job listing

- letters
- 22 Sales agent, for short
- 26 Amateurs' counterparts
- 28 Wine's scent
- 30 "Fiddlehead" plant
- 31 "Ye gods!"
- 32 Bit of sunshine
- 33 Blessing
- 34 Naomi's daughter-in-law
- 36 "when r u coming?"
- 37 Ride the waves
- 39 Tai __ chuan
- 40 French pronoun
- 45 Not sharp or flat
- 48 Key in the top left
- 50 Return designer: Abbr.
- 52 Duck down
- 53 Overused
- 55 Performance place
- 56 Spy's data, for short
- 57 Tale
- 58 Dressed (in)
- 59 In this location
- 60 GI who deserts
- 62 Ice cream holder
- 64 Vast amount

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