



Photos by Jessica Peralta

REBECCA DEANDA writes the message “Si Se Puede” on Monica Gil’s arm during a CHOC new-hire orientation on May 6.

Employees spearhead project at CHOC to strengthen bonds

BY JESSICA PERALTA

Part of Monica Gil’s new-hire orientation at Children’s Hospital of Orange County earlier this month involved a photo session. A meaningful message she chose was written on her right bicep with a marker — which was followed by a quick photo shoot. Gil chose “¡Si Se Puede!” “I love the project of Dear Hospital. It was really cool,” Gil said. “And I wrote ‘Si Se Puede,’ which means ‘Yes You Can’ because I think you can turn anything into positive. And anything you want, you can do it. “I have a son and I can teach him the same thing. That anything you want to do, you can make it happen.”

The photo session is part of a larger project called Dear Hospital that was spearheaded by three CHOC employees as a way to encourage connection, camaraderie and mental health awareness among hospital employees. The idea sprouted from the American Assn. of Critical-Care Nurses’ National Teaching Institute conference in May 2022 attended by Jennifer Hayakawa, CHOC’s director of Nursing Research and Innovation. It was the first in-person nursing conference after the pandemic. Hayakawa was interested to see how the conference would inspire nurses experiencing burnout, defeat and isolation



See Bonds, page A4 “BRAIN TATTOOS” are written where the participant chooses.

Almquist breaks ground for SoCal’s first T&T market

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA



Tony Wodarck

TINA LEE, chief executive of T&T Supermarket Inc., and Dan Almquist, founding president and chief executive of Almquist, break ground on the development company’s latest project: The Canopy at Great Park in Irvine.

Local development company Almquist broke ground on its latest project, The Canopy at Great Park in Irvine on April 24, where the first SoCal T&T Supermarket will open. “The Great Park community has long awaited a retail and dining hub that not only serves their needs but also enhances their everyday lifestyle,” chief executive officer of Almquist, Dan Almquist said at the ground-breaking ceremony. Almquist is responsible for other Orange County retail destinations such as River Street Marketplace in San Juan Capistrano and Rodeo 39 Public Market in Stanton. The new project is designed to serve the expanding Great Park Neighborhoods. The Canopy at Great Park will be a 12-acre experiential retail and dining destination, roughly 90,000-square-feet in size with chef-driven restaurants and lifestyle brands anchored by the specialty grocer. T&T Supermarket is Canada’s largest Asian grocery chain. Chief executive Tina Lee spoke at the ceremony that included a live music performance and refreshments. “We are a really unique Asian food destination,” said Lee. “We are not a cookie-cutter grocery

See Market, page A6

Newport City Hall installs historic seal

After nearly a year of petitioning officials to retrieve a seal from storage and install it outside City Hall.

BY SARA CARDINE

A handful of locals unofficially celebrated a homecoming at Newport Beach City Hall on May 8, when public works employees installed an 8.5-foot wooden city seal on an exterior wall facing Civic Center Drive. Kept under wraps since 2013 — after being removed from outside the former City Council Chambers when that building was decommissioned — the civic work of art was recently retrieved from the city’s utilities yard and gussied up for rehanging. But it nearly took an act of Congress, at least the municipal version, to get the piece in place. Led by former Mayor Don Webb and backed by a passel of past city leaders, the effort took nearly a year to go from idea to installation. “The seal itself, in my opinion, is quite a masterpiece,” said Webb,

See Seal, page A2

Anaheim approves tourism bureau contract

The move comes after a California state audit recommended enhanced city oversight of its operations.

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

The Anaheim City Council increased its oversight of Visit Anaheim, a bureau that promotes tourism to Disneyland and other city destinations, in a new contract that followed a state audit last year. The amended agreement comes in the wake of a scandal, which involved former Visit Anaheim chief executive Jay Burress resigning in 2023 after an independent investigation and audit found the bureau improperly diverted \$1.5 million in federal pandemic relief funds to the Anaheim Chamber of Commerce. Negotiations between the city and the bureau over the matter

See Tourism, page A7

New exhibit showcases local artist’s depictions of Route 66

BY ERIC LICAS

Joan Gladstone showed enough promise as a painter to get accepted into the Boston University College of Fine Arts. It wasn’t long after she arrived on campus that she found herself grappling with a question countless other talented 18-year-olds standing on the verge of the rest of their lives have asked themselves. “In my freshman year I thought, ‘How will I ever make a living as an oil painter?’” said Gladstone, who now resides in Laguna Beach. “And I didn’t have the confidence back then to stick with it.” She switched her major to journalism. That led her to a successful career running her

own public relations firm. Gladstone said she never lost her passion for the visual arts and visited exhibits as often as she could. She tried to keep her skills sharp by taking classes offered by the city of Laguna Beach beginning in 2007. But she just couldn’t afford to make art her priority, given her other responsibilities. “After dabbling in classes, I’d do a painting and I’d feel a month or two would go by and I’m starting all over again,” Gladstone said. “I’m kind of going backwards; I’m not progressing because I’m not investing the time in it.” She described painting as a

See Route 66, page A3



LAGUNA BEACH artist Joan Gladstone stands in front of her recently installed pieces at the Newport Beach Library.

Eric Licas

Cypress mayor calls special meeting over accusations of city manager misconduct

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Cypress Mayor David Burke responded to serious allegations lobbed against City Manager Peter Grant last month by former Public Works Director Doug Dancs by calling for a special meeting on the matter. Whether enough members of the Cypress City Council will attend remains to be seen.

Dancs accused Grant of “unlawful acts of misconduct” after the City Council honored him for a decade of service as city manager during the April 28 council meeting.

He called on councilmembers to terminate Grant’s employment but did not specify the alleged misconduct after City Atty. Fred Galante interjected and cautioned against potential violations of Dancs’ separation agreement.

“The appropriate response to a situation like this is fairly straightforward,” Burke said during Monday’s meeting of the City Council. “If accusations of serious misconduct are made against an employee that the council supervises, those accusations should be taken seriously and fully investigated.”

Burke’s move capped a contentious meeting that showed the suburb of nearly 50,000 residents in the thick of a political roil.

Dancs’ \$183,000 separation agreement ended his longtime employment with the city on Dec. 31. The terms include confidentiality and non-disparaging clauses but Dancs felt within his right to discuss issues of unlawful conduct per another provision of the agreement when he spoke out April 28.

Attorney J. Scott Tiedmann of the Los Angeles-based Liebert, Cassidy, Whitmore law firm signed the separation agreement last October, as did former mayor and current councilmember, Scott Minikus.

A review of Cypress’ payment register shows the city paid Liebert, Cassidy, Whitmore more than \$104,000 for legal services regarding a human resources matter dating back to May 2024.

In past comments to TimesOC, Galante, the city attorney, said he lacks authorization to disclose what preceded the separation agreement.

No formal discussion of Dancs’ curt but explosive allegations appeared on Monday’s council meeting agenda, but it remained a top concern of residents, who either called for an independent investigation or staunchly backed Grant’s service.

Minikus sounded off on Burke for almost 15 minutes during a portion of the council meeting dedicated to board and committee reports.

“He was directly responsible for and orchestrated everything that unfolded during that meeting,” Minikus alleged. “It’s clear that he lacks the ability to carry out the most basic concepts of leadership.”

Burke invited Minikus to send him an email outlining everything he didn’t like about him after previously interrupting to remark that his “broadside attacks” against himself and residents during board and committee reports violated multiple provisions of conduct codes.

After Minikus concluded his comments, which included criticisms of local media, Burke made it known that he asked Galante for a full report of any investigations conducted in response to complaints or allegations made by Dancs, but had not received anything to date.

“What I think I need to do is call a special meeting where the council can consider directing the city attorney to provide us with all the relevant information,” Burke said. “And to be clear, I mean a public, open session meeting where residents can hear our deliberations and see our votes.”

Galante argued against it. “I don’t have the authority to release a report,” he said. “The council has to make that decision. Beyond that, I cannot speak any further, because it would entail closed session information, and I think it would be dangerous to have an open session discussion about this.”

Burke asked his council colleagues if they would be available to attend a special meeting on either May 15 or May 19.

Councilmember Bonnie Peat and Minikus signaled that they would not be able to attend on either date. Councilmember Leo Medrano wanted to revisit the question of a special meeting at another time.

“My highest priority is the city of Cypress,” he said, “and I don’t want to see us accidentally walk our way into multiple lawsuits.”

Not hearing majority support for the special meeting, Galante attempted to argue that Burke could not call for one on such grounds. Burke questioned Galante what part of municipal code he based his argument on.

“You do not have a policy for calling a special meeting here,” Galante said. “However, if the majority of the council objects, that is the way the legislative process works.”

Burke pressed forward

and called a special meeting for May 19 with an agenda item asking Galante to provide the council with access to any reports or investigations into complaints or allegations made by Dancs.

Councilmember Kyle Chang voiced support for the meeting for newer members of the council who were elected in November, like himself and Medrano.

“This is just a fact-finding



James Carbone

CYPRESS CITY MANAGER Peter Grant was accused of “unlawful” conduct by an ex-department head last month. Grant has not publicly addressed Dancs’ allegations to date.

mission,” he said. “We’re new to the council. We don’t know everything that the other council members know. I feel like we’re handicapped in that sense.

I just want to get up to speed about what’s going on.”

If three council members are unable to attend the special meeting, it will be

canceled for failing to meet the required quorum.

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SEAL

Continued from page A1

who helmed the City Council during the city’s 100-year anniversary in 2006, and so earned the distinction of “Centennial Mayor.”

“To me, it’s assembled in Newport, and we should be proud to show it in its beautiful colors for anybody who visits City Hall. And we can now do that.”

Emblazoned with sailboats on an open ocean, water ripples hearkening the ocean and the bay, two albacore tuna indicating the city’s origin as a fishing village and surrounded by a circle with four cardinal compass points, the emblem has represented Newport Beach since 1957.

That’s when famed California scene painter and Corona del Mar resident Rex Brandt, working under a city commission, created the initial rendering, which the council adopted to serve as the mark used for any official city business.

Brandt died in 2000 and was recognized by the Arts

Commission in 2014, in honor of what would have been his 100th birthday, with a showing of his art. A memorial plaque stands outside his home and studio, “Blue Sky,” near the Goldenrod Footbridge, indicating the spot as an Historic Point of Interest.

Tradesmen in the city’s sign shop in 1992 carved two giant wooden seals from Brandt’s design, which were placed outside City Hall and also on the city’s lifeguard headquarters building. The second one has stayed put for the duration, but the fate of the civic center seal has been somewhat choppy.

The insignia was displayed in two locations at the former Civic Center, at 3300 Newport Blvd., but was not returned to a place of prominence when Newport Beach City Hall moved to its current location in 2013.

Webb began petitioning the council last year about restoring the city seal to a place of prominence at City Hall. He reached out to Councilman Erik Weigand,

who was amenable to the idea.

Weigand recalled first seeing the wooden emblem while touring the city’s utilities yard as a newly elected council member in 2022. Public Works Director Dave Webb (no relation to Don Webb) described it as the best interpretation of Brandt’s original design.

So when Don Webb approached him about bringing the matter to a future council meeting, he helped bring the topic to the agenda and discussion during a Nov. 19 meeting.

Officials ultimately approved the installation, on the spot where a metallic facsimile of the seal had been placed in 2013. The location, across from the sculpture garden at Civic Center Park, seemed ideal, Weigand said Wednesday.

“People already come to look at art now, and it’s a piece of art — a piece of the city’s history. I thought it was a good place for it,” he said. “It just needed a home, so by putting it on City Hall, it was finally home.”



Courtesy of Don Webb

DON WEBB, Newport Beach’s “Centennial Mayor,” poses with a restored wooden city seal he helped install outside City Hall.

As luck would have it, Don Webb happened to be at City Hall on May 8 when he saw public works employees installing the wooden seal on Civic Center Drive. Mayor Joe Stapleton, along with City Council

members Robyn Grant and Sara Weber, who had been nearby, posed for photos with the emblem.

“There’s definitely a sense of having accomplished something,” the Centennial Mayor said Tuesday. “I’m

very proud to have that as a city seal, and I’m proud I had something to do with having it reinstalled at City Hall.”

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Homeowners in Laguna Beach urged to do their part to stave off wildfire disaster

BY ANDREW TURNER

Laguna Beach has rolled out a robust list of recommendations for its continued efforts in shoring up the community against the threat of wildfires and one key component is property owner participation.

The city introduced a wildfire mitigation and fire safety report in 2019. Two dozen items have been completed stemming from the initial report, city officials said, while another 67 recommendations were submitted in the update.

In the wake of the wildfires that ravaged the Los Angeles area in January, Laguna Beach revived its wildfire mitigation and fire

safety ad hoc committee. The City Council appointed council members Sue Kempf and Bob Whalen as its representatives.

During the May 6 meeting of the City Council, city officials and community members called on residents to do their part to mitigate fire risk at home and to be prepared in the event that disaster strikes.

Sarah Limones, the city's new emergency operations coordinator, said the action items included in the update were broken up into several categories. The focal points for improvements include alert and warning capabilities, community preparedness, evacuation planning, fuel

modification, infrastructure and public safety technology.

"I think there's really several components to it," Whalen said of wildfire preparations. "The first is ... continued public agency effort ... on the part of the city, on the part of the water districts, on the part of our surrounding agencies that have been assisting us. ... I think the one we really have to stress, and it was not really that prevalent in the 2019 report, is private homeowner effort. ... It really comes down to home hardening and vegetation management on our private property, and it's a big undertaking. It's a big effort. It's not going to be fun,



AN ORANGE COUNTY Fire Authority helicopter picks up a load of water from a refilling tank along the fire road while battling the Coastal fire in Aliso Canyon.

Don Leach
Staff
Photographer

in a lot of cases."

City officials want to create a list of residents with mobility challenges that

may need additional assistance on red flag days or in the event of an evacuation. Kempf said there will be a door-to-door campaign to get people signed up for the Nixle alert system, and she stressed the importance of taking heed to evacuation warnings.

Limones said the city would like to continue community engagement through town hall meetings. She suggested an annual meeting on the topic of insurance. Residents were also urged to have emergency kits ready and to practice leaving their neighborhoods via at least two separate routes.

There was also discussion about staging heavy equipment, such as bulldozers, on red flag days in areas with tough ingress and egress, in case abandoned cars need to be moved along evacuation routes and for public safety personnel. A video was shown during the meeting to demonstrate what it is like to maneuver a fire apparatus on the narrow streets of some neighborhoods in town.

From a technology standpoint, the city has begun implementing artificial intelligence fire detection cameras. Fire Chief Niko King said there are a couple cameras already installed at Top of the World and along Laguna Canyon Road, and there are plans to identify more locations. The city is exploring ways to control traffic without tying up public safety personnel, too.

The cameras operate 24/27 and detect any ignitions, King said. They can automatically report them to the nearest dispatch center to get early-notification resources started.

"We're looking at traffic systems and installing some of the priority signals," he added. "In the event of an evacuation, these signals ... stay green and they allow traffic to continue its flow in a specific direction."

Other preventive measures include consideration of the expansion of some fuel modification zones.

"Probably within the last six or seven years, we're starting to see some of the technology applied after fires occur," King said. "With the AI, they're able to model these fires and look

where the ... energy was the strongest.'

The fire chief said that where there's continuous fuel, such as dry brush on a steep slope near a populated area that's subject to high winds, some of the energy can be taken out of a blaze and the amount of flying ember showers will be decreased if the fuel modification zone is expanded to 300 feet from a property.

The local water districts also want to be resilient against seismic events and wildfire, both from the perspective of infrastructure and water supply.

Keith Van Der Maaten, general manager of Laguna Beach County Water District, said his team is working with Newport Beach and Fountain Valley to get a new well and working with South Coast Water District on the Doheny desalination project. "Those those two projects alone will allow us to be 100% local supply," he said.

"Helo-hydrant is another infrastructure," he continued. "There's two of them now — one that the city funded, one that the district funded, and we are going to be looking at next year ... a study to see if we can identify a third site."

Undergrounding utility lines remains a major focus in the community's fire mitigation efforts.

City Manager Dave Kiff said the bottom line on the action items outlined in the plan will amount to "tens of millions of dollars."

Mayor Alex Rounaghi said the city has to be "all-in on fire safety," and inquired about the possibility of putting 10% of the city's general fund budget, which this year is \$94.6 million, toward such measures.

"I think we should be putting the next 10 years 10% of our general fund into wildfire prevention," Rounaghi said. "I think when you look at the public safety needs that we have in this community, we have to take this seriously. That's where I'm at. I think we need to really do more than \$4 million this next budget. I think we need to be closer to 10% of our budget and also be looking at revenue enhancements."

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Dr. David I. Lee is a nationally recognized fellowship-trained urologist who specializes in prostate cancer surgery.



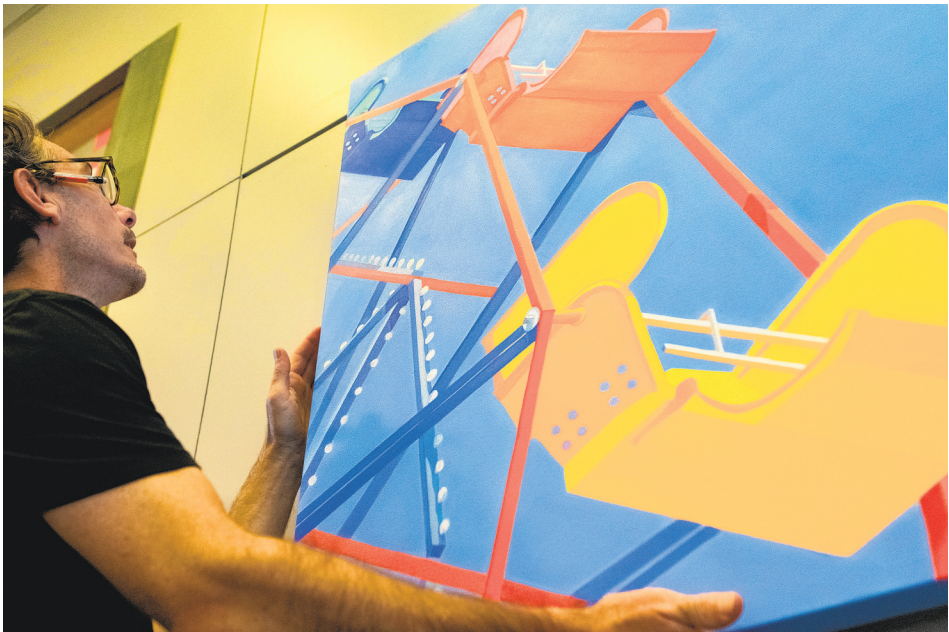
ROUTE 66

Continued from page A1

dormant "seed." And it wasn't until she started to step away from her first career that she began finding time to truly nourish and cultivate her latent talents.

"We have to be realistic about not trying to do too much at the same time, and that was my problem," Gladstone said. "I was trying to run a business. We had huge, important clients and [I was] taking art classes at the same time. And it just didn't work. I think we need to give ourselves permission to say we may have to do things in stages."

Looking back, Gladstone said she's grateful opportunities life offered eventually led her to a point where she could fully dedicate herself to art. Her work, much of which offers a local's perspective of the sights and culture of coastal Orange County, has been displayed at John Wayne Airport as well as art shows



JOSH HOYER installs a painting at the Newport Beach Central Library of the Balboa Fun Zone's Ferris wheel by Laguna Beach-based artist Joan Gladstone.

in Huntington Beach; she's planning another show for Los Angeles in September.

Earlier this month she debuted the first five of a new series of paintings she has been working on, inspired by trips with her

husband across iconic Route 66 in 2009 and 2024. Those, as well as six of her paintings showcasing life and landmarks in Laguna Beach and Newport Beach, are on display at the Newport Beach Central Library

through Aug. 31.

Her Route 66-themed series, with a nod to its upcoming 100th year, evokes 20th century Americana with depictions of signage travelers may have spotted along the 2,448-

mile "Mother Road" from Chicago to Santa Monica.

In her pieces Gladstone casts the signs and billboards in the bold, primary colors they would have brandished when they were new, rather than the faded shades they grew into after decades bleaching in the sun. The addition of subtle lighting effects with precisely blended paint adds a layer of depth, instilling a shimmering, lifelike quality to much of her work.

For many travelers, the signs in Gladstone's work served as either beacons offering respite or landmarks guiding their progress. Several library visitors who stopped to chat with the artist as her pieces were installed recounted the first time they saw the exact same scenes she had painted.

Many of those signs had been either destroyed or removed by the time she made her second trip across Route 66. Her latest work is partly an effort to catalog and preserve these artifacts. And 10% of proceeds from sales of prints

and originals from the series will benefit the Route 66 Centennial Commission.

Other pieces she has on display at the library celebrate the culture and mood of coastal Orange County. These include depictions of the Main Beach lifeguard tower in Laguna Beach, the Balboa Fun Zone's Ferris wheel, a stack of surfboards on the sand and more.

Prints in a variety of sizes, as well as a limited collection of original paintings, are available through her website. She also invites patrons to stop by her booth and connect at the upcoming Sawdust Art Festival, which runs from June 27 through Aug. 31.

"I meet so many people at the Sawdust who are retired, and they're blossoming because they've gone back to music or art or writing or some creative pursuit that they just did not have time to do when they were working and raising a family," Gladstone said.

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Scaring up a few laughs

More than 1,000 people lined up for “Goosebumps” author R.L. Stine at the OC Public Library’s Comic Orange event.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

R.L. Stine is regarded as one of the greatest children’s horror authors. Best known for the delightfully frightening “Goosebumps” book series, his name is recognized across generations of readers. Yet, while most know his name and work, there is one thing people might not know: R.L. Stine is hilarious.

“Everyone always says write what you know, write from your heart. I have written 300 books and not a single word from my heart,” Stine deadpanned at a recent author talk and book signing at the Laguna Hills Community Center.

His appearance on May 7 was part of OC Public Libraries Comic Orange, a countywide event designed to promote literacy by highlighting OCPL’s graphic novel collections and celebrating comics. Funded in part by a grant from the California Department of Aging, administered locally by the Orange County Office on Aging, Stine appeared in conversation with fellow author, Jonathan Maberry, known for his suspense and thriller books, like the “Rot & Ruin” series.

Stine’s sense of humor isn’t a complete surprise, however. The best-selling author began his career writing for a kids humor magazine titled “Bananas” as well as joke books for children. Then his editors came to him with an idea for children’s horror books.

“They said, we should try a scary book series for young kids; no one has ever done it,” said Stine.

He reluctantly agreed, but only if he could come up with a good name for the book series.

“I was reading the T.V. Guide and I saw an ad at the bottom of one page that said, ‘It’s Goosebumps week on Channel 11’ and I just stared at it. I thought, ‘That’s perfect. We will call it Channel 11.’”

Before “Goosebumps” Stine wrote teen horror, a genre he said he also fell into by accident. His publisher had a disagreement with another horror author (who Stine said would remain nameless; right before he name checked Christopher Pike that is) and asked Stine to write the book instead. It was

1987. “She said go home and write a book called ‘Blind Date’ and when it came out it was a number one best-seller,” said Stine. “I thought forget the funny stuff, and I have been doing horror ever since.”

His “Goosebumps” books for younger children came later, with the first of the series published in 1992 by Scholastic Books, which initially signed Stine for a six-book deal. The original “Goosebumps” series went on to contain 62 books and inspire spin-offs like “Goosebumps Series 2000,” “Tales to Give You Goosebumps,” “Goosebumps Triple Header” and “Goosebumps SlappyWorld.” The series has sold over 400 million copies globally in 35 languages and is second only to the Harry Potter series as far as best-selling children’s book series go. The series also inspired two television shows, including one on Disney+ starring David Schwimmer and two full-length feature films starring Jack Black.

“Goosebumps” is also one of many children’s books that has found new audiences since it was adapted into graphic novels, making the popular author a perfect fit for Comic Orange.

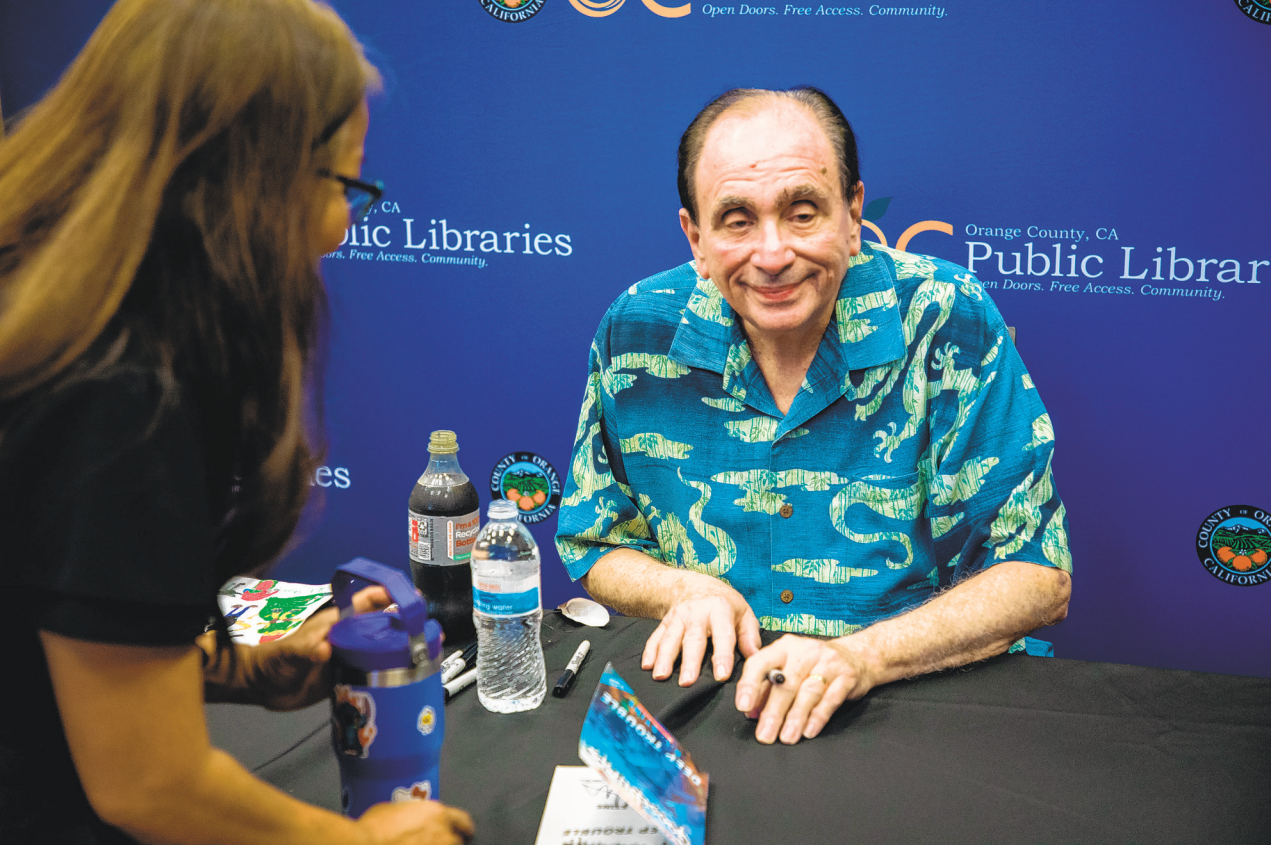
The adaptation of his books into graphic novels is something of a full circle moment for Stine who shared how he enjoyed reading comic books as a kid, particularly the “Tales from the Crypt” series, even though his mother forbade him to buy such comics.

“They were gruesome, bloody comics and they all had funny, twist endings,” Stine said of “Tales from the Crypt.” “I would read them at the barber shop because my mother wouldn’t let me buy them. She said they were trash. So every Saturday morning I would get a haircut.”

During the Q&A segment of the program, one young audience member asked what made Stine finally come around to the idea of writing scary books after trying to be funny.

“Greed and stupidity,” he said.

Stine also lamented about how no matter how many books he writes, readers always want to



Courtesy of OC Public Libraries

CHILDREN’S HORROR author, R.L. Stine made an appearance at the Laguna Hills community center on May 7 as part of OC Public Libraries Comic Orange event.



Sarah Mosqueda

“GOOSEBUMPS” FANS of all ages attended R.L. Stine’s book signing, including Gary and Effie Bender.

know about Slappy, the ventriloquist dummy who first appears in his “Goosebumps” book, “Night of the Living Dummy.” Many fans in the audience sat holding their own bow-tied Slappy dolls.

Stine told stories, including a funny account of how his son getting stuck in an old Frankenstein Halloween mask inspired another popular “Goosebumps” book, “The Haunted Mask.” He shared memorable experiences over his career, like winning a Nickelodeon Kids’ Choice Award and meeting another well regarded horror author: Stephen King.

Maberry shared he had met King himself and when he did, they discussed

Stine. “I asked him, ‘When you grow up, what do you want to do?’ and he said ‘I want to be R.L. Stine,’” Maberry said. “He said, ‘You look like you’re having more fun than he’s having.’”

Stine shook his head in disbelief.

After the talk, Stine signed books for the first 200 people at the event, some who lined up as early as noon for the 6 p.m. event. Fans of all ages turned out with the audience numbering nearly 1,000 people, many in “Goosebumps” T-shirts or dressed as characters from his books.

For locals Gary and Effie Bender, meeting R.L. Stine was a childhood dream



Sarah Mosqueda

JOHNNY GUTIERREZ, a self-proclaimed R.L. Stine super fan poses with part of his “Goosebumps” collection.

come true. “What I want to tell R.L. Stine today is thank you for an amazing childhood and adulthood,” Effie said. “My nieces and nephews are reading my vintage books to me today as a 42-year-old and still watching the VHS [tapes] that I own.”

The Benders credit Stine with inspiring their love of horror.

“He was everyone’s introductory to that genre,” Gary said.

Once young reader getting that introduction is Johnny Gutierrez, who describes himself as a R.L. Stine super fan.

“I am a super fan because I have collected most of the books and I also watch the TV shows,”

Gutierrez said. “I mostly like the classic books, like ‘Night of the Living Dummy.’”

Gutierrez brought several of his books to the event for signing along with his own Slappy doll.

Stine announced a new movie based on his teen horror book series “Fear Street” will drop on Netflix on May 23 and a new book will be out later this summer titled “Nightmare on Nightmare Street.” It seems the author still has plenty of ideas to continue scaring up a good time, and a few laughs, for the next generation of young readers.

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BONDS

Continued from page A1

post-pandemic. The Institute partnered with Dear World storytelling company, which led the nurses at the conference through a unique experience.

“We wrote the short, meaningful messages on each other and as we did that and stood in line, people opened up to each other,” Hayakawa said. “We shared stories, we cried, we laughed, we bonded and we healed. And I was just so in awe of what happened and the power of that, that I was like, ‘How do I bottle it up and bring it back to CHOC?’ Because I know, our nurses felt that way as well.”

On her return to the hospital in Orange, Hayakawa pitched it to her chief nurse and was allowed to move forward with finding funding and working with Dear World to customize the program to a hospital setting — which hadn’t been done before. They received a \$100,000 grant from #FirstResponders-First, a fund sponsored by the Entertainment Industry Foundation as part of the campaign ALL IN: Well-Being First for Healthcare.

They began the program with the CHOC executive management team and continued with the nurses.

“And then we expanded and expanded and now it’s part of clinical orientation, so all of the new hires that are taking care of patients and families are all



Photos by Jessica Peralta

EDISON KAO, Chapman University Dodge College of Film and Media Arts intern, photographs Nichole Johnson during a Dear Hospital photo session.



JENNIFER HAYAKAWA and Rebecca DeAnda stand in the exhibit pop-up on May 6 at CHOC in Orange.

onboarded with this experience — so we do it every two weeks,” Hayakawa said.

With the help of Dear World, Hayakawa and CHOC Clinical Research Nurse Coordinator Paulina Schuhler learned how to take the photography — which is in black and white — and conduct the sessions, which also involve getting the participant’s personal story.

With licensing and certi-

fication from Dear World, they eventually hired from within CHOC and trained 10 storytellers who facilitate the sessions. They also eventually partnered with Chapman University’s Dodge College of Film and Media Arts to have student photography interns take the photos.

Part of customizing the program to a hospital setting included designing the sessions so that employees could have the experience

and then continue on with their work of caring for patients and families.

“We had to really put some guardrails around the experience to get them to tell more joyful stories to still be deep and meaningful, but to do it in a safer way that allows them to continue with their day to day,” Hayakawa said.

“We’ll still sometimes get trauma unleashed — it happens. And we actually have incorporated that into a discussion about mental health. We use those in onboarding to say, ‘You know what we do here is tough and it’s OK to not be OK.’ And here are the resources and support system that are available to you as an employee or as a member of the community as well. Because that’s an important conversation to have.”

As the program has developed, the Dear Hospital team works with different departments and groups. For new-hire orientation, the sessions focus on CHOC values to develop stories, but the team also continues to do two-hour sessions for retreats and groups like social workers and frontline nurses.

“Most recently our patients and families have started doing it,” Hayakawa said.

They partnered with the Child Life team to target adolescents and young adults, and had them reflect on inner strengths.

“At that age a lot of them are struggling to find their inner strengths and to talk

about themselves in a positive way,” Hayakawa said. “So that exercise in and of itself was really good. But then they were able to pull stories from their healthcare journey that reflect on those inner strengths. It was a really meaningful experience for them. We had a really good time with that. We’ve been featuring some of those stories.”

Another element of Dear Hospital now is a pop-up exhibit that happens quarterly and displays the photos and stories of participants in the hospital lobby for about a week. The first exhibit was in September 2024. Their third exhibit was nurse-themed and ended May 9, taking place in time for National Nurses Week. They also had a mini version of the exhibit at CHOC at Mission Hospital. With more than 1,800 participants since the program launched, the Dear Hospital team has plenty of stories to tell. The next exhibit takes place in July.

During the photography sessions, messages — also known as “brain tattoos” — are written where the participants choose on their body with a skin-safe marker. The ink can be removed with baby wipes following the session.

At the recent pop-up exhibit at CHOC’s Orange location, messages like “Invisible, I See You,” “It’s OK to be Different” and “Here to Serve” were featured on participants’ arms and hands in the large black-and-white photos.

Hayakawa said they’ve had participants have messages on the face, neck, chest (where it’s not too revealing) and stomach. Some participants might cover their face for the photo.

“The pop-up kind of serves as a purpose to share what we do,” said Rebecca DeAnda, department assistant for Nursing Research and Innovation. “We can choose from this huge collection of photos we have and feature some of those but also give some representation for what Dear Hospital is. And so it has brought a lot of new departments who are interested.”

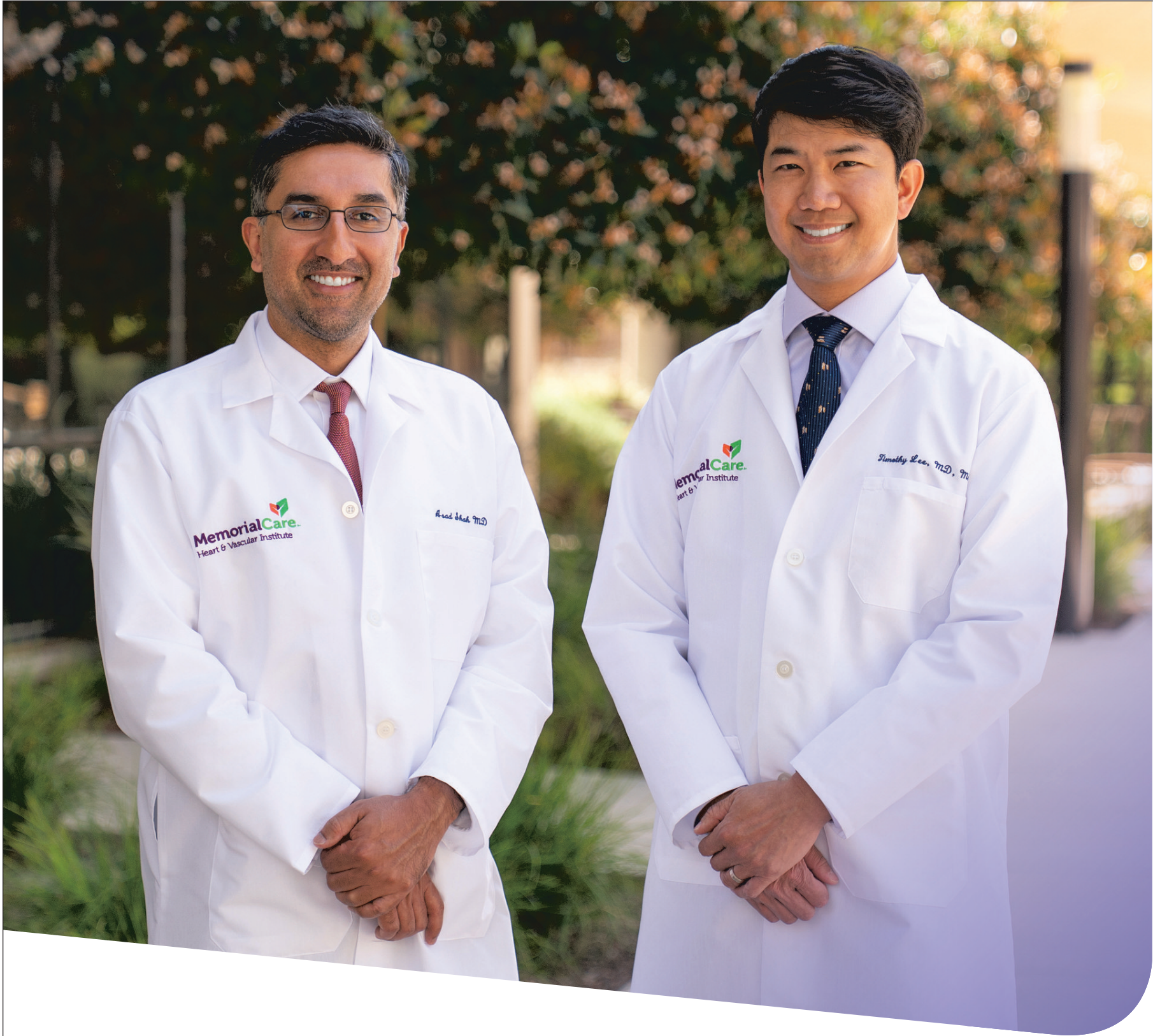
DeAnda said the program has been very well received and helps break down barriers.

“We all have something important to say,” she said. “And something that is important to me should matter. Having that connection and fellowship is really at the core of what we do at CHOC and why it makes this special.”

At the May 6 photo session, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit Nurse Nichole Johnson chose “Powered by Purpose” as the message on her arm.

“Part of it is the reason why I still work in the ICU, the reason why I still do what I do,” Johnson said. “ICU is a hard place to work and I love it. Yeah, it gives me purpose to work there.”

JESSICA PERALTA is a contributor to the Daily Pilot.



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forum

MAILBAG

Half a million for Newport Beach kids gone? Taxpayers foot the bill

Who in heaven's name thinks it's a good idea to spend as much as \$500,000 from the Newport-Mesa Unified School District's school and kid dedicated, tax dollars to hold the June 10 special election to fill a board vacancy, even after a well-qualified candidate, through an open and public application process, was appointed to fill the two-year vacancy?

Just as unsettling, that near \$500,000 loss happened only because the losing candidate's supporters had to get just 361 of the area's 19,000 voters to sign a special election petition.

Regrettably, that's the law even though it feels just so wrong.

Can you imagine such a thing in a democracy? Like a ballot measure proposing to spend hundreds of thousands in school tax dollars getting 285 votes out of 19,000 and winning?

Because school district funds are generally given more respect, school board vacancy special elections are, mercifully, as rare as hen's teeth. But not this time. Not for the champions of the second-



Photo by Sara Cardine

NEWPORT-MESA Unified School District office in Costa Mesa.

place finisher in that two-party race.

Here's the key question: What kind of folks would be behind spending that much school and kid money? It would appear because they're peevisish their preferred appointee wasn't selected. Did they know or ask before signing how the election would be paid for?

More important: What

kind of person would agree to be their candidate? What kind of person would accept this waste of school funds because they want to be a winner?

And, the proverbial last, ironic, straw? In October 2022, their board choice, NMUSD candidate Andrea McElroy, wrote a stinging and published letter-to-the-editor criticizing a Newport Beach City

Council candidate for spending "... more than \$525,000 and counting of his own money in the race ... to satisfy his wish to become an elected official."

Outrageous! Spending your own money when you can pilfer the school district purse to undo a lawful process.

How much more principled is candidate McElroy,

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Send an email to nicole.charkychami@latimes.com and include your full name, hometown and phone number (for verification purposes). All letters should be kept to 350 words or less and address local issues and events. The Daily Pilot reserves the right to limit the frequency of publication and edit accepted submissions for clarity, accuracy and length.

her ventriloquists and petitioners by causing a huge waste of school and kid money to vindicate her second-place finish in a two-horse race, and merely because of her "... wish to become an elected [school board] official?"

Lynne Riddle
Newport Beach

Ballots for a special school board election — one costing taxpayers almost half a million dollars — are arriving now in Area 5 mailboxes of the Newport Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD). This should be a non-partisan election but the Orange County GOP, once a pillar of fiscal conservatism, has made this a political campaign. The promotional materials emphasize the political party connection rather

than qualifications of the candidate.

How did we get here? The board of trustees selected Harbor High School PTA President Kirstin Walsh, with 13+ years of leadership and volunteer experience in Area 5 schools, easily the most qualified to be on our school board of all those candidates that applied to serve until November 2026. But that wasn't good enough for an unverified petitioner. With just 361 signatures, this person was able to force this election to be held.

As a retired high school and community college educator, I am both incensed and appalled by this unnecessary expense being forced on the school

See **Mailbag**, page A8

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**CITY OF COSTA MESA
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held by the Costa Mesa City Council at its regular meeting at City Hall Council Chambers, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California and virtual locations on **Tuesday, June 3, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.**, or as soon as possible thereafter as the matter shall be heard, to consider:

Pursuant to Article XIII B the California Constitution, the Appropriations Limit for the City of Costa Mesa for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 has been calculated to be \$330,924,446.

The documentation used in determining the City of Costa Mesa's Appropriations Limit for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 is available for inspection in the Office of the Director of Finance, City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California, during regular business hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Public Comments:
Members of the public wishing to participate in the meeting may find instructions to participate on the agenda. Members of the public may also submit written comments via email to the City Clerk at cityclerk@costamesaca.gov and they will be provided to the City Council, made available to the public, and will be part of the meeting record. Any written communications, photos, or other materials for copying and distribution to the City Council that are 10 pages or less, can be e-mailed to cityclerk@costamesaca.gov, submitted to the City Clerk's Office on a flash drive, or mailed to the City Clerk's Office. Kindly submit materials to the City Clerk **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, BUT NO LATER THAN 12:00 p.m.** on the day of the hearing, **June 3, 2025**. All materials, pictures, PowerPoints, and videos submitted for display at a public meeting must be previously reviewed by staff to verify appropriateness for general audiences. No links to YouTube videos or other streaming services will be accepted, a direct video file will need to be emailed to staff prior to each meeting in order to minimize complications and to play the video without delay. The video must be one of the following formats, .mp4, .mov or .wmv. Only one file may be included per speaker for public comments. Please note that materials submitted by the public that are deemed appropriate for general audiences will not be redacted in any way and will be posted online as submitted, including any personal contact information. For further assistance, contact the City Clerk's Office at (714) 754-5225. The City Council agenda and related documents may also be viewed on the City's website at <http://costamesaca.gov>, 72 hours prior to the public hearing date. **IF THE AFOREMENTIONED ACTION IS CHALLENGED IN COURT**, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in the notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Council at, or prior to, the public hearing. Brenda Green, City Clerk, City of Costa Mesa
Published on May 18, 2025.



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Courtesy of Almquist

A RENDERING of T&T Supermarket, set to open its first Southern California store in Irvine's Great Park in Winter 2026.

MARKET

Continued from page A1

store. Dan Almquist came up to Canada and saw what we did and in his view there is nothing like it in California. He wanted to be part of bringing us to Orange County."

T&T Supermarket has

more than 33 stores in Canada and opened its first U.S. location in Bellevue, Wash. in 2024. The popular grocery store was started by Lee's mother, Cindy Lee, nearly 30 years ago, with the ambition of becoming the Asian answer to chain grocery stores like Safeway, Lee recounted to the crowd. The

Orange County store is projected to be a 34,000-square-foot space.

"Our sizes in Canada range and this will be on the smaller scale, but we were able to bring a real creative element to the store," said Lee. "Today you are looking at a piece of dirt, but we are going from the ground up."

Besides stocking produce, dried goods and canned goods from all over Asia, T&T is also known for its prepared foods. The in-house bakery offers fresh dum sum and more than 100 varieties of Asian baked goods, including viral sensations like Napoleon Portuguese egg tarts. Shoppers can also look forward to freshly made jian bing (savory Chinese crepes) and Taiwanese-style rice rolls. T&T also has a line private label products, like Xiao Long Bao, or pork soup dumplings, Korean kalbi marinade and seaweed snacks. Like any good grocery store, whole cooked chicken is popular item but T&T puts their on spin on the poultry staple.

"We have really a great team of in-house chefs and we are always innovating," said Lee. "We have a new product called the Crispy Papa chicken, which is a whole butterflied deep-friend chicken and we recently came out with two other flavors."

The chicken will be available in the original Crispy Papa Chicken variety and the new Roasted Garlic Papa Chicken and Roasted Spicy Mala Papa Chicken flavors.

T&T Supermarket is set to open at The Canopy in late 2026.



Robert B Smith

August 12, 1945 - May 7, 2025

Robert was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, and son, and a longtime resident of Newport Beach. Known to his friends as Bob, he influenced the lives of many through his work, friendship, and kindness.

Born in Columbus, Ohio to Robert and Jennie Smith, he moved to Seal Beach with his family in 1957, and he attended Huntington Beach High School. He majored in public speaking and psychology at Cal State Long Beach where he was a member of Sigma Pi and was elected associated student body president in 1966. In college he met the love of his life, Carmen Bowman, and they married in 1967.

A life-long learner and teacher, he taught psychology at Orange Coast College from 1972 to 2004. In addition to education, Bob was actively involved in real estate development, serving as project manager for the Old Town Irvine restoration project and later as project manager of Discovery Science Center, Santa Ana.

Bob was extremely proud of his children and grandchildren and would spend as much time with them as possible. He enjoyed traveling and new experiences, and he cared deeply about improving people's lives. Most recently he started a men's group at the Oasis Center in Corona del Mar to discuss "man's third act," as he called it, about how to live well in old age. He also was a commissioner on the Newport Beach Arts Commission, and he helped obtain many sculptures for the sculpture garden at the Newport Beach city hall.

Bob's steady wisdom and warmth will be missed by all who knew him. He is survived by his wife, Carmen, their sons, Robert and Adam, three grandchildren, Ava, Olivia and Colin and two brothers, David and Dan.

Memorial services are pending and will be announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please send donations in Robert's name to the Newport Beach Arts Foundation.

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@latimes.com
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THE DAILY
COMMUTER
PUZZLE

By Stella
Zawistowski

- ACROSS**
1 Addition problem answers
5 Rents out
9 Full of foliage
14 Akron's state
15 Factually correct
16 Skateboarding trick
17 Daring
18 Financial obligation
19 Actress Davis
20 Bundle of papers
22 Audiotapes
24 Flash of lightning
26 Existence
27 "Speed it up!"
29 Weapon in a Clue game
30 Spherical veggie
33 Suffer defeat
34 Creme-centered cookie
36 Magic incantation
38 Triple Crown race: 2 wds.
41 Architect Antoni
42 Come in contact with
43 Alabama Slammer liquor, for short
44 Egyptian snake
45 "I Am _" (2015 reality show)
47 Not happy
49 Potato peel
50 Quick photo
51 "Swan Lake" performer
55 Musical pitches
59 Shun
60 Auction off
62 Bus trip
63 "Thanks" in French
64 House, in Spanish
65 Oak or pine
66 Elizabeth _ (makeup brand)
67 Timeline parts

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
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59						60			61		62			
63						64					65			
66						67					68			

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.

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

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

68 Mail

DOWN

- 1 Cries loudly
2 "Eek!"
3 Odometer unit
4 Irish loaf: 2 wds.
5 Inc. equivalent: Abbr.

- 6 Standing tall
7 Big brass instrument
8 Frees: 2 wds.
9 Affectionate exchange
10 Top-class
11 Oodles: 2 wds.
12 Dossier

- 13 Aye votes
21 Tit _ tat
23 Small taste
25 French city
27 Jewish dances
28 Deplete: 2 wds.
29 Turn back to zero
30 Orange _ tea
31 Put into office
32 As well
33 Lydia Ko's group: Abbr.
35 Be nostalgic
37 Travel documents
39 Contributed: 2 wds.
40 Absolutely amaze
46 What fills a beach ball
48 Bad review
49 Serving of pizza
50 Tortilla chip dip
51 The Crimson Tide, for short
52 Declare
53 "The _ of the Rings"
54 Close by
56 Grow weary
57 Actress Barbara
58 Tournament ranking
61 The L in UNLV

Tribune Media
Services

TOURISM

Continued from page A1

led Visit Anaheim to agree to pay \$3 million back to Anaheim, with the first \$1.5 million paid last month.

The audit, which Assemblyman Avelino Valencia requested, called for the Visit Anaheim agreement to be amended by June 2025 with more performance standards and subcontracting oversight.

Councilmember Carlos Leon emphasized that point during his remarks at Anaheim City Council on Tuesday.

"We're not here because the contract was up for renewal," he said. "We're here because there was misuse of funds from the organization."

Under the new contract approved by the council, Visit Anaheim will issue annual reports to its board of directors and the city on performance standards, including the number of convention events booked and occupancy rates for hotels within the Anaheim Tourism Improvement District, which assesses a 2% fee on nightly room rates within its boundaries.

Visit Anaheim will also disclose unspent ATID funds, which are culled from 75% of the fees collected by the city, and reserve balances, one of several requirements incorporated from a state audit's list of recommendations.

As the audit additionally found that Visit Anaheim improperly subcontracted with the Anaheim Chamber of Commerce, any future subcontract totaling more than \$150,000 must be approved by Anaheim's city manager.

During the council's deliberations, Leon sought to change the contract's three-year term to one-year, with an annual review determining whether or not the panel would approve a two-year extension.

Several of his council colleagues pushed back on the proposed change, including Mayor Ashleigh



ANAHEIM
Convention Center bookings will be charted and reported to the city under a new agreement with Visit Anaheim.

Richard Shotwell/
invision/ap

Aitken, who called a clause allowing for a 180-day termination of the contract without cause a "rip cord" that sufficiently strengthens the city's hand.

"If we were genuinely upset about something that happened in six months, we could invoke that 180-day termination clause," she said. "That's what actually gives me peace about this."

Aitken also noted the importance of sending a message of "continuity" regarding Anaheim's tourist economy.

Councilmember Natalie Rubalcava voiced other concerns about the contract before voting on it.

She brought up the idea of setting a cap on reserve balances to compel Visit Anaheim to spend and wanted transient occupancy taxes, or TOT, to be a key performance indicator of the bureau's work, especially as the city's tourism-reliant general fund faces a budget gap next year.

"That's an issue for me because our TOT revenue is down," Rubalcava said. "[Visit Anaheim's] CEO makes \$500,000. That's a significant amount of money for not having our TOT revenue where it should be."

She also noted that smaller hotels among the 90 within the ATID boundaries have indicated to her office that they're struggling.

"We really need to be booking enough conventions or youth sports events so that we're really helping everybody, and not just the hotels that are in and around the convention center," Rubalcava added.

According to city spokesman Mike Lyster, TOT revenue in Anaheim is down by 1.2% over the past 12 months after seeing a post-pandemic boost of pent-up tourism.

Councilmember Ryan Balias asked what would happen to any reserve balances if the city decided to discontinue its contract with Visit Anaheim. Tom Morton, executive director of convention, sports and entertainment said that the funds would carry over to a new contractor.

But the council did not entertain taking such a measure on Tuesday and voted unanimously to approve the updated agreement.

"We want them to sell the heck out of Anaheim," Balias said.

A contract amendment tasks Visit Anaheim with monitoring and reporting on TOT revenue collected within the Anaheim Resort, while a revenue cap is something that could come back as a future recommendation and change.

Regarding the timeline of the contract's terms, Leon amended his proposed change to have a two-year automatic renewal of the contract after its initial one-year term, with one-year automatic renewals every year afterward.

"We still believe in Visit Anaheim because, clearly, we could dismantle you today," Rubalcava said sternly. "We need to make it clear and really reinforce the fact that we need you to do your job."

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Disneyland's 70th birthday celebrates happiness

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

If anyone knows how to throw a birthday party, it's Disneyland. Hewing to a theme of happiness, the Anaheim resort began its year-long 70th birthday celebration on Friday with food, entertainment and fun.

In the seven decades since its opening, much has evolved in Walt Disney's park that pioneered theme entertainment. Disneyland originally opened on July 17, 1955 and while park-goers will have to wait until July 17 this year for one special surprise, there are plenty of early birthday treats launching now.

The original park sat on 160 acres of former orange groves and opened on a sweltering, 100 degree day. There were four original lands accessible through Main Street, U.S.A.; Fantasyland, Adventureland, Frontierland and Tomorrowland. Today, Disney has a nearly 500-acre footprint, with the addition of New Orleans Square, Mickey's Toontown, Bayou Country and Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge, plus approved plans to expand over the next few decades.

Visitors hoping to learn more about Disneyland's history can join "A Story of Celebration" guided tour. On the two-hour jaunt through the park, guests will learn about significant moments in Disneyland's past, ride original attractions like the Mark Twain Riverboat and the Disneyland Railroad, enjoy reserved parade viewing and more.

The park is dressed up for the party, too. The hot pink, royal purple and cyan blue decorations throughout Disneyland, Disney California Adventure and Downtown Disney are part of a tradition David Caranci, manager of creative development at Walt Disney Imagineering, said stems from Disneyland's opening day.



Sarah Mosqueda

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY Castle lit up for "Wondrous Journeys" Nighttime Spectacular, the firework and projection show celebrating Disneyland's 70th birthday in Anaheim.

"It really starts from 1955 when Walt decorated Main St. U.S.A. in red, white and blue," said Caranci. "We know that decor plays a huge part in the celebration and connecting our past and our future."

The decor starts outside Disneyland with a 50-foot sculpture of a contemporary interpretation of Sleeping Beauty Castle, with each of the original lands represented. The real castle inside the park has a 70th medallion on the doorway above the drawbridge and guests will find unique backdrops, perfect for photos in both parks and at Disneyland Hotel, Downtown Disney District and Disney's Grand Californian Hotel & Spa.

"We want people to step in, take pictures, take selfies and get involved," said Caranci.

"Better Together: A Pixar Pals Celebration!" parade at Disney California Adventure also returns for the occasion, starting with a float of the iconic Pixar

lamp. Eight colorful floats featuring music and characters from Pixar films like "Turning Red," "Soul" and "Up" with the parade celebrating friendship.

Carthay Circle Restaurant is decked out in the 70th anniversary colors and a special projection light show, "Celebrate Happy: A Little Bit of Magic Every Night" enhances the façade in the evening. It's set to a new song, "Celebrate Happy," by the Jonas Brothers, which was composed especially for the occasion.

"Happy is the message, because this is such a happy place and people come here to celebrate their happy memories; their birthdays, their graduations, their proposals," said Tricia Holloway, Disney music executive. "We wanted to make sure we had a song that would underscore this environment. When we approached the Jonas Brothers, they responded with a resounding 'yes.'"

The song is used in different versions

throughout the park and Susana Tubert, creative director of Disney live entertainment, said it is a key element to the storytelling.

"The song is acting as a needle and thread that weaves across the resort and brings the theme of the celebration to the top of mind for our guests and our cast members," said Tubert.

A new water show is debuting at Disney California Adventure for the celebration titled "World of Color Happiness." It highlights characters from "Inside Out" and opening with words Walt spoke on opening day: "To all who come to this happy place — welcome."

There is also a pre-show from the Muppets.

"The Muppets are actually celebrating their 70th anniversary as well, so we reached to our friends at the Muppets Studios and said, 'Hey, do the Muppets want to play with us?'" said Jennifer McGill, executive producer of Disney live entertainment.

Nighttime parade "Paint the Night" will return to Disneyland with more than one million LED lights plus special effects and music that references the original "Main Street Electrical Parade" theme and of course, the new "Celebrate Happy" song.

"Wondrous Journeys" Nighttime Spectacular is also back at Disneyland and enhanced with fireworks on select nights.

"Wondrous Journeys" premiered during the Disney 100 Celebration and we are super thrilled to bring it back," said Tubert. "It is an amazing opportunity to celebrate 60 animation films by Disney."

Sleeping Beauty Castle becomes a canvas for the projection show with beloved Disney characters and songs, including Baymax from "Big Hero 6" flying overhead.

Food is also part of the storytelling and the Disney culinary team is introducing more than 70 menu items for the 70th birthday. Disney chefs like Eduardo Rodriguez and Esther Alonso are presenting new and nostalgic food, including the chocolate-dipped Mickey hat cookie.

"This is a classic cookie but it's also an homage to the Mickey Mouse Club and the ears they used have back in 1955," said Alonso.

Other throwbacks include a classic banana split like those available in the park in the 1950s and other treats inspired by it, like a banana split churro, rolled in chocolate sugar with banana and vanilla sauce and a cherry on top. Red Rose Taverne will serve a mid-century classic tuna melt, with Muenster and herb-marinated tomatoes complete with a green olive on a toothpick for garnish. Apple rolled pancakes, finished with walnut streusel, and cinnamon Chantilly cream at River Belle Terrace, the chili cheese corn dog from

Corn Dog Castle and chili cheese baked potato at Troubadour Tavern each represent early dishes served in the park.

"These are beautiful because they are an homage to Walt Disney himself; his favorite dish when he would go into the park was Walt's chili," said Alonso.

It wouldn't be a birthday party without cake. A 70th celebration cake will be served at the Plaza Inn, layering all of the best kinds of confection flavors in one slice with pound cake, cherry compote, confetti cake, vanilla bean white chocolate mousse and lemon curd pastry cream covered with a white chocolate ganache buttercream frosting. There is also a 70th Celebration macaron at Jolly Holiday Cafe, fashioned to look like a pink cake slice.

A special surprise is planned for July 17 when the park's founder will attend the party himself in the form of a new attraction "Walt Disney — A Magical Life," featuring the first ever audio-animated figure of Walt Disney, who passed away in 1966. Using the latest form of technology Disney first created to bring Abraham Lincoln to life for "Great Moments With Mr. Lincoln," the Main Street Opera House will become Walt's studio office. After the initial run for the 70th celebration, "Great Moments With Mr. Lincoln" will return playing alongside "A Magical Life" on a rotating stage.

There is a lot to do, see and taste for Disneyland's birthday, but guests have a whole year to celebrate. Now, it's time to get the party started.

Disneyland Resort 70th Celebration began Friday and runs through summer 2026. For tickets and park reservations visit disneyland.disney.go.com.

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MAILBAG

Continued from page A6

district when we had a great candidate already serving as the appointed trustee. Andrea McElroy's qualifications are simply not as strong as those of Kirstin Walsh. Make no

mistake, this election is a power grab, not about who is best qualified to guide our children.

Maureen Ramer
Newport Beach

I had the privilege of listening to Kristin Walsh. She is a very qualified candidate running for

Newport Mesa school board trustee Area 5. She is now in a very expensive special election. School Board is non political affiliation. It is to support, students and teachers. Kristin does both of these.

Her opponent (Andrea McElroy) is sending fliers

critiquing her independent political affiliation.

Her opponent also lists endorsements from most current City Council members.

It is not the right thing to do!

She seems to have a disadvantage because she's not a conservative Republican?

Please get out an vote for Kristin Walsh.

Maureen Mccarthey
Newport Beach

The battle over control in H.B.

The words "local control" are routinely used by the Huntington Beach City Council to stop state government interference.

Measure A gives each parent and guardian local control over what books and materials their own children see at the Public Library.

Measure B gives Huntington Beach residents local control over how the

public libraries will be managed.

If the H.B. City Council demands local control over its city government, shouldn't H.B. residents have the opportunity to have the same local control over how they use the public libraries?

Vote "yes" on Measures A and B for local control and the freedom to choose.

Cathey Ryder
Huntington Beach

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

S	U	M	S		L	E	T	S		L	E	A	F	Y
O	H	I	O		T	R	U	E		O	L	L	I	E
B	O	L	D		D	E	B	T		V	I	O	L	A
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9	8	4	1	7	6	2	5	3
7	9	2	8	6	4	5	3	1
4	6	3	2	5	1	9	7	8
8	5	1	7	3	9	4	2	6
5	1	8	9	2	3	7	6	4
2	3	9	6	4	7	8	1	5
6	4	7	5	1	8	3	9	2

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One of the books currently relocated from the middle grade, non-fiction section of the children's library to the restricted fourth floor adult section of the Huntington Beach Public Library is the award-winning, "The Way We Work," by David McCaulay. Written in similar fashion to the classic, "The Way Things Work," the book is a beautifully illustrated anatomy book that children and teens find informative and absorbing.

Many kids, ages 8-12, are attracted to books like "The Way We Work" because of their interest in anatomy and human biology. My nephews, who are now in medical school, loved checking out similar library books when they were in elementary school. Why should this book be made inaccessible for browsing to minors? Published in 2008, "The Way We Work" in no way can be considered sexually explicit even with its mild description of the reproductive system. There are absolutely no images of sexual acts.

In their quest for ultimate control of our public library and our book choices, the extremist Huntington Beach City Council has gone too far with their cries of pornography and their proposed book-banning review board.

Vote "yes" on Measures A and B to keep our library free from political agendas and corporate takeovers.

Carol Daus
Huntington Beach

Portillo's in Buena Park offers the 'Leo,' a Pope-inspired Italian beef sandwich

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

What would the election of the first U.S.-born pope in history be without a promotional gimmick?

Now that Cardinal Robert Prevost is known to the world as Pope Leo XIV, Portillo's in Buena Park is paying homage to his Chicago roots by rechristening its famed Italian beef sandwich the "Leo."

Foodies and the faithful don't have to be part of a conclave to enjoy the meal. Even though the sandwich doesn't appear on the menu by name, the kitchen knows what to do when an order for the Leo comes through.

The Chicago-based chain is perhaps best known for its Chicago-style hot dogs stuffed in poppy-seed buns and topped with neon green sweet pickle relish, tomato slices, sport peppers and a dill pickle spear.

Coming in at \$8.99 a pop, the Leo is just as good as any would-be "holy" hot dog.

Splashed with gravy, the Leo makes the wrapping it comes in almost translucent.

A hefty layering of thin slow-roasted Italian beef fills the Turano French roll, as the au jus delightfully dampens the bread inside. Sweet or spicy chopped peppers provide for a flavorful contrast to its savory profile.

Pickled bits of cauliflower, celery and onion round out the meal fit to quell papal hunger pangs and leave bellies feeling blessed, not bloated.

The hot dog chain hailed its "sacred sandwich" as one "made in honor of a moment that's historic for Portillo's hometown."

It's not the first time a restaurant in Orange County has honored a new pope.

When Pope Francis took



Photos by Gabriel San Román

PORTILLO'S IN Buena Park serves up a sandwich fit for a pope, but not just for the faithful.

helm of the Catholic Church in 2013, the Pasta Connection's location in Orange, which served a menu of fugazza and pampa steaks before shuttering, hung a banner of the Argentinian flag on its outside patio to welcome his election.

With Portillo's, whose sole O.C. location is in Buena Park, the honor in the form of the Leo is one that folks can bite into through the month of May, which also doubles as Italian beef month.

That's also how long diners will wonder why they weren't baptized in gravy, too!

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THE ITALIAN BEEF sandwich at Portillo's has been rebranded as the "Leo" in honor of the new pope from Chicago.



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