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Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

STUDENT MENTOR Joel Pratt, left, helps Quinn Persinger, 18, with a graphic design idea as Spyder Lab teacher Jason Kovac, talks to Kerrie Torres, Newport-Mesa Unified School District assistant superintendent of secondary education, at the new Spyder Lab at Back Bay High School.

Back Bay students design their futures at Spyder Lab



DAVIAN GONZALEZ, 17, top left, and Christian Martinez, 17, use an eco-solvent printing and cutting machine to create 'Proud supporter of BBHS Spyder Lab' stickers at Back Bay High School.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

The bell rang Wednesday morning to mark the end of the second period at Back Bay High School, but few of the students in classroom 1A moved an inch from their seats, instead choosing to continue their work undeterred.

Machines hummed with activity and lasers cut into wood. At other stations designs were printed onto fabric and sticker paper. Students called out to one another, then to mentors and teacher Jason Kovac for assistance. From the sidelines, district staff witnessed the activities taking place in Back Bay's own Spyder Lab, which was two years in the planning.

Spyder Lab is a work-based school program that allows stu-

dents to gain skills for graphic media careers and entrepreneurship. The consultant itself is based in Brea and has labs in schools all over Orange County, including in Back Bay. Though, the Spyder Lab at Back Bay is the only one of its caliber in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District.

"This program itself is training students in a one-year period of time to run a business and be certified in all of the machinery in this room. They're building an amazing portfolio to go into the industry; whether they're getting certified in QuickBooks — they're going to learn how to operate an actual business— but it's also all these pieces of machinery," career technical educa-

See **Lab**, page A7

Dancer leaps back on ballet stage

James Whiteside returns to Segerstrom after he tore his patellar tendon last year performing in "The Nutcracker."

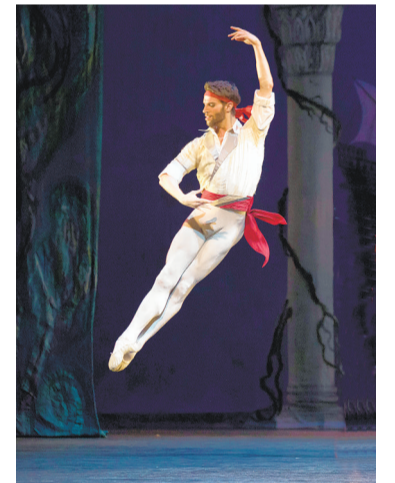
BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

During a matinee performance of "The Nutcracker" at Segerstrom Center for the Arts last year, James Whiteside had one of the most devastating experiences a dancer can have.

"I did a big running start to this jump sequence," said Whiteside, "and as I pushed off my left leg, I felt and heard my patellar tendon disconnect."

Whiteside was already battling with patellar tendinitis, a degeneration of a tendon over time in his knees, and the pandemic made it difficult to take classes and find places to rehearse. When restrictions were lifted and he finally did return to the theater, he admits he didn't feel as strong despite all manner of physical therapy.

See **Dancer**, page A4



Courtesy of Rosalie O'Connor

BALLET DANCER and choreographer James Whiteside performs in "Le Corsaire."

OH THOSE DONUTS on Newport Boulevard in Costa Mesa closed Nov. 14 after nearly four decades.

Don Leach
Staff
Photographer



Doughnut shop-owning family thanks Costa Mesa for 39 sweet years

BY SARA CARDINE

Costa Mesa doughnut lovers were saddened last month to learn a beloved family-owned institution that had operated out of a storefront at 1734 Newport Blvd. for nearly four decades had closed its doors.

Oh Those Donuts offered its namesake fried pastries along-

side an assortment of custom-created deli sandwiches during long hours, serving young families, retirees and late-night crowds. But without much fanfare, the enterprise served its last customer on Nov. 14.

"We weren't in any hurry to close the business, for sure," said

See **Family**, page A4

Laguna Beach brothers featuring local icons in Christmas ornaments

BY ANDREW TURNER

A look around their Laguna Beach home is all anyone needs to know about how much Christmastime means to the Collins family.

In the living room, a tree standing 15 feet tall is strewn with lights and ornaments, dominating the front-window display of their historic home.

Over the years, Clark and Greg Collins have seen their sons help decorate the tree during the holidays, and the parents have shared the stories behind the ornaments.

For the past couple of years, Jackson, 16, and Sawyer, 13, a sophomore and an eighth-grader at St. Margaret's Episcopal School in San Juan Capistrano, have added to the stories represented on the tree.

Jackson and Sawyer launched Iconic Ornaments in October 2021. The kids have thrown them-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

JACKSON COLLINS runs a business with his brother, Sawyer, called Iconic Ornaments. The trolley bus is one of the ornaments for sale.

elves into the entrepreneurial endeavor after experiencing more common childhood ven-

tures such as hosting lemonade

See **Brothers**, page A7

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CdM eighth-grader's curiosity leads to big opportunity

BY MATT SZABO

Corona del Mar Middle School eighth-grader Maxwell Tran has always had a passion for learning.

When he was in first grade, he was interested in spiders, so he found every morsel of information that he could about the arachnids.

"In general, he's a very curious person," said Maxwell's mother, Uyen Nguyen-Tang. "When he finds something that he's interested in, he has this dedication to it that I feel is amazing. He's still 13, so obviously we still want him to be a kid and play with his friends and everything like that. But I'm always in awe when he finds something interesting and puts a lot of work and effort into it."

His seventh-grade social studies teacher at CdM last school year, Todd Eversgerd, told the class in January that he would have to miss a day of school. He needed to be there for his daughter, Marina High's Mika Ikemori, as she received a Vagus Nerve Stimulator (VNS) implant to help her battle seizures.

Ikemori is a standout girls' tennis player bound for UC Davis who recently reached the CIF Southern Section Individuals singles title match for the second straight year. The part of the equation that interested Maxwell, though, was the VNS implant itself.

"The procedure is really simple, it takes 45 minutes to an hour," he said. "I thought it was interesting that a short procedure to put in a small device could stop a seizure so easily. That's why it really piqued my interest."

Maxwell's father, Dr. Thanh Tran, is an anesthesiologist at Children's Hospital of Orange County. He handled that part of Ikemori's procedure.

Meanwhile, Maxwell went home and started watching the first of 50 YouTube videos on VNS im-



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

MAXWELL TRAN did a research project on Vagus Nerve Stimulator (VNS) implants to treat epilepsy after learning that his teacher Todd Eversgerd's daughter received a VNS implant earlier this year.

plants, rating each one as he went through them.

He submitted a 3,000-character research paper to the Western Medical Research Conference in September, and it paid off. Not only was Maxwell's abstract accepted, but he has been invited to speak at a WMRC event in Carmel on Jan. 22.

It will be part of a fun weekend for Maxwell, who turns 14 the day before he makes his 10-minute PowerPoint presentation. His mom is a pediatrician at CHOC, and one of her co-workers, Dr. Behnoosh Afghani, has worked as

Maxwell's mentor on the project.

While the thought of a presentation to medical school students does bring nerves — Maxwell has been dealing with a speech impediment since kindergarten — he is confident it will go well.

"I have to talk to people that are way older than me," he said. "But with a lot of practice and stuff, then it should go smoothly."

Practice makes perfect, or at least better. Maxwell knows this because of his stutter but also in activities like running for the cross-

country team at CdM. He's also on the yearbook staff.

At the end of the school year last spring, Eversgerd picked Maxwell as his recipient for the CdM Pride award.

"I was expecting, because of his stutter, to have this kid that was really reserved and shy, didn't really want to participate," Eversgerd said. "But it was the complete opposite. He would volunteer to share out, answer questions. Even times where he would struggle, just stammer for a good five or 10 seconds, he never let it stop what he wanted to

convey verbally. He would just power through, which is kind of unusual for a 12-year-old in seventh grade, especially the social stigma that can come along with that. He never let it get in his way."

What Eversgerd didn't realize was all of the research that Maxwell was doing on the VNS procedure. Maxwell never told his favorite teacher until his research was accepted last month. On the day before Thanksgiving, he sent Eversgerd an email with the good news.

"The reason why [I didn't tell him earlier] was that I

didn't think my paper would be accepted," Maxwell said. "I'm so young. I was just going to do it for the experience."

Eversgerd couldn't be more proud of his former student.

"People can benefit from the information that he's working on to convey with this abstract, which is also cool," he said. "It's not just a Max story, it's that others can benefit from it as well, as far as garnering information about VNS."

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THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

1 Cat

5 Cabbage dishes

10 Makes a choice

14 Blind as _

15 Not prohibited

16 Bangkok native

17 Some bills

18 The whole shebang

20 Fem. title

21 Grain planted

22 Language in Cardiff

23 Like a babe in the woods

25 _ person; each

26 Shrewd

28 Searches

31 Africa's Sierra _

32 All tied up

34 House member: abbr.

36 _ up; held inside

37 Big name in cameras

38 Goose egg

39 Word with lifts or boots

40 G. Gordon _ of Watergate fame

41 Branches

42 Only

44 Abhor

45 Feel poorly

46 Bathtub outlet

47 _ off; disregard

50 Pay attention to

51 Hoover, for one

54 As light as a feather

57 Asian desert

58 Curved beam overhead

59 Requests for more slop

60 Invalid; not binding

61 Stingers

62 Unkempt

63 Secondhand

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														63

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.

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

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A4.

DOWN

1 Taps gently

2 Taxi competitor

3 Location of the Alamo

4 Ave. crossers

5 Coat part

6 Embankment

7 Well along in years

8 Simple card game

9 Shifty

10 "Do unto _"

11 Golfer Mickelson

12 Browns

13 Exhale audibly

19 Rough woolen fabric

21 Location

24 Kate Middleton, to Archie

25 Young hoodlum

26 European peaks

27 Looks for

28 Wharf

29 Huge

30 Many Bosnians

32 Corpse

33 Kooky

35 Pillar

37 Slaughterer

38 Tubular pasta

40 Actress Janet

41 Pencil's core

43 Giggles

44 Like formal clothes

46 Classroom furniture

47 Q-tip, e.g.

48 Roll call response

49 School in Houston

50 Cluckers

52 Capable

53 Not at all harsh

55 Cruise, for one

56 Whopper

57 Large antelope

Tribune Media Services

Patient of
Dr. Michael Russo,
Bariatric Surgeon



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who lost
78 pounds

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A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE

A punctuation primer as a grammar gift for the holidays

Sending out holiday greetings this year? Christmas cards, emails, posts on the family Facebook page and party invitations are all wonderful opportunities to embarrass yourself with punctuation and grammar mistakes. So here, continuing my annual tradition, is the 2022 edition of the most common holiday greeting grammar flubs and how to avoid them.



Wrong: We're visiting the Miller's house, the Ricci's house, the Williams' house, the Jones's house, the Ramirez's house or the French's house. **Right:** The Millers', Riccis', Williamses', Joneses', Ramirezes', Frenches'. Unlike plurals, possessives actually do take apostrophes. But when you're talking about something that's owned by more than one person, like a house, first make it plural — one Williams, two Williamses — then add the possessive apostrophe at the end: the Williamses' house.

Wrong: Happy holidays from the Miller's! **Right:** the Millers. If your last name ends with any letter other than S, Z, X, Ch or Sh, make it plural by just adding S. No apostrophe. Two people named Miller are the Millers. Three people named Smith are the Smiths.

Wrong(ish): Hey Katie, (as a greeting in a card or email). **Right:** Hey, Katie. Don't confuse a greeting like "hey" with an adjective like "dear." When "dear" begins a correspondence, you don't need a comma after it: Dear Katie. And when "Dear Katie" kicks off the first line of a correspondence, you can follow it with a comma or a colon: "Dear Katie, (line break) It was so nice to hear from you." But "hey," "hi," "hello" and similar greetings are not adjectives. They don't modify the noun that follows the way "dear" does. Instead, "hey" should be separated from the name with a comma. So just like "Katie, what are you doing?" and "It's nice to see you, Katie," there's a comma to set off the name in "Hey, Katie." After the name, you could put a comma, but it looks funny because you already have one after "hey." So opt for a colon or a period. "Hey, Katie: How have you

Wrong: Happy holidays from the Ricci's. **Right:** the Riccis. A name that ends in a vowel may look weird with an S at the end, but that's no excuse to add an apostrophe. If your last name is D'Angelo, two of your family members are D'Angelos.

Wrong: Happy holidays from the Jones', the Ramirez's or the French's. **Right:** Joneses, Ramirezes, Frenches. Seeing a theme here? No matter the name, you should never use an apostrophe to make it plural. These names work just like common nouns ending in S, Z, X, Ch and Sh, which add ES to form the plural — bosses, blintzes, axes, marches, marches. So two Ramirezes, no apostrophe.



Susan Hoffman

KIDS DECORATE Christmas stockings during the 2022 Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort & Marina holiday celebration marking the 32nd annual Lighting of the Bay.

been?" "Hey, Katie. Hope you're well." So why do I say that "Hey Katie," with the comma at the end is "wrongish" instead of just wrong? Because it's standard. Every editor I correspond with uses it. If editors do it, you can, too.

Not offensive: Xmas. Contrary to the common belief that X erases Christ from Christmas, the X here is the Greek letter chi — the first letter in Christ — which was used as a reference to Jesus.

So don't worry about offending anyone if you feel like writing Xmas.

Wrong: Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. **Right:** Have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Merry and Happy aren't capitalized unless they're the first word in the sentence.

Wrong: Wishing you all the best in the New Year. **Right:** the new year. The holidays New Year, New Year's, New Year's Eve and New

Year's Day are capitalized. References to the year itself are not: the new year.

Wrong: Seasons greetings. **Right:** Season's greetings. You're sending greetings of just one season: this one. So season's is singular possessive.

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

P	U	S	S	S	L	A	W	S	O	P	T	S		
A	B	A	T	L	E	G	A	L	T	H	A	I		
T	E	N	S	E	V	E	R	T	H	I	N	G		
S	R	A	S	E	E	D	W	E	L	S	H			
	N	A	I	V	E		P	E	R					
A	S	T	U	T	E		Q	U	E	S	T	S		
L	E	O	N	E		B	O	U	N	D		R	E	P
P	E	N	T		K	O	D	A	K		Z	E	R	O
S	K	I		L	I	D	D		L	I	M	B	S	
S	O	L	E	L	E		D	E	T	E	S	T		
		A	I	L		D	R	A	I	N				
S	H	R	U	G		H	E	E	D		D	A	M	
W	E	I	G	H	T	L	E	S	S		G	O	B	I
A	R	C	H		O	I	N	K	S		N	U	L	L
B	E	E	S		M	E	S	S	Y		U	S	E	D

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

DANCER

Continued from page A1

"When we came to California to do 'The Nutcracker,' my tendinitis was pretty much at an all time high," said Whiteside.

He was scheduled for two performances in Costa Mesa when another dancer fell ill and a third performance was added to his itinerary.

"Sadly, that is the performance during which I ruptured my patellar tendon," Whiteside said.

Whiteside made it through the first act, but it was during the second act that the injury occurred.

"I sort of crumbled like a bag of laundry," said Whiteside. "In shock, I remained laying on the ground on my stomach as the music continued. Finally the music stopped and the curtain came down."

Whiteside flew back to New York, and was in for reconstructive surgery two days later.

After a year of recovery, Whiteside returns to Segerstrom on Dec. 10 with the American Ballet Theatre to perform once again in "The Nutcracker."

Whiteside joined American Ballet Theatre in 2012 and was named a principal dancer in 2013. He has choreographed for music videos, commercials, film and ballet and published his memoir, "Center Center," with Penguin Random House in 2021. He also hosts a podcast, "The Stage Rightside," with James Whiteside. While his other projects kept him busy dur-



Courtesy of Rosalie O'Connor

JAMES WHITESIDE performs as Hilarion in "Giselle." Whiteside will return to the stage for "The Nutcracker."

ing recovery, he also struggled with the idea that he might not be able to dance at a performance level again. In some ways, that uncertainty was more excruciating than the physical pain.

"For much of the recovery process, you can't imagine that you will ever be able to do what you did at the level that you like to do it again," said Whiteside, "and quieting that very reasonable voice, frankly, is incredibly difficult. So you have to have the will of a warrior."

The American Ballet Theatre's "The Nutcracker" runs at Segerstrom Hall until Dec. 18 and tickets start at \$29. The show is under the artistic direction of ABT's Kevin McKenzie and features the work of renowned choreographer Alexei Ratmansky, sets and costumes by Tony winner Richard Hudson and the Pacific Symphony playing Tchaikovsky's score. The annual performance has

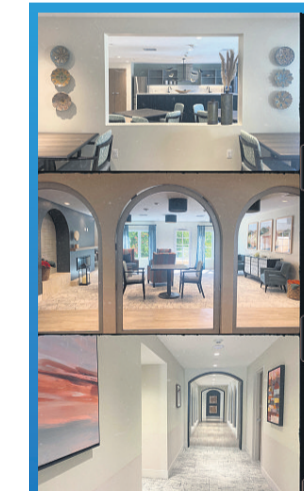
become a holiday tradition for Orange County and one that Whiteside looks forward to being a part of once again.

"I love, love the holidays. I love everything from the music to the decorations to the spirit of giving," said Whiteside. "'The Nutcracker' has played a role in my life since I was 10 years old. It is huge part of why I am a dancer. It is the first ballet I ever saw."

Whiteside said he hopes that his story of recovery can help others feel inspired this holiday season.

"I want to be a part of that holiday lore. I want this to be something that people can use to make themselves feel stronger," said Whiteside. "Because knowing that I am not alone in this makes me work harder and be more thoughtful and more grateful."

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HERITAGE POINTE

Seniors Living in the Jewish Tradition

FAMILY

Continued from page A1

Ken Metro, whose father, Steve, became part owner of the store in 1983 and, in a matter of months, was its sole proprietor. "It's been a great little business that's supported my mom and dad for a lot of years."

Metro, 57, who began working at the shop after high school and went from making doughnuts to learning the finer points of management, said his family had a longstanding arrangement with property owner Jerry Palangian that was made decades earlier, essentially on a handshake.

"His word is gold. And he upheld that commitment for 40 years, we can't complain," he said in an interview last week. "[But] he has decided he wanted to try something else."

Rumors abounded on social media, where forlorn customers wondered if a legal cannabis retailer might move in. Costa Mesa city officials confirmed last month no dispensary applications have been received for that address.



THE INTERIOR of Oh Those Donuts and Deli in 2021.

Courtesy of John Mourani

Even Metro speculated on the doughnut shop's successor, saying someone made an offer to Palangian for a vegan restaurant, but he didn't know for sure.

He said while his family learned in September the shop's closure was imminent, it didn't seem like the right time, given his father was in his 80s, to start over in a new location. And because the family's agreement with the property owner had been mostly verbal, there wasn't adequate documentation to allow them to sell the enterprise to a new owner.

Closing in November, although not a happy option, seemed the practical thing to do.

"While we were closing

down that Monday, a lot of people were coming up and asking us, what's going on here?" Metro recalled of the store's last day. "We had people, regulars, who came in every single day, and they'd sit there for hours."

Costa Mesa resident Valerie Zaffino, 63, said her favorite order was a Diet Coke or buttermilk bar. She recalled Thursday walking her dog to Oh Those to meet up with her dad, Louis, who'd spend hours out front with a cadre of friends.

"He'd be sitting at a table outside with four or five other guys — they literally had nothing else to do, and they'd sit down there and

See Family, page A5

Founders' Park celebrates a very Victorian Christmas in Anaheim

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

In the heyday of Anaheim's packing district, oranges were wrapped in tissue paper before going into the crate for shipping.

"Before refrigerator cars, oranges were wrapped, and the reason they wrap them is because if one of them goes bad, it is not going to spread and infect the rest," said Jane K. Newell, heritage services manager at the Anaheim Heritage Center.

During the holiday season, orange packaging was made a little more festive with symbols of Christmas printed on the tissue paper, typically by a local newspaper. Twisted in the merry paper, the orange became a gift of sorts that was regarded even more highly outside of the county.

"The oranges that appeared on the table back east or anywhere up north are going to be precious to those people because they didn't see oranges, especially at that time of year," said Newell. "Anytime of the year it is going to be expensive, but that time of year, it was really like gold — California gold."

At Founders' Park in Anaheim, the history of Orange County's citrus-packing houses and Victorian Christmas traditions was celebrated at the Victorian Christmas Open House on Saturday and will open again for tours on Jan. 7. The historic Woelke-Stoffel House is a two-story Queen Anne built in 1894 during Anaheim's citrus era and is named for the two earliest families that lived in it.

"Mr. Woelke came here from Chicago, and the plans for the house were in a catalog," said Newell. "The Stoffel's lived here the



Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

THE WOELKE-STOFFEL HOUSE, built in 1894, is adorned with Victorian-style decorations at Founders' Park in Anaheim. The Victorian Christmas Open House is back at Founders' Park in Anaheim, featuring the historic Mother Colony and Woelke-Stoffel houses.

longest, from 1907 until Mr. Stoffel died in 1948. It was in 1949 the house was actually moved here to save it. It has been a museum since then."

This time of year, the historic Woelke-Stoffel House gets adorned with Victorian-style Christmas decorations, both inside and out.

In the parlor, for example, a Christmas tree stands atop the grand piano.

"This would have been an upper- to middle-class family. They had a business and they had an orange grove, so they would have had money to buy the glass ornaments that were being produced in Germany, and they probably still had family there, so they had contacts," said Newell.

Many of Anaheim's early families were German American, for whom the



JANE K. NEWELL demonstrates how Valencia oranges were packaged and prepared for shipping to the East Coast.

Christmas tree was a long tradition.

"It didn't really get the profile until Queen Victoria married a German prince," said Newell. "Suddenly

everybody wanted a Christmas tree. But these families would have had one because it was part of their culture."

Many Christmas tradi-

tions like snow globes, candy canes, nutcrackers and the exchange of homemade gifts are rooted in the Victorian era, and displays within the home reflect those too.

"A lot of people collect nutcrackers and have no idea it has that tie," said Newell of a nutcracker collection that lines shelves in the kitchen.

In the dining room, visitors will find decorations featuring cherubs — winged childlike angels.

"Cherubs became a part of the Christmas elements whether it was on cards or ornaments. So you will see cherubs everywhere because they were super popular at that time," Newell said.

Besides the entry, parlor, dining room and kitchen, two upstairs bedrooms are also set up with displays. During the open house, docents will be stationed in each space, available to answer questions and dressed in period costumes to be easily identified.

Founders' Park also features the Mother Colony House, the oldest remaining wood-framed building in Orange County, and a Carriage House, where visitors can learn how to size oranges and wrap them in holiday tissue paper.

Since printed tissue paper isn't made anymore, visitors can stamp a Christmas design of their choice on tissue paper to wrap an orange.

"So they have got the experience of the packing house," Newell said, holding up a wrapped orange.

The Victorian Christmas Open House is free and will be open to the public from 9 a.m. until noon on Jan. 7.

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FAMILY

Continued from page A4

smoke and do crossword puzzles," Zaffino said, describing a de facto social club of gentlemen in their 70s.

"The people there were really nice. They knew my dad and took care of him. They used to take the doughnuts down to Share Our Shelves [pantry], whatever they didn't sell."

Oh Those was the go-to doughnut spot for Costa Mesa's John Mourani, a fan of apple fritters and turkey on squash bread, who often made late-night trips in his college days back in the '90s. After hanging out at Harp Inn, an Irish bar around the corner where his friend played in a band, he and his friends would walk to the shop.

"It was kind of like the parking lot hangout," he said. "I met my wife at the Harp Inn, and we used to hang out at Oh Those after the Harp. When our three daughters were born, we introduced them to Oh Those. After church, we'd drive there as a family and get doughnuts — it was a family staple."

Mourani, 52, recalled how the shop let customers play the lottery or Keno, where numbers were displayed on a digital board and ticked off, like Bingo, offering chances to win.

"We were all disappointed to learn they were closing," he said Thursday.

Metro said while it was a sad day for all, his family is grateful for the customers and all the fond memories made at the shop over the years.

"We would like to thank everybody who was a part of that business," he said. "It has quite a history — we're all going to miss it."

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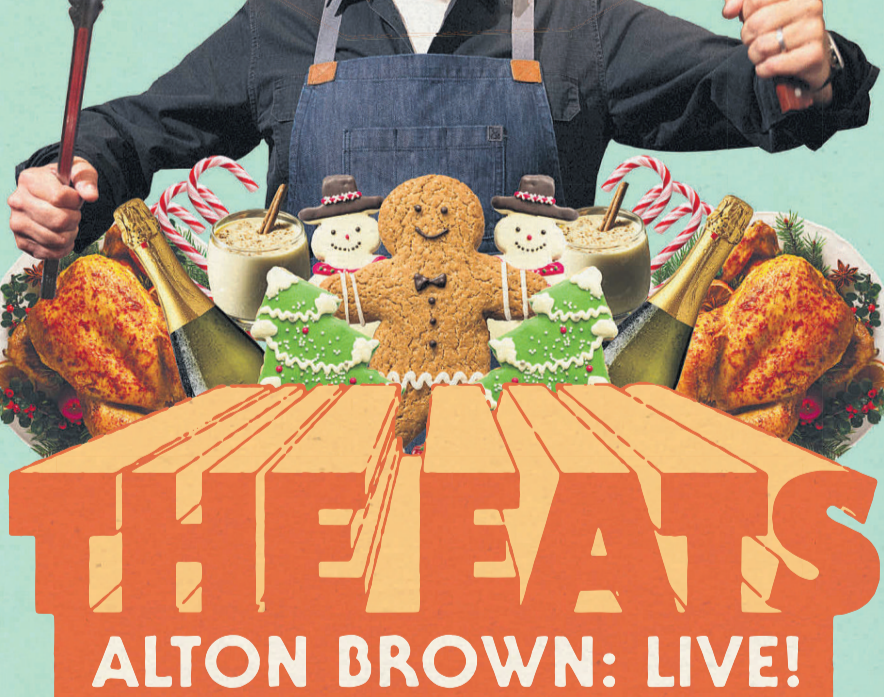
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Pacific Islander-style brunch keeps it breezy

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

As a commercial real estate developer, Jasmin Gonzalez has always worked behind the scenes, scouting tenants for hot spots like Stanton's Rodeo 39.

"In building Rodeo 39, I made a lot of contacts and kind of fell into the restaurant industry," said Gonzalez.

In San Juan Capistrano, Gonzalez leased a prime corner property from Dan Almqvist and brought in Ramen Shack, a concept from chef-owner and Ramen Burger creator Keizo Shimamoto.

"This was an excellent location and we tried to bring in the Ramen, but unfortunately Keizo got sick," Gonzalez said.

Ramen Shack closed in July, when Shimamoto began experiencing health issues. So Gonzalez tapped into her contacts at Rodeo 39 and brought Shootz Hawaiian-inspired barbecue and Primal Cuts butcher shop together to create a new brunch spot at the location, Breezy Restaurant & Lounge.

"We flipped this space in about 45 days," said Gonzalez.

The Island-style brunch concept features a Filipino-inspired breakfast menu that is very personal to Gonzalez and her Filipino heritage.

"I hold it really dear because bringing in the Filipino culture, a lot of people are not familiar, so we are introducing it in our way. We took the traditional and made it more modern."

Much of the menu is made up of dishes that were favorites in Gonzalez's family.

"I am big on loco moco. That was one of our favorites, and our loco moco sauce is not our traditional gravy sauce. We put our secret Breezy gravy sauce on it," Gonzalez said.



THE KITCHEN crew at Breezy restaurant finish a big order including the adobo burrito, left, and loco moco.



JASMIN GONZALEZ stands at her new Breezy restaurant in downtown San Juan Capistrano.

Some dishes are personal in other ways.

"All the acai bowls are named after my kids, so Kaeli, Kainoa and Kekoa. A lot of it is super personal, and that is in everything that I do."

Shootz chef Michael Dancel developed the menu that includes items like an adobo breakfast burrito, stuffed with shredded pork adobo, scrambled eggs, garlic rice, cotija cheese, avocado, sour



TWO ACAI BOWLS at the new Breezy restaurant in downtown San Juan Capistrano.

cream, salsa verde and cilantro and ube pancakes with ube whip cream, toasted coconut flakes, coconut crema and mixed berries.

"For me personally, I have always wanted to

figure out how to put Filipino food on the map" said Dancel.

Dancel grew up in his family's Filipino restaurant in Moreno Valley and learned to cook from his mother.



THE UBE pancake stack with strawberry and blueberry "refreshers."

"You always see different Asian restaurants starting to blow up, like Korean, Japanese, Chinese," Dancel said, "and I would always be like, 'Why not Filipino food?'"

Dancel has enjoyed the experience of taking recipes he learned from his family and putting his own spin on them for Breezy, and Gonzalez said she appreciates Dancel's perspective.

"I believe that food, just like art, needs to evolve," said Gonzalez.

So far the restaurant has received a positive reception that gives Gonzalez a sense of pride. She is still hard at work curating tenants for Rodeo 72 in Whittier and River Street Marketplace in San Juan Capistrano, both opening in 2023. But she is also happy to have a place that is such a personal reflection of who she is.

"This is my baby in the sense that I think I am representing my culture," said Gonzalez. "When you go to a Filipino household, the first thing they do is feed you. It's all love. It just shows how much we care. It is the same here. I just want to feed you good food and have you feel the comfort I felt growing up."

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PUBLIC Legacy carries on at the Stadium Promenade

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Friends and business partners chef Gerry Kent and Chad Dickey are not new to the restaurant business. They've been in it for eight years with places like Public House in Temecula, Downtown Public in Murrieta and Public 74 in San Juan Capistrano.

Their latest venture, Public Legacy at the Sta-

dium Promenade in Orange, is a way for those restaurants to carry on and also evolve.

"We definitely took a different direction with this one," said Dickey. "When the light said turn right, we went left."

The 174-seat restaurant serves comfort food with craft cocktails, beer and wine, and while that may not seem like a stretch from the other concepts in the series of PUBLIC restaurants, Kent said PUBLIC Legacy aims to move away from the gastro-pub style and into a more modern version of itself.

"It is nice to make a switch. Gastro pubs are

cool, but they started in 2004 or 2005," said Kent. "Once we landed on PUBLIC Legacy sticking as the name, we knew it would be a culmination of all my experience, all of Chad's experience, everything that we have done or wanted to do."

The restaurant has two distinct areas with tufted booths along the walls, dark walnut tables and velvet chairs surrounding a 30-seat bar. Former employees were commissioned for the original artwork in the restaurant, and some of the tables are made from an old tree removed from Kent's Temecula property. Behind the bar is the library, a more intimate section that still feels connected to the restaurant.

"The concept of this room used to be a private dining area in the previous restaurant, so when we decided to blow the wall open with the bar, it was evident there was something that we needed to do different to still draw peo-



Joel Maus

THE 30-SEAT bar at Public Legacy at the Stadium Promenade center in Orange.

ple back there," Dickey said.

The space is darker and moodier, ideal for a more romantic dinner date.

The menu features classic dishes like a chili and coffee-rubbed rib eye

steak and the legacy smash burger made of a house blend of beef and pork with cheddar and caramelized onion. PUBLIC restaurant favorites also make their way onto the menu, like the tomato addiction, consisting of small cast-iron pan filled with herb-seasoned tomato, crushed garlic cloves and balsamic reduction and served with a wedge of St. Andre brie and toasted house sourdough.

But Kent has also created more vegan and vegetarian options, like a vegan mac and cheese.

"It is cashew-based, and I used kogi rice with nutritional yeast and that is really the base line," Kent said. "And then we added caramelized shallots to give it that french onion soup kick that brings your brain to the cheesy goodness you expect from that."

Kent's wife is vegan and he said it has given him more opportunities to experiment with plant-based dishes.

"You practice a little more often when have someone that is interested in eating that," said Kent, "and my kids aren't vegan so when I do make some-

thing, I have to really bring it."

The vegan mac and cheese has been a hit so far, Kent said.

"I had the staff try it, and they were like, this is better than the regular mac," said Kent. "It is always good to land upon something that people respond to like that."

PUBLIC Legacy will also be open for brunch daily, with familiar breakfast dishes like a signature breakfast sammy with house-made sausage, tomato, egg and cheddar and more vegetarian options, like the vegan eggs Benedict made with mushrooms, tofu and charred tomato over biscuits and finished with "hollandays" sauce.

Kent and Dickey hope Orange diners can find something to connect with on the menu and maybe find an unexpected favorite that can't be found elsewhere.

"Being in this big center provides us an opportunity to be a little individual here among the chains," said Kent.

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Joan (Valley) Carr

August 2, 1945 - November 20, 2022

CARR, Joan Victoria (Valley) - Born August 2, 1945, to Roland and Vivian Valley of Balboa Island and lived her entire life in Newport Beach. She passed away on November 20, 2022 at the age of 77.

Joan was married for 33 years to Kenneth G. Carr, the love of her life, who predeceased her in 2011. They both loved the game of golf and were members of the Newport Beach Country Club for over 30 years. Joan had a great passion for keeping every picture of her family, friends and travels and had a photo library going back to when she and Ken were first married. Joan loved gardening and her favorite plant was the Plumeria.

She is survived by her four step-children, Kurt Carr (Rebecca), Canda Carr (Angela), Kevin Carr, and Christa Drexler (Michael) along with seven grandchildren, Andrew Carr, Angela Carr, Zachary Drexler, Megan Johnson, Tanner Drexler, Cory Carr and Aubrey Carr, as well as three great grandchildren, Ruby Bolton, Vinny Marzella, and Delaney Johnson. Joan is also survived by her brother, John Valley (Karen), nephew Eric Valley (Suzanne) and great niece Vivian.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that donations be made to the National Pediatric Cancer Foundation.

Per her request, services will be private and her ashes scattered at sea outside her beloved Corona Del Mar.

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Sherman Library & Gardens ushers in the holidays

BY ERIC LICAS

The Sherman Library & Gardens became something like a movie studio lot to host its Nights of 1,000 Lights Thursday, with can-can dancers hearkening back to the golden era of Hollywood and a red carpet inviting visitors to enjoy elaborate scenes staged throughout the lush Corona Del Mar attraction.

The annual event takes place on select evenings in December and offers those who might have already visited the gardens and library in the daytime a chance to see them in a different light by letting ticket holders in after dark. Popular sights from previous years, like the tunnel of lights running down the 2.2-acre facility's central path and a tropical greenhouse illuminated by black lights and glow-in-the-dark paint, returned this year.

Those are accompanied by attractions inspired by this year's theme, "Hooray for Hollywood," a nod to Hollywood developer the



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

MARIA KHO walks through the tunnel of lights with her little baby during the Nights of 1,000 Lights event at Sherman Library & Gardens on Thursday.

gardens are named after, Moses H. Sherman, the facility's executive director, Scott LaFleur said. Guests can catch a cabaret performance inspired by the Moulin Rouge in the tea

garden. The shade garden has been transformed into the Sherman Shop of Horrors, with volunteers posing as people-eating carnivorous plants wandering about.

Judy Schreckengost is one of them and said she jumped at the opportunity to channel (arguably) the main character from one of her favorite films. That's especially due to the fact

that she was unable to participate last year because a grill had exploded in her face during a cooking accident.

"When I saw they had costumes from 'Little Shop of Horrors,' you can imagine the excitement I had," she said. "Because, y'know, some people just don't grow up."

Children gasped, then laughed as the toothy green puppet on her arm snapped at them. Others, like cousins May Susson and Ari Levine, got hands-on at the arts and crafts table to make homemade holiday ornaments.

"It's like the beginning of the magic of the holidays to see them both run through the rainbow tunnel," Ari's mother, Sarah Levine, said. "And I think they're just excited to be out at night. That was part of the sell: 'You guys are gonna get to stay up late, and there's a s'mores station!' So all the things that we wouldn't usually allow, for special reasons we'll let it fly tonight."

All of the scenes and at-

tractions for the Nights of 1,000 Lights were created by the gardens' staff, LaFleur said.

"We get a few props here and there, but all the designs, the details in Santa Land or the train, that's all made in-house."

This is the ninth time Sherman Gardens & Library has hosted Nights of 1,000 Lights, and like previous years, all tickets for the holiday celebration were sold out by early December, LaFleur said. However, all of the seasonal decorations for it will still be up and running during the day, and admissions for regular hours are still available for \$5.

"It's never the same thing twice, so if you missed it, that's too bad," LaFleur said. "But there's always next year."

Those interested in visiting the gardens or being notified when tickets go on sale next year can sign up on the mailing list or visit thesherman.org.

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BROTHERS

Continued from page A1

stands or selling popsicles on Victoria Beach.

Iconic Ornaments features a couple of ornaments befitting of the name, as Main Beach lifeguard tower and the Laguna Beach trolley have been the subject of their creations.

"We've always wanted to do a business venture, and our parents have pushed us to be entrepreneurs, but this is our first venture that made it past the drawing board, per se," Jackson said. "The inspiration behind it is we have a leaning tower of Pisa ornament up on the tree from Italy."

"We like it a lot. It's hand-blown glass, like our ornaments, and it has the same kind of pearlescent finish

as the lifeguard tower."

To create the lifeguard tower ornament, the kids started with a paper model before taking a CAD (computer-aided design) drawing to determine the exact dimensions. They were assisted by Keith Lee, a draftsman in town who Clark Collins has worked with on real estate projects.

Fourteen months after their start date, the brothers have sold more than 3,400 ornaments. They have managed it through a titular website and via community vendors that carry their product.

Their ornaments can be found at Bushard's Pharmacy, Good Together House, Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach Books, all in Laguna Beach, and Roger's Gardens in Corona del Mar.

The business had imme-

diated support from Laguna Beach residents, Jackson said. The brothers had a booth at Hospitality Night on Dec. 2, allowing them to introduce themselves to more of the community.

"The first day we launched, we had Bushard's Pharmacy reach out to us and ask if they could carry our lifeguard tower ornament," Jackson recalled.

"That was a huge confidence booster for us because we saw that we had a product that would sell to a retailer, one of the most prominent, older retailers in town, a very established store downtown in the middle of Laguna."

"That support helped us a lot with confidence, and then also, we had many orders the first day, so our first week was pretty good for having a new business



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

SAWYER AND JACKSON COLLINS, from left, hold two ornaments as part of their Iconic Ornaments business, the lifeguard tower and the trolley bus.

that was untested."

The brothers have indicated that more ornaments may be on the way, and they have considered expanding their range of subjects to Newport Beach and

San Juan Capistrano.

"It was really overwhelming at the start, but then I started to get a hang of packing all the ornaments, checking emails every day, and just overall running a

business," Sawyer said. "It's just been such a great learning experience. In these two years, I've learned a lot about business and how to run one."

One of the lessons their parents had hoped could be learned through the business is the idea of giving back to the community.

"That's a big part of the philosophy," Clark Collins said. "If you're making money, you need to be supporting something in your local community, so figure out what that's going to be, and figure out a way to give back. ... They picked the Pacific Marine Mammal Center. They had both been there since they were kids, and so they give a percentage of every sale to the PMMC."

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LINDSEY SANCHEZ, 17, prints a "Merry Christmas" graphic design on a tote bag as a gift for a friend during a staff open house of the new Spyder Lab at Back Bay High School.



Kevin Chang
Staff Photographer

LAB

Continued from page A1

tion program analyst Anne Younglove said.

Plans to establish the \$200,000 Spyder Lab on campus were made in 2020, but were temporarily tabled during the pandemic. The lab was constructed over the summer, with final installations accomplished in late September. About 80% of its funding comes from state career technical education grants and the remainder from the school district, according to district officials.

"It has been our goal for many years to bring a pathway back to this school. They had one eight years ago and this worked out very well because it's a one-year pathway and the students are taking two courses every quarter and they're side-by-side," said Younglove. "So, they're really in this classroom for about two hours a day, five days a week."

Younglove said she first heard of Spyder Labs through a presentation with the Orange County Department of Education.

"I thought, 'With grant money, this is completely possible to do anywhere.' But the one place where we really need it most is the place where students need to get work as soon as possible and also get credit," said Younglove. "So, what's great about this is that the things they're learning in here they can continue on into community college

and go into any of the graphics things. They're learning all the Adobe applications, so there's lot of diversification. They can go into digital media, business, graphic design, ... the clothing industry, which is huge here."

The walls of the Spyder Lab are adorned with items designed and printed by the handful of students enrolled in the class, including laser-cut wood and leather carvings and printed totes, shirts and socks. The students even created the blue hexagonal wall coverings using one of the machines, according to Back Bay senior Davian Gonzalez.

Gonzalez, 17, said he came from Newport Harbor High School. He said he wasn't doing well in school and ended up coming to Back Bay, where he felt "relief" and was able to find time to work on himself.

He said the class is challenging and requires work, but that he's really enjoyed learning about a trade that he could do straight out of high school. He said his goal is to one day use similar machines while employed by a business.

In addition to learning how to operate, students are also split up into five different roles to mirror a business. Students are expected to either become a general manager, office manager, production manager, sales representative or a creative director on each project with different responsibilities in each role.

"This showed me there's

a business type to this because we do make this stuff. We get to see the marketing, the production and the business side. [We learn] how much everything costs; what happens if something goes bad. That's basically something that I like and I think a lot of students will like too," said Gonzalez.

Back Bay senior Lindsey Sanchez said she wasn't sure about the class at first. She said she didn't think any of the knowledge she'd acquire would be useful, but her interest really took off once she learned clothing and other products could be made in the Spyder Lab.

Sanchez started off on the direct-to-garment printer, but is currently working on learning the laser cutter. She said she recently visited an artists' market and saw wooden music boxes on sale. Sanchez said she realized then that she could make similar products and sell them herself.

Now, Sanchez said she wants to come back after she graduates this year to help mentor other prospective students on how to use the machinery.

"I want to show other students how you work the machines, what you know from the machines ... it's not bad to ask for help. You always can ask for help and that's what I like about [the staff mentors]," said Sanchez.

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