

Daily Pilot

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2022 /// dailypilot.com



Photos by Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

VISITORS WALK the Huntington Beach Pier Tuesday as teal and purple lights illuminate Lifeguard Tower Zero as part of “Light Up Hope OC.”

Landmarks illuminated to bolster ‘Light Up Hope OC’

BY SARA CARDINE

The Huntington Beach Pier and several other local Orange County landmarks have been illuminated in purple and teal-colored lights as part of a “Light Up Hope OC” campaign to raise awareness of suicide prevention.

Switches were flipped Tuesday evening at John Wayne Airport, Mission San Juan Capistrano and Knott’s Berry Farm, among other locations, to mark September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and to

See **Light**, page A4



ANDY HSIEH, from New Zealand, takes a photograph of Huntington Beach Lifeguard Tower Zero Tuesday.

See **Action**, page A3

F.V. says ‘no’ to proposed rental law

The city has rejected an ordinance that allows short-term rentals with restrictions and will prepare a ban on them.

BY ANDREW TURNER

After mulling a decision on whether to allow short-term rentals for more than a year, the Fountain Valley City Council on Tuesday night unanimously rejected an ordinance that would have done so.

Going a step further, the council also directed staff to prepare an ordinance that explicitly bans short-term rentals in the city.

Between August and December last year, the council met three times to consider short-term rentals. Those discussions indicated that a council majority was interested in allowing short-term rentals with some restrictions.

The ability to enforce regulations on short-term rentals factored strongly into the council’s decision not to pass the ordinance. Fountain Valley has one code enforcement officer, and the projected revenue from transient occupancy tax would not have been substantial enough to cover

See **Rental**, page A3

Jury deadlocked in case of man accused of killing bookie

The victim held the man responsible for \$60,000 in gambling debts, according to court testimony.

BY ERIC LICAS

After six days in deliberation, jurors remained deadlocked Wednesday in the case of a man accused of killing a family friend in Huntington Beach three years ago over a \$60,000 gambling debt.

The defendant, Dennis Tri Gia Dang, 32, of Westminster, did not deny shooting and killing Linh Ho, 48, of Fountain Valley in the parking lot of a strip mall at the corner of Warner Avenue and Magnolia Street on Oct. 20, 2019. His attorney claimed he acted in self-defense and in the heat of the moment. Prosecutors argue he had no reason to believe the victim posed a mortal threat to him and sug-

gested his actions were planned out ahead of time.

On Thursday, jurors told Judge Richard King they had unanimously decided Dang was not guilty of first-degree murder. However, they were unable to agree on whether or not he should be convicted of second-degree murder or another lesser charge.

“Multiple people have changed their minds back and forth,” the jury’s foreman, identified only as juror No. 129, said in court Thursday.

Judge King asked each juror, individually, whether or not they believed more time to deliberate would result in a verdict. Two said no, and one gave a definitive yes. The remaining replies included shades of “possibly,” “unlikely,” and “I don’t know.”

King noted multiple jurors were open to the possibility of reaching a unanimous verdict

See **Jury**, page A4



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

HUNDREDS of UCI students run to tag Peter the Anteater as they participate in a game of red light/green light on Wednesday.

Stop, then go! — UCI students set record

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Sweat dripped down the brow of competitors of all shapes and sizes as a hot September sun beat down on Aldrich Park.

They waited at the top of a grassy knoll. Many knelt, others made the choice to stand. Resting would delay them, and this

was a marathon, not a sprint.

Then over the loudspeaker came the cry: “Green light!” And just like that, a veritable horde of students surged toward the stage in search of he who would name them the victors of this game: Peter the Anteater.

See **Record**, page A4



There's nothing like the experience of watching an amazing film in a big, dark theatre. But when you find yourself in the sun, make sure to apply the proper sunscreen.

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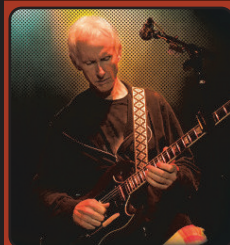
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FRI, SEP 23
ROBBY
KRIEGER



WED, SEP 28
SAMANTHA
FISH



SUN, OCT 2
PLAIN
WHITE T'S



THU, OCT 6
THE
SPINNERS

9/23 ROBBY KRIEGER OF THE DOORS
 9/24 ROBERT JON & THE WRECK
 9/25 CHRISTOPHER CROSS
 9/27 MICHAEL SCHENKER / *ERIC MARTIN OF MR. BIG*
 9/28 SAMANTHA FISH
 9/30 LEONID & FRIENDS (*CHICAGO TRIBUTE*)
 10/1 TOM SANDOVAL & THE MOST EXTRAS
 FROM VANDERPUMP RULES
 10/2 PLAIN WHITE T'S
 10/6 THE SPINNERS
 10/7 ACCEPT w/*NARCOTIC WASTELAND*
 10/8 CASH'D OUT (*JOHNNY CASH TRIBUTE*)
 10/12 LEONID & FRIENDS (*CHICAGO TRIBUTE*)
 10/14 BILLY VERA & THE BEATERS
 10/15 MICK ADAMS & THE STONES
 10/16 PETTY CASH (*JOHNNY CASH & TOM PETTY TRIBUTE*)
 10/19 TODD SNIDER / RYAN MONTBLEAU
 10/20 SOPHIE B HAWKINS
 10/21 OINGO BOINGO FORMER MEMBERS
 10/22 OINGO BOINGO FORMER MEMBERS
 10/23 JOURNEYMAN (*ERIC CLAPTON TRIBUTE*)
 10/27 CANDLEBOX
 10/28 BUCKCHERRY
 10/29 LARRY CARLTON (*FAREWELL WORLD TOUR 2022-2023*)
 11/1 DAVE MASON
 - 2022 WORLD IN CHANGES TOUR
 11/4 YACHTLEY CREW (*YACHT ROCK TRIBUTE*)
 11/5 PIANO MEN (*BILLY JOEL AND ELTON JOHN TRIBUTE*)
 11/6 ARTIMUS PYLE
 FORMERLY OF LYNYRD SKYNRD
 11/9 BIG HEAD TODD & THE MONSTERS
 11/10 MARC BROUSSARD
 11/11 KIDS OF CHARLEMAGNE (*STEELY DAN TRIBUTE*)
 11/12 TYRONE WELLS
 11/17 DAVE ALVIN &
 JIMMIE DALE GILMORE AND THE GUILTY ONES
 11/18 FUN LOVIN' CRIMINALS
 11/19 BEATLES VS STONES
 - A MUSICAL SHOWDOWN
 11/20 O-TOWN
 11/23 HEARTBEAT CITY (*CARS TRIBUTE*)
 11/25 LEE ROCKER OF THE STRAY CATS
 11/26 WILD CHILD (*THE DOORS TRIBUTE*)
 12/2 WHICH ONE'S PINK? (*PINK FLOYD TRIBUTE*)
 12/3 WHICH ONE'S PINK? (*PINK FLOYD TRIBUTE*)

ACTION

Continued from page A1

port that was released July 6 as potentially violating two state codes related to conflict of interest.

Additionally, the City Council will evaluate the possibility of seeking reimbursement for payments made to Greenberg Gross following Williams' hiring by the firm in January 2021 in the middle of the age discrimination case.

The City Council voted to recuse the city attorney's office from the proceedings after the hiring of the independent counsel. Councilwoman Kim Carr added an amendment requiring the scope of the work be dictated by City Manager Al Zelinka, not Gates.

City staff's initial recommendation was that Zelinka and Gates would work together throughout the process.

"I just want to make sure that nobody can make the allegation that there's any partiality there," Councilwoman Rhonda Bolton said. "I just don't want to go down this path again. We're still dealing with a review of what happened within the office. It's not personal to you," she said to Gates, "but I think that the best practice is that the city attorney's office be recused."

Mayor Barbara Delgleize was even more direct.

"Suppose something happens and it infers you," she said, addressing Gates. "Then what do we do?"

Gates responded that he didn't want it intoned that he was responsible for any wrongdoing.

"None of these [recommendations] present a conflict of interest," he said. "I haven't spoken with Mr. Williams since he resigned ... the fact that I knew him in the past doesn't present a conflict of interest."

Williams left the city attorney's office in December 2020 during the age-discrimination case to work for Greenberg Gross — the firm the office had hired to work on the case — and continued working on the case there.

Lawyer Craig Steele, the city attorney for Seal Beach and Monrovia who wrote the RWG report, found potential conflict in that action.

"Mr. Williams' decision to negotiate for employment



SCOTT FIELD, right, filed an age discrimination case against Michael Gates, left, and the city, which was settled last year for \$1.5 million.

*Scott Smeltzer/
Kevin Chang*

with Greenberg Gross while he was a public official, and while Greenberg Gross was lawyer for a party in which Mr. Williams was participating personally and substantially as the city's lawyer, raises the possibility that he also violated California Rule of Professional Conduct 1-11," Steele wrote.

At the direction of the council, Steele submitted a still-pending inquiry to the California Fair Political Practices Commission for an investigation of Williams' actions.

Williams responded in an email to the Daily Pilot on Wednesday.

"This politically driven effort by the City Council to question the legitimacy of my work is disheartening, to say the least," he said. "Huntington Beach is my hometown. It was a privilege to represent the city and its many employees in numerous, high-profile lawsuits. Throughout my tenure at the city, and then at Greenberg Gross, I always acted with the best interests of the city in mind. My work on the lawsuit at issue was conducted with full transparency, and performed at the express direction of those in charge."

Gates, meanwhile, had other fish to fry during public comments at Tuesday's meeting. His challenger for the city attorney seat this November, Scott Field, was one of the speakers. Field and Neal Moore are the two former lawyers in Gates' office who sued him and the city, alleging age discrimination.

Field said during public comments that he was running because of "the gross corruption and mismanagement" revealed in the report, tying Gates to Williams' alleged actions.

Another speaker was Anaheim Assistant City Atty. Leonie Mulvihill, who served as senior deputy city attorney in Huntington Beach from 2001 to 2009 before becoming Newport

Beach's assistant city attorney from 2009 to 2017. Mulvihill said she had filed a complaint with the California State Bar against Gates.

"I am struck by the fact that the City Council's report has been assailed by the city attorney by way of multiple statements blasted on social media," Mulvihill said. "The ensuing commentary, which has been encouraged by the city attorney, in my opinion has become a distraction to the election this year, especially as to the applications of the state bar rules of professional conduct, as described in the report ... These rules of professional conduct address conflicts of interest, special conflicts of interest that apply to government officials and the special rules that apply to organizations as clients."

Gates noted in an interview Wednesday that Mulvihill was on the Huntington Beach charter revision committee this year and voted to change the city attorney position from an elected to an appointed one.

"It doesn't surprise me that she's filing a false claim with the state Bar," he said. "It's just more drama which is going to prove to exonerate me again. She and Scott Field both made wild accusations against me that do not appear in the report ... Because it's campaign season, the speakers are making these wild accusations against me."

In his report, Steele said he found no evidence that Gates, the city attorney's office nor Greenberg Gross had broken the law in handling the age-discrimination case. Yet, he was not complimentary of Gates' actions in the case, calling it "unusual" that the city attorney's office managed the outside counsel in the case, essentially, against itself.

"Although the city attorney has said he 'abstained' from the litigation as city attorney, he participated directly in ways ... that blurred

the important line between his personal interests as an individual defendant in a lawsuit and the city's interests as its chief legal officer," Steele wrote.

Gates said the comments of Field and Mulvihill are defamatory and he is going to be speaking with an attorney.

"These false statements seek to harm my professional legal reputation," he said. "This is beyond politics. This is injuring somebody's ability to provide for their family ... Scott Field used the word 'corruption' and the report, even though it tried to drag me through the mud at times, it ended up saying I didn't do anything wrong, I didn't break any laws. It said things could have been handled better, but it did not find any wrongdoing."

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Daily Pilot

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**BSC 222202
NOTICE OF PETITION TO
ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:
CONSTANCE IRENE TUTTLE
30-2022-01278357-PR-LA-CJC**

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of **CONSTANCE IRENE TUTTLE**. A **PETITION FOR PROBATE** has been filed **CHARLES L. PALMER** in the Superior Court of California, County of **ORANGE**. **THE PETITION FOR PROBATE** requests that **CHARLES L. PALMER** be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. **A HEARING** on the petition will be held on **November 02, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. in Dept. C8** located at 700 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE WEST, SANTA ANA, CA 92701

The court is providing the convenience to appear for hearing by video using the court's designated video platform. This is a no cost service to the public. Go to the Court's website at The Superior Court of California - County of Orange (occourts.org) to appear remotely for Probate hearings and for remote hearing instructions. If you have difficulty connecting or are unable to connect to your remote hearing, call 657-622-8278 for assistance. If you prefer to appear in-person, you can appear in the department on the day/time set for your hearing.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for the Petitioner:
TRENT C. MARCUS, ESQ
TRENT C. MARCUS, A LAW CORPORATION
19900 BEACH BLVD, C-1
HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92648
Published in the HUNTINGTON BEACH
INDEPENDENT on: 9/8, 9/15, & 9/22/2022

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF BULK SALE
(UCC Sec. 6105)
Escrow No. 22167-HY**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a bulk sale is about to be made. The name(s), business address(es) to the Seller(s) are: **KAMBIZ NOORYANI, ROSENAZ SHARIFI AND AZADEH JEBELLI, 7300 EAST STONE CREEK LN ANAHEIM, CA 92808**

Doing Business as: **DR N WELLNESS AND LASER CENTER**

All other business name(s) and address(es) used by the Seller(s) within three years, as stated by the Seller(s), is/are:

The name(s) and address of the Buyer(s) is/are: **AMIR ABDI POUR AND SANAZ NABAVI, 3885 SAN ANTONIO RD YORBA LINDA, CA 92886**

The assets to be sold are described in general as: **FURNITURE, FIXTURES, EQUIPMENT, TRADE NAME, MACHINERY, GOODWILL, LEASE, LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS AND COVENANT NOT TO COMPETE, SUPPLIES, TELEPHONE NUMBERS** and are located at: **62 CORPORATE PARK, STE. 145, IRVINE, CA 92606**

The bulk sale is intended to be consummated at the office of: **NEW CENTURY ESCROW, INC, 500 S. KRAEMER BLVD STE 275, BREA CA 92821** and the anticipated sale date is **OCTOBER 10, 2022**

The bulk sale is subject to California Uniform Commercial Code Section 6106.2.

The name and address of the person with whom claims may be filed is: **NEW CENTURY ESCROW, INC, 500 S. KRAEMER BLVD STE 275, BREA CA 92821** and the last day for filing claims shall be **OCTOBER 7, 2022**, which is the business day before the sale date specified above.

Dated: **9/8/22**
BUYERS: **AMIR ABDI POUR AND SANAZ NABAVI 1181872-PP DAILY PILOT 9/22/22**

**BSC 222279
NOTICE OF PETITION TO
ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:
DANIEL COOK
30-2022-01280701-PR-LA-CJC**

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of **DANIEL COOK**.

A **PETITION FOR PROBATE** has been filed **BRUNO COOK** in the Superior Court of California, County of **ORANGE**.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that **BRUNO COOK** be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on **November 10, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. in Dept. C8** located at 700 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE WEST, SANTA ANA, CA 92701

The court is providing the convenience to appear for hearing by video using the court's designated video platform. This is a no cost service to the public. Go to the Court's website at The Superior Court of California - County of Orange (occourts.org) to appear remotely for Probate hearings and for remote hearing instructions. If you have difficulty connecting or are unable to connect to your remote hearing, call 657-622-8278 for assistance. If you prefer to appear in-person, you can appear in the department on the day/time set for your hearing.

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IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

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NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92660
Published in the HUNTINGTON BEACH
INDEPENDENT on: 9/22, 9/29, & 10/6/2022

RENTAL

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the cost of additional officers.

Councilman Glenn Grandis disclosed he operates short-term rentals in Big Bear and Palm Desert. He said code enforcement personnel costs about \$100,000 per person, according to conversations he's had with people familiar with short-term rentals and code enforcement in Big Bear.

"The problem that I see is we don't have the enforcement capability like they do in Big Bear," Grandis said. "In Big Bear, they have four full-time code enforcement people. They work nights, they work weekends. In order for us to do it in Fountain Valley, we would need the same thing."

Dozens of people packed the council chambers to weigh in on the issue, with some watching from outside the door. There was significant public pressure to vote down short-term rentals, as the majority of the roughly 40 speakers on the item voiced their opposition to the practice, expressing concerns related to noise, parking, privacy and safety.

Some speakers also railed against the argument that tourists would boost local businesses, saying that those staying in the short-term rentals were more likely to head to neighboring cities to visit beaches and theme parks.

Councilman Ted Bui asked Police Chief Matt Sheppard how officers intervene when residents call about nuisance behavior occurring at a short-term rental.

"I heard here several times tonight that [the public] witnessed or were subjected to behavior that is a nuisance, and that they have not called the police when they wish they would have called the police," Sheppard said. "I wish they would call the police because we can go out, and we can assist with curbing that behavior."

Mayor Patrick Harper noted a desire to prioritize residents over businesses.

"I'm not against short-term rentals, in general, but I just don't think they're right for Fountain Valley," Harper said. "I am sympathetic to the hosted method — maybe those could be considered on a case-by-case basis. If there's a hardship or somebody has a

particular situation they want to apply for, we can consider that, but I think the most reasonable thing to do would be to ban the rentals and also develop some sort of enforcement mechanism to make sure that we enforce the ban."

Several nearby cities, including Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach and Irvine, have not permitted short-term rentals.

Since the municipal code did not expressly permit short-term rentals, city officials had taken the position that those operating short-term rentals were doing so illegally. The city collects transient occupancy tax at a rate of 9%, and Grandis vowed once again to hold those who had not paid the tax accountable.

"I now want to make sure we tackle the back taxes owed," Grandis said. "I don't want that to just slip through. It really just bothers me, and I think we need to put up an ordinance that states something that we're going after them. We need to come up with a policy, and I want it to be really strict and strong."

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7	5	6	1	8	9	3	2	4



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HIGH SCHOOL ROUNDUP

Newport Harbor girls' volleyball earns first league victory

Newport Harbor outside hitter Anabel Kotzakov starred with 31 kills and four block assists, as the Sailors defeated Laguna Beach 25-16, 22-25, 25-23, 26-24 on Tuesday in a Surf League match on the road.

Laine Briggs contributed 13 kills for Newport Harbor (10-4, 1-1), while Malia Thorne also hammered out 11 kills. Drue Coberly distributed 34 assists to go with eight digs, and Tegan Glenn supplied 13 assists and 12 digs.

Eva Travis paced the Breakers with 25 kills, adding 15 digs and four block assists. Laguna Beach (10-13, 0-2) plays host to Los Alamitos (18-6, 1-1) on Thursday.

Newport Harbor travels to league-leading Huntington Beach (22-2, 2-0)



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

NEWPORT HARBOR'S Anabel Kotzakov (18), shown playing against Mission Viejo in November 2021, had 31 kills to lead the Sailors to their first Surf League win with a 25-16, 22-25, 25-23, 26-24 victory over Laguna Beach on Tuesday.

Thursday to cap the first half of league play. The Oilers earned a 25-23, 25-

23 win over the Sailors in the Dave Mohs tournament.

Costa Mesa 3, Saddleback 0: Rosey Madriaga dished out 23 assists to go with eight service aces, as the Mustangs swept the Roadrunners on Tuesday in an Orange Coast League match at home.

Costa Mesa (8-6, 4-2), will playshost to Calvary Chapel (8-13, 5-1) on Thursday.

GIRLS' GOLF

Costa Mesa 248, Calvary Chapel 258: Junior Sydney Ngo carded a one-over-par 36 to lead the visiting Mustangs past the Eagles on Monday in an Orange Coast League match at Willowick Golf Course.

Costa Mesa improved to 4-4 overall and 4-3 in league.

Westminster 256, Estancia 272: Leeann Hong

paced all competitors in shooting a round of 47 for the victorious Lions on the par-35 Mesa Linda course at Costa Mesa Country Club on Monday.

Estancia dropped to 5-5 overall and 5-2 in the Orange Coast League.

GIRLS' TENNIS

Corona del Mar 12, Manhattan Beach Mira Costa 6: Sophia Andrei-Birca, Emilie Lew and Polina Briggs each won a pair of singles sets for the Sea Kings in Tuesday's nonleague match on the road.

Cate Montgomery and Lauren Jones won twice at No. 1 doubles for CdM (6-1), ranked fourth in the CIF Southern Section Division 1 coaches' poll.

The Sea Kings suffered

their first loss of the season against third-ranked Mater Dei, 11-7, last Thursday.

Sage Hill 10, Beckman 8: Junior captain Arden Stobart swept in singles for the Lightning in their Pacific Coast League opener Monday at Beckman High.

Senior co-captains Kana Byrd and Ava Herin swept in doubles for Sage Hill (7-0), the top-ranked team in the Division 3 poll.

BOYS' WATER POLO

Laguna Beach 15, San Clemente 12: Diego Audebert scored seven goals for the Breakers in their nonleague triumph Tuesday at Laguna Beach High.

Cade Anderson added three goals for Laguna Beach (7-4), ranked No. 9 in Division 1.

— From staff reports

JURY

Continued from page A1

and said “the court has the discretion at this point, and perhaps the responsibility,” to ask them to continue deliberations. Both Deputy Dist. Atty. Janine Madera and Dang's lawyer, Ricardo Nicol, said the level of uncertainty they expressed, even after spending nearly a week going over the facts of the case, was unusual.

The defendant was described as a middleman in a sports betting operation run by the victim. At some point, gamblers Dang had vouched for amassed a combined debt of about \$60,000, which Ho held him responsible for, multiple witnesses said over the course of five days of testimony.

The victim told Dang to meet him with the money “... or else you can't blame me for what happens to you,” in a text message the morning before the shooting. The defendant told his best friend, 34-year-old Midway City resident Casey Ngo, that he only had \$2,000 at the time, and asked him to ride in his car with him to the location Ho had chosen.

They parked in a back lot, out of view of where Dang and Ho met. The victim arrived in an Escalade, and the defendant got into its passenger side. Less than a minute later he was seen getting back out and running from the scene in footage captured by surveillance cameras.

As Dang fled, Ho stumbled out of the passenger seat and then collapsed onto a nearby patch of

grass. Bystanders and first responders tried to save him, but he died six days later in a hospital.

The victim's sister, Monique Ho, was among several of his relatives who have been present in court almost every day of the trial. She denied her brother was the head of a gambling operation and said it has been heart-breaking to hear people characterize him as a criminal.

“I'm not mad [at Nicol], it's his job,” Ho said. “But for him to say my brother was a bad person is painful. My brother is already 6 feet under; there's nobody who's going to speak for him.”

She described her brother as a peacekeeper in their family who would help mediate drama between their siblings. She said he cared for his elderly father by bathing him, taking him to appointments and picking up groceries for him every weekday morning. He would also bring attention to people in need in his native Vietnam and helped raise money via social media to build wells and purchase a wheelchair for someone who couldn't afford it.

Dang said he and the victim had been working together for about eight years, and they would take thousands of dollars in bets on a weekly basis.

“It's in the Jury's hands now,” Ho said. “But either way, whatever they decide, I want people to know who my brother was.”

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Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

HUNTINGTON BEACH'S Lifeguard Tower Zero was illuminated in teal and purple lights Tuesday as part of an initiative led by the Orange County Health Care Agency to raise awareness of the preventability of suicide.

LIGHT

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spark conversations that could save lives. They will remain lit through Saturday.

Light Up Hope OC is an initiative of the Orange County Health Care Agency, whose Mental Health and Recovery Serv-

ices Division has helped coordinate events and workshops centering on suicide prevention and reducing the stigma of mental health issues.

Health officials remind residents to look for some of the signs a loved one may be considering suicide, including giving away possessions, engaging in reckless behavior, in-

creased drug and alcohol use or sudden mood changes and signs of anxiety, agitation and hopelessness.

“Suicide is preventable, and there is hope for those who are struggling,” Dr. Veronica Kelley, who heads the county's mental health and recovery efforts, said in a statement. “Please reach out and use the tools

to help a loved one you may be concerned about.”

In addition to a new toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline — available by dialing or texting 988 — resources are available at suicideispreventable.org. For more, visit LightUpHopeOC.com.

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RECORD

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On Wednesday afternoon, 1,415 students at UC Irvine set the new Guinness world record for the largest game of red light/green light.

An official counter from the organization verified the results shortly after what was about a 15-minute game. Willamette University in Salem, Ore., set the previous record of 1,203 participants in 2015.

Students cheered, screaming the university's official battle chant, “Zot! Zot! Zot!” when the announcement was made and a certificate was handed over to campus spirit commissioners who helped organize the event.

Looking to break world records is a longtime campus tradition, though the last such effort was made back in 2018 when the Associated Students of UC Irvine organized a game of balloon tag. ASUCI president Sarah Semaan, a fourth-year philosophy and earth system sciences major, said the intent was to kick off this new school year with tradition that was new to many students, including herself.

“I think [red light/green light] made a really big resurgence because of ‘Squid Game,’ I'm not going to lie,” said Semaan, laughing as students shouted “Zot” behind her. “A lot of us, when we were kids, used to play that game as well. So in the spirit of



Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

UC IRVINE students celebrate as they gather for a group photo after setting a record with a total of 1,415 people for the Guinness World Records' largest game of red light/green light.

having something that everyone would kind of know how to play, we chose red light/green light ... It's really rewarding to see how many people turned out to show their school spirit.

“I know it's a little cringey, and UCI isn't particularly known for its school spirit, but I think this year is really different. I see a lot of people this year who are really willing to just let go of that conception of ‘Oh, I'm too cool for this’ and just really have fun and play the game.”

Semaan organized the event with Connie Nguyen, vice president of student services, and professional staff.

Nguyen said organization

for the event started in July and said all the welcome week events were directed and run by different commissions within ASUCI.

“My campus spirit commissioners Eduardo [Barbero] and Leah [Beastrom] are just really on top of it. Our professional staff had to work here with Guinness to figure out what's the best possible world record that we could break,” said Nguyen. “Once we found that out, we were able to advertise it, find all the decorations, set up student speakers and all other speakers.”

The online notice for the event said about 2,198 people were registered to attend. Nguyen said she knew not everyone who regis-

tered would come, but the fact they were able to bring out more than half of that number meant the students were excited to accomplish something together.

“It's a really beautiful thing, honestly,” said Nguyen. “It's really nice to be able to work with a lot of students and meet with a lot of students that are so excited to be Anteaters.”

Second-year student Prinz Sabate said he heard about the game through Instagram and decided it was a “once in a lifetime” opportunity to be a part of setting a world record.

Sabate said he joined the game at the last minute and said that while he managed to get halfway through the



CAMPUS SPIRIT co-commissioners Eduardo Barbero, center, and Leah Beastrom, second from left, hoist the official Guinness World Records certificate on Wednesday.

cordoned-off play area, he didn't quite manage to reach Peter the Anteater by the time the game ended.

“The competitive spirit in me — I was trying to race my way through to the front, but no luck,” said Sabate.

Mya Huetter, an ecology and evolutionary biology major, said she started attending UC Irvine in 2020 when classes were completely online because of the pandemic.

“Honestly, all of my friends wanted to do it and I never got the chance to do it before so I thought it'd be a super fun opportunity to do it this year,” said Huetter. “I think I won? I got to give [Peter] a high five, so I think I finished. I just thought the [game] was super fun. Everyone was super hyped ... I think it's really special.”

“I feel like my first two years — first year, completely online. Last year was like a hybrid, so it's super

awesome I'm finally getting to have that real college experience the second half of my time here.”

Matthew Banuelos, a second year in electrical engineering, agreed.

Banuelos said he heard about the game from his dormmates on Tuesday, all of whom came out to participate on Wednesday with him.

With the university's colors — yellow and blue — painted on his cheeks, he said he wanted to check it out.

“Last year, I didn't feel like we had much school spirit. I remember the only thing we really did was a grunion run, and that was the only time I really felt like, ‘Oh, I'm really part of this school,’” said Banuelos. “So, the fact that we could do this, it's fun. It makes me proud to be an Anteater.”

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