

Daily Pilot

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Ocean View district stays course

Gina Clayton-Tarvin remains president of the board of trustees after an election at Tuesday's meeting.

BY MATT SZABO

Gina Clayton-Tarvin will again serve as the president of the Ocean View School District Board of Trustees after she was elected to the position through December 2022 at Tuesday's board meeting.

It will be her fifth time serving as president since she joined the board in 2012.

"I'm really honored that my colleagues have put their faith in me that many times to be able to lead the school district," Clayton-Tarvin said. "Honestly, I feel like it's my calling in life to serve children, so it's kind of just an extension of what I do as a teacher every day. I feel like it's something I was meant to do, to serve the public. I'm a public servant at heart."

Clayton-Tarvin, who has announced she will run for Huntington Beach City Council in 2022, is a teacher in the ABC Unified School District in Cerritos.

She was nominated for board president by trustee John Briscoe. The board voted 4-1 for Clayton-Tarvin as president, with trustee Norm Westwell voting no.

After taking over as president again, Clayton-Tarvin nominated Patricia Singer, who was the board's president this year, as the vice president in 2022. That also passed 4-1, with Westwell opposed.

Clayton-Tarvin and Westwell have often been at odds during their tenure on the board, with Westwell being censured in 2020 for behavior exhibited toward board colleagues at the close of a meeting in November 2019.

Jack Souders will be the board's clerk, on the same 4-1 vote, while Briscoe and Westwell stay on as members.

The five-member board has remained unchanged since 2018, when Singer was

See **District**, page A2

Johnny Mathis, 'the Voice of Christmas,' is still caroling



Courtesy of Elliot Lee Hazel

JOHNNY MATHIS brings his Christmas classics to Costa Mesa in celebration of 65 years in the music business.

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

With his velvety vibrato, a youthful Johnny Mathis melted midcentury America with "Chances Are," a feathery love ballad that rose to the top of Billboard's pop charts in 1957. The singer from San Francisco notched a number of hit singles early in his recording career and an appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" when he decided to take a chance of his own with Columbia Records.

A very merry Mathis wanted to record a Christmas album next for his loving mother and father.

The 86-year-old crooner is back on the road to perform songs from his decades-long career, with a stop in Costa Mesa for a holiday concert on Tuesday.

"After I had success in the beginning of my career, all I ever wanted to do was to sing something for them," Mathis said. "The only thing that came to mind was the fact that they made Christmas so special for me and my six brothers and sisters."

The balladeer, now 86, remains effusive with praise for his late parents.

Clem, his father, briefly moonlighted as a musician and im-

parted his passion for singing to his impressionable son. He took a teenage Mathis to apprentice under Connie Cox, a vocal teacher who honed his talents in those early years. Mildred, his mother, reared his siblings with unconditional love.

Later on, Mathis became a fixture at San Francisco's jazz club scene, first in the audience and

See **Mathis**, page A2

A new look for county's oldest college

Makeover at Vanguard University is designed to enhance security, give the perimeter a little more curb appeal.

BY SARA CARDINE

After more than 50 years in Costa Mesa, Vanguard University — the oldest four-year college in Orange County — is getting a makeover designed to enhance campus security and give the perimeter a little more curb appeal.

Those who've had occasion to walk or drive by the campus, on the corner of Fair Drive and Newport Boulevard, may have seen work crews breaking ground in late November in preparation for the installation of 1,130-foot security fence and monument sign, along with newly paved sidewalks.

The work is part of a \$1.8-million project defined in the first master plan for the institution, which opened in 1920 as Southern California Bible School and earned its charter from the state to grant degrees in 1939.

Adopted in 2019, the document is intended to cast the vision of what Vanguard may become over the next 30 years, President Michael Beals said Thursday.

"We were coming up on 100 years [of operation] and we'd never had a master plan," said Beals, recalling seven public hearings with the City Council and planning commission. "This project is really embedded in and is the result of the city-approved master plan."

Officials established the Landmark Campaign to raise the final \$540,000 and created a tagline that would come to define the mission behind the project: to make Vanguard more beautiful, known and secure.

To that end, construction crews removed 68 trees, predominately Indian laurel ficus trees that had been planted decades earlier too closely to one another and were determined to be suffering from "uncorrectable structural weaknesses," according to an arborist's report.

See **Vanguard**, page A2



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

CITY MAINTENANCE workers hang a banner Wednesday outside Costa Mesa City Hall, temporarily renamed "Snoopy Hall."

Snoopy House, a holiday tradition, returns to Costa Mesa City Hall on Friday

BY SARA CARDINE

In recent days, under the hands of city-employed elves, a well-known holiday landscape has been assembled piece by piece in preparation for a beloved Costa Mesa tradition — Snoopy House is back, baby.

Starting Friday and running through Wednesday, from 5:30

to 8:30 p.m. nightly, locals looking for a little nostalgia and lots of seasonal cheer can come by Costa Mesa City Hall (temporarily renamed "Snoopy Hall" for the occasion) to write a letter to Santa, ride a train and enjoy wintertime treats — or just gaze at a display five decades in the

See **Snoopy**, page A3

Newport Christmas Boat Parade ushers in the holiday season

It returns for the 113th time Wednesday after it was canceled last year due to the pandemic.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Those boat bells were jingling, ring-tingling too in Newport Harbor on Wednesday night, which marked the start of the 113th annual Newport Christmas Boat Parade.

The parade, held by the Commodores Club of the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce, made its return this year after the pandemic forced its cancellation last winter.

A separate, unofficial boat parade was held by residents with the theme of "Let Freedom Ring."

The parade's theme this year is "Jingle on the Waves" and its grand marshals were returning Orange County Olympians.

About 100 boats were out on the calm waters of Newport Harbor, each laden with twinkling lights and inflatable Santas. Some came with their own holiday soundtracks to usher in the



THE MAYFLOWER makes a turn at the Balboa Island Bridge during the opening day of the Newport Christmas Boat Parade on Wednesday.



RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA resident Sabrina Abercromby takes photos of the boats from the Balboa Island Bridge.

Photos by Scott Smeltzer

See **Parade**, page A3

MATHIS

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then onstage. He met Nat King Cole, a musical hero who was to become a friend, after a performance one night at the Black Hawk.

"Nat King Cole was, to me, the epitome of excellence in not only vocal qualities but musicianship," Mathis said. "Most people never realized what an extraordinarily gifted pianist he was. He also sang better than anybody in the world."

Helen Noga, the Black Hawk's co-owner, took notice of Mathis' own gifts. After headlining acts cleared the smoky corner nightclub, the young crooner took the stage along with a pianist friend. Noga liked what she heard and introduced him to music industry bigwigs, including Columbia jazz talent scout George Avakian.

The rest is still unfolding history; Mathis remains the longest-running recording artist with the label.

In 1958, with Avakian's help and producer Mitch

Miller's blessing, Columbia granted Mathis' Christmas wish. The singer headed into the studio to record "Merry Christmas," that spring and brought Percy Faith, a conductor and fellow label mate, along with him.

"He was a brilliant musician and became a very close friend of mine," Mathis said. "I begged him to accompany me on the Christmas album because I loved his orchestrations. I was blessed because he ended up accompanying me and making one of the best Christmas albums I've ever heard."

The collection, with spirited renditions of "Winter Wonderland," "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and "Sleigh Ride," has withstood the test of time and has earned new accolades along the way. "Merry Christmas" quickly peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard 200 chart before becoming certified gold two years after its release.

By 1999, Mathis' "Merry Christmas" sold 5 million copies and cemented its place among the top 10 best-selling Christmas albums of all time.



JOHNNY MATHIS feeling festive in the late 1950s.

He's since recorded six Christmas albums, most recently 2013's "Sending You a Little Christmas."

And thanks to the release of "A Sentimental Christmas With Nat King Cole and Friends," off Capitol Records this year, Mathis had the opportunity to join his late friend and early inspiration for a "Deck the Halls/Joy to the World" duet, which serves as the lead-off track of reimagined classics. He deemed the studio session with Cole's voice in his headphones a "special occasion."

With the return of live music, Mathis is heading



JOHNNY MATHIS' "Merry Christmas" album was released in October 1958 and has become a holiday classic.

Photos courtesy of Rajon Productions

out of the studio and back on the road for a tour celebrating the 65th anniversary of his musical career, including a Christmas concert at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa on Tuesday.

"I hear '65th year' and think, 'my goodness, gracious,' but singing to me has always been as much a part of my life as getting up in the morning and going to bed at night," Mathis said. "I've done it from the time I was a little kid. It's been such a big part of my life that it's very difficult to explain to people why I do what I do musically."

The tour will take him nationwide through 2022.

Mathis credits his stamina as an octogenarian to habits honed as a prolific high school athlete, back when regular calisthenics and exercise routines conditioned him to be an almost Olympian; in 1956, at the guidance of his father, Mathis chose to head to New York to work with Columbia Records instead.

Another piece of advice he's heeded from friends in the music industry since is that if he wanted to continue performing, he had to take care of himself physically. "I've continued with

that until how old am I now?" said Mathis with a laugh. "I still get up in the morning and go to the gym five days a week."

Mathis has much to celebrate over the span of 65 years. In that time, he has recorded nearly 80 studio albums, earned five Grammy nominations, seen three of his songs inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and received a lifetime achievement award in 2003 from the Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

Between all his accolades and endurance, "Merry Christmas" continues to occupy a special place in Mathis' heart.

"It meant so much to my parents to have that recording that I made of Christmas songs, especially at Christmastime, of course," he said. "All of their friends and neighbors congratulated them on the success of my Christmas music. There's been so many blessings along the way, in my career, and that's been one of the finest."

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DISTRICT

Continued from page A1

elected. Clayton-Tarvin and Westwell both ran unopposed for reelection in 2020.

"We are a team," Clayton-Tarvin said. "Even if we disagree, I think we know each other and we know how to work with each other ... We really handled, I think, the pandemic in an expert fashion because we are veteran board members."

The district, which has an enrollment of nearly 8,000 students, serves portions of Huntington Beach, Fountain Valley, Westminster and Midway City.

"President Clayton-Tarvin has a proven track record of success as a board president," district Supt. Carol Hansen said.



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

OCEAN VIEW School Board Trustee Gina Clayton-Tarvin takes a tour of a science room at the reopened Marine View Middle School in Huntington Beach on Nov. 15.

"She is a creative thinker and has been a tremendous asset in moving the district forward, even in the midst of a global pandemic. I am looking forward to collaborating with

her and working alongside an experienced and dedicated board of trustees in 2022."

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VANGUARD

Continued from page A1

David Vazquez, Vanguard's senior director of external relations, said those trees will be replaced with 21 new Brisbane box trees that will be set into a landscaped area along the fence and sidewalk, currently closed to foot traffic.

"Our hope is it's going to create a new lush environment for pedestrians, especially those walking along Fair Drive," he said.

The security fence, which will range in height from 4 feet to 7 feet, was designed to reduce the number of access points onto the private property so traffic can be better managed.

Beals said the idea of the fence, and a 50-by-10-foot monument sign bearing the school's name, is to define the perimeter of the campus more clearly.

"We want to create an



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

THE SIDEWALK along Fair Drive is fenced off for construction work at Vanguard University in Costa Mesa.

environment of safety and confidence for our students and for anyone who comes on campus, he added. "There's not going to be a guard shack or anything — it will have an open and welcoming look."

If all goes well, the work could be completed by early to mid-March. Officials anticipate hosting a community event to cele-

brate the accomplishment of a project that will not only spruce up the Vanguard campus, but the entire vicinity.

"We're creating a space that is going to have trees and lush plants," Beals said. "I think it's going to be wonderful."

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THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By *Jacqueline E. Mathews*

ACROSS

- 1 Hard hit
- 5 2009-17 White House resident
- 10 Time _; appointment opening
- 14 Reason to marry
- 15 Game bird
- 16 "Mine eyes _ seen the glory"
- 17 Foreboding sign
- 18 Skeptic
- 20 Tavern
- 21 Small fruit
- 22 Live's partner, in phrase
- 23 Sticks one's lower lip out
- 25 Fish appendage
- 26 Longest river entirely in England
- 28 Seashores
- 31 Desert refuge
- 32 Wide
- 34 Maroon or ruby
- 36 Hurricane wind
- 37 Frighten
- 38 Sacrum or scapula
- 39 Supped
- 40 Fail to pass
- 41 Throw water on
- 42 Leave prison early?
- 44 _ wire; cattle range fencing
- 45 Fleur-de-__
- 46 Health club offering
- 47 Goes on _; continues
- 50 Part of speech
- 51 Popular pet
- 54 Salon employee
- 57 "Groovy!" to today's kids
- 58 Give temporarily
- 59 _ park; Disneyland, e.g.
- 60 Anise-flavored drink
- 61 Uneasy
- 62 Actress Spacek
- 63 _ Carey

DOWN

- 1 Shapeless mass
- 2 CA's _ Linda

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

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

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

- 3 Elevated highway sections
- 4 Ming-Na _
- 5 Strength _ exercises
- 6 Family reunion attendees
- 7 Kemo _; Tonto's name for the Lone Ranger
- 8 Hurry
- 9 Everyone
- 10 Martin & Charlie
- 11 Kilauea's outflow
- 12 "Bridge _ Troubled Water"; 1970 song
- 13 Marine bird
- 19 Trojan War epic
- 21 Member fees
- 24 Fail to mention
- 25 Froth
- 26 Garb for Caesar
- 27 _ cuisine; fine food
- 28 Bottle stopper
- 29 Singing poet of old
- 30 Makes _; is logical
- 32 Unhappy
- 33 Skedaddled
- 35 Homeowner's paper
- 37 Peaks seen from Lucerne
- 38 " _ in the U.S.A."; Springsteen hit
- 40 Swoon
- 41 Apply makeup
- 43 Overcast
- 44 Purple dinosaur
- 46 Bursting at the _; too full
- 47 Up to the task
- 48 Requirement
- 49 "Phooey!"
- 50 Competes
- 52 Flow out slowly
- 53 Shine
- 55 " _ My Party"; Lesley Gore song
- 56 Letter from Greece
- 57 MA's Cape _

Tribune Media Services

PARADE

Continued from page A1

holiday season.

Steven Rosansky, Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce president and chief executive officer, said more boats participated this year than in recent years, when the highest number registered for the event hit 80. Rosansky chalks the uptick this year to the public's excitement over the parade's return.

Families gathered on the sands of Marina Park on opening night, while others looked on from nearby restaurants. Food and hot chocolate were sold, along with light-up balloons children carried as they dashed across the sands, their parents in mad pursuit. Some viewers stood at Newport Pier, transfixed as fireworks exploded overhead to mark the start of the parade.

A set of four kayaks paddled past with lights adorning their sides and small, illuminated Christmas trees couched in the back of each vessel.

For the King family of Costa Mesa, watching the Newport Christmas Boat Parade is a longtime tradition that started when Jonathan and Natalee King were just teenagers.

Their 5-year-old daughter, Iris, has seen the parade just about every year she's been alive, including last year's unofficial boat parade.

"My favorite part [of the parade] now is [Iris], her joy," said Jonathan King. Natalee King added that she was looking forward to seeing the biggest, brightest boats out on the water and the crowds of people that turned out to watch the parade Wednesday night.

"It's the crowds and how everybody is so excited and into the spirit of the holidays. It's like our kickstart to the holiday season," King said.

Julia D'Souza was visiting from Washington, D.C., with her fiancé Trevor Shourds for a work function when Shourds heard



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

THE LAST HURRAH makes a turn near the Balboa Island Bridge during the opening day of the Newport Christmas Boat Parade on Wednesday. "Jingle on the Waves" is the parade's theme.

about the parade when he was visiting 15th St Surf + Supply.

"The [store's staff] were like, 'It's been going on for like a 100 years, you need to go check it out while you're down here.' I was like, 'All right,'" Shourds said.

D'Souza said she thinks having a boat parade is "awesome." She said she could understand why people come back year after year, especially if it is a family tradition.

"Honestly, this is just a cool thing to stumble upon," said D'Souza, who said she and Shourds have visited California before but that this is the first time they've been in Orange County. "It definitely adds a little cherry on top of the area. It's just something unique to it."

"It's like a ritzy tradition, but it's cool and I love it," Shourds said.

The Sedbrooks of Costa Mesa said this is the first time that they've seen the parade. Cindy Sedbrook, who was attending with her daughter, Madison, said the family just moved to the city in the summer from Colorado and that they've been trying to take in as many sights and ac-

tivities as possible since.

Sedbrook said they watched the Fourth of July parade earlier this year, but felt the Christmas boat parade was better than it because of how festive and well decorated the boats were.

Millie Buac and Carlos Cortez were visiting from Chicago with their son, who is receiving medical treatment for severe food allergies. Buac said that the family flies in every two months for treatments and typically stays around Newport Beach.

"We call it our second home now," Cortez joked.

"This is our first year. We heard about the parade and we were like, 'We have to go.' It matched the dates that his treatment was, so we got lucky there," said Cortez, who said he heard about the parade through the city's Instagram page. "In the Midwest, we have parades, but it's your typical parade on land."

"[The Newport Christmas Boat Parade] is something different that we've never seen before, so we [were] excited," Cortez said.

The parade on average generates an estimated \$7 million to \$10 million in

revenue, according to studies done by the Newport Beach and Co., though Rosansky said the total impact is difficult to quantify.

"There's not going to be a restaurant or a yacht club that isn't sold out already. And then if you figure businesses like Davey's Locker that takes people out on the water, they're all sold out. It generates a lot of business for businesses not only directly on the water, but businesses off the water because people can have dinner and then walk over to watch," Rosansky said.

"It's a huge shot in the arm for businesses at the end of the year," Rosansky said. "If you look at businesses like Davey's, this is a great way to fill their bank accounts again after having to keep their boats in the dock for weeks [because of the oil spill]."

The parade continues through Sunday, beginning each night at around 6:30, at the east end of Lido Island. Fireworks are expected to be launched on Sunday night to close the parade.

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Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

RECREATION MANAGER Monique Villasenor sets up the Snoopy House, a Christmas-themed homage to Charles Schulz's comic strip "Peanuts," at Costa Mesa City Hall.

SNOOPY

Continued from page A1

making.

During opening night and this weekend only, the event will also feature Victorian carolers, musical performances and a mini sledding hill with snow.

"We had snow blown this morning with hay and a little ramp, so kids can go down real quick and see how it feels to be in the snow," said Monique Villasenor, the city's recreation manager.

Villasenor said Parks and Community Services staff began unpacking Snoopy House's main attraction, a giant collection of hand-crafted wooden characters and buildings arranged in a winter village, weeks ahead of the big day.

The labor of love began in 1966, when the family of former Costa Mesa Mayor Willard Jordan installed the first hand-designed wooden figures, a Christmas-themed homage to Charles Schulz's comic strip "Peanuts" at their Santa Ana Avenue home.

Snoopy House grew over time and was passed down to Jordan's son, Jim, who enlisted friends and neighbors to produce new pieces and maintain the mammoth display.

In 2011, the Jordan family bequeathed its beloved collection to Costa Mesa, which grew Snoopy House

into a citywide celebration, complete with carolers, performances and a visit from Kris Kringle himself.

Costa Mesa Mayor John Stephens confessed he's signed up to don the red suit on Saturday and Sunday nights, a personal tradition he started when first elected to the City Council in 2016.

He looks forward to playing the role each year, despite sweating under the heavy garb and scratchy beard.

"It's pretty amazing — people bring their whole families, and the families want to get in the picture. You've got grandmas and grandpas. It's unbelievable, it's terrific."

During last year's coronavirus surge, community groups put their heads together and hosted a scaled-down drive-through version of the display in the parking lot of the Costa Mesa IKEA for participants in an annual toy drive hosted by local nonprofit Power of One Foundation.

Stephens had to wave to kids from a distance as families drove by. But this year, Snoopy and Co. have returned to City Hall in full force.

"The train is going to be bigger this year," Stephens said. "It's going to be really nice. It's just great to have it back."

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