Daily Pilot Times OC

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St.Clair shares notes on his career

Music director recently offered highlights of his decades of leading the Pacific Symphony in a passionate conversation with KUSC's Rich Capparela.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

hen Pacific Symphony music director Carl St. Clair first came to Orange County there was no Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa. In fact, in 1990 the classical music scene in Orange County was quite small. However, its size was not indicative of its ambition.

"In 46 years what has been accomplished here has been nothing less than miraculous," St.Clair said at the Box Circle Club of the concert hall on Oct. 17. "But it's not because of me, it is because of this community. The dedication of our board members and our subscribers and people like yourselves sitting here, all realizing the importance of classical music in your life."

Founded in 1978, Pacific Symphony began as a collaboration between Cal State Fullerton and north Orange County community leaders led by Marcy Mulville and has been the resident orchestra of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall since 2009. In June 2018, the orchestra made its national PBS debut in June 2018 on "Great Performances."

Under St.Clair's direction, Pacific Symphony has become highly regarded among the classical music community, with the conductor responsible for creative endeavors like the American Composers Festival, which began in 2000 as well as introducing an opera initiative, "Sym-



Sarah Mosqueda

See Career, page A4 PACIFIC SYMPHONY Music Director Carl St.Clair sits in conversation with KUSC 91.5 FM radio host Rich Capparela.

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Critic of \$8M insurance 'slush fund' knocked off committee

Trustee was removed from board that reviews district's finances after calling for an audit of a fund held by a vendor.

BY SARA CARDINE

A Rancho Santiago Community College District trustee seeking to investigate how a third-party vendor quietly held insurance rebates that accrued to \$8 million in an off-the-books account has been removed from an audit committee he's chaired for two decades.

Phil Yarbrough, a 28-year veteran of the board and chair of a fiscal and audit review committee

tasked with examining the district's financial accounts, said he was stripped of his chairmanship duties earlier this month.

"My efforts to investigate the misappropriation of public funds within our district and to seek clarification from staff have consistently been obstructed, leading to retaliation against me," he said of the move in an Oct. 14 Board of Trustees meeting.

Yarbrough, in an interview Wednesday, refuted the reason offered for his dismissal — that he violated the Brown Act by calling a closed session committee meeting to inform a district audit team, among other things, of the \$8-million risk management fund held by risk pool operator the Alliance of Schools for Cooperative Insurance Programs (ASCÎP).

Board members only learned of the money, held by ASCIP since before 2009, in June and immediately demanded a full remittance via check. District records indicate administrators spent at least \$3.6 million from the fund in at least 13 transactions made between 2012 and 2020.

Yarbrough said auditors preparing for Rancho Santiago CCD's upcoming annual audit needed to know about the \$8 million and where it came from.

"I was just doing my due dili-

See Critic, page A2

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Courtesy of the Heritage Museum of Orange County

HERITAGE MUSEUM LOOKS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR HISTORIC KELLOGG HOUSE ROOF REPAIRS PAGE A5

Courtesy of the Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel

A trio of eateries have plans to celebrate Día de los Muertos in O.C.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Día de los Muertos, the holiday dedicated to honoring beloved family members who have passed away, has been celebrated in Mexico and other Latin countries for centuries, but traditions associated with the multiday holiday have become popular in Southern California too.

Typically celebrated on Nov. 1 and 2, families build altars or "ofrenda" with photos of friends and family they have lost along with marigolds, candles and sometimes their favorite food. Other traditions around the holiday also involve making treats, like baking pan de muerto or decorating sugar skulls.

A handful of Orange County restaurants are getting in on the

tradition, offering festive feasts to celebrate the Day of the Dead. TimesOC takes a look at three:

CHAPTER ONE: THE MODERN LOCAL

227 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, (714) 352-2225

Earlier this year chef Luis Pérez earned a Bib Gourmand from the Michelin Guide for his longstanding downtown Santa Ana restaurant, Lola Gaspar. Pérez has also recently taken over the kitchen of another established Santa Ana institution, Chapter One: the modern local.

Pérez is bringing his culinary sensibility to the menu, and his special Día de los Muertos dinner, in partnership with Lalo Tequila,

See Plans, page A2

DÍA DE LOS Muertos dining at Raya at the Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel.

Rancho Santa Margarita mayor suspends campaign, cites 'error'

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Shawn Gordon drove around Rancho Santa Margarita when he noticed something odd happening in his hometown.

Mayor Carol Gamble's campaign signs began disappearing from District 3, where she sought reelection next month. By evening, even the lawn signs outside of the mayor's home vanished from sight.

The next day, Gamble's campaign website was scrubbed to read "coming soon."

By Oct. 20, the sudden political retreat made sense when she publicly announced the suspension of her campaign that same day. Gamble acknowledged she attested to an inaccurate statement on her nomination papers but deemed it a mistake that was found too late to cor-

"My error, my responsiand my decisions have been discussed with District Attorney through my counsel, and no promises have been made to me," said Gamble in a press released published on the city's website.

On Oct. 16, the Orange County district attorney's office could neither confirm nor deny an investigation with TimesOC regarding Gamble and any potential perjury case surrounding her nomination papers.

Under election law, anyone of voting age can help circulate nomination papers so long as the person signing off on the documents is the same person who witnessed the voter signatures.

Gordon, a longtime Rancho Santa Margarita resident, first alerted election authorities about Gamble and allegations of perjury back in August.

He wrote a letter to Orange County Registrar of Voters Bob Page and informed him that several registered voters in Rancho Santa Margarita signed declarations stating that Gamble did not witness their signatures despite attestations that she had.

TimesOC reviewed one notarized statement related to Gamble's campaign.

"Ms. Gamble was not present at that time and did not witness my signature,"

The Registrar's office forwarded the matter to the O.C. Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer's office for review, according to Gordon.

"There is no cure period," he said. "I'm hoping Spitzer does the right thing. This is absolutely cut and dry."

An O.C. D.A. spokeswoman did not immediately respond for comment following Gamble's campaign suspension.

It comes just days after the O.C. D.A. brought two felony charges against Scott Markowitz, a first-time Fullerton City Council candidate, for allegedly attesting under the penalty of perjury that he witnessed signatures gathered for his own nomination papers.

Markowitz, who was arraigned on Monday, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor election law violation and was sentenced to a day in jail, a year of probation and 160 hours of community service.

The felony counts were dismissed.

Gamble, an incumbent, has served on Rancho Santa Margarita City Council since 2011 following an initial four-year term in

According to her press release, she is making efforts to immediately return campaign contributions donors.

Political Action Committees for the Lincoln Club of Orange County, Apartment Assn. of Orange County and the Assn. of Orange County Deputy Sheriffs have all recently contributed to Gamble's campaign this month.

Gamble will still appear on the ballot but pledges to from office, if resign elected.

In the Markowitz case, the O.C. D.A. stated that he would be ineligible to hold office if he won, and a special election would need to be called.

Keri Lynn Baert, a Rancho Santa Margarita District 3 council candidate, declined to comment on circumstances surrounding Gamble's campaign suspension.

"Her decision doesn't impact how committed I am to my campaign," said Baert, who is the sole opponent in the race. "She's still on the ballot. I've focused my entire time on term limits, fiscal responsibility and transparency. It's still important that I win the majority of the votes in this election."

Chris McLaughlin, a former City Council candidate, appeared to allude to issues surrounding a candidate's nomination papers, but didn't name who, during an Oct. 9 Rancho Santa Margarita council meeting.

"When it says penalty of perjury, that's actually a crime," he said.

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CRITIC

Continued from page A1

gence and doing what I've done for decades on that committee," he said. "A 'slush fund' is something that's kept off the books and outside the awareness of people, and the spending is unknown. So this fits the definition of a slush fund because the board never knew about it and [administrators] have been spending money out of it."

Trustee Zeke Hernandez joined Yarbrough in calling for an independent audit of the risk management fund. That would mean tracking deposits made by ASCIP and withdrawals made by administrators, including John Didion and Peter Hardash, two retired cabinet members with deep ties to the insurance agency continue to this day.

"If we don't clear this mess up, people are going to come back to the board and say, 'You're responsible because you've had that issue before you and you're not doing anything about it," Hernandez said of an audit at the Oct. 14 meeting.

But despite requests to agendize a discussion, Board President Sal Tinajero had not taken action — until this week. On Monday, trustees will vote whether to submit a request for proposals for a forensic audit of the fund.

It's unclear how an investigation into funds held by ASCIP, a Cerritos-based public joint powers authority, might be conducted by one of its 134 member districts. But Tinajero said he's open to exploring the matter.

"I'm going to be calling for an independent audit of ASCIP," he said Thursday. "Personally, I don't think there's anything there. [But] I do think everyone on the Board of Trustees wants to ensure everything is being done correctly.'

Tinajero Yarbrough's claim of being against retaliated speaking out against the fund and administrators who may have known about its existence, saying the trustee was removed from the audit committee for convening an illegal meeting and then failing to apologize, as he'd prom-

"I have been working with this guy since July. He has refused to say he violated the Brown Act," he said, saying an ad-hoc being committee is formed to determine further sanctions against the trustee.

Like his colleagues, Tinajero only learned of the risk management fund this summer. Exactly who in the district knew about it, and authorized the \$3.6 million in withdrawals from the account, is unclear.

Chancellor Marvin Martinez said at last week's meeting the fund was established in 2012 or 2013 and has been around for a long time.

"It's been going through audits year after year after he said. "And year," throughout all those years, Trustee Yarbrough was the chair of that committee."

However, unlike other funds, audited annually and reviewed by the fiscal and audit committee, the account is held off the district's books by ASCIP and audited collectively with multiple other districts' pooled insurance rebates.

Barry Resnick — a local resident and former Rancho Santiago faculty union president who's requested numerous records regarding ASCIP and the risk management fund — said Martinez was made aware of the account when he



James Carbone

THE ALLIANCE of Schools of Cooperative Insurance Programs office in Cerritos, seen in 2023.

came to the district in 2019, after meeting with (then-retired) Didion and Fritz Heirich, chief executive of the joint powers authority.

"He told me Didion and Heirich told him ASCIP was holding money for the district," he said Wednesday. "And based on public records, on the day he was hired, there was \$771,127 in that account. When you have three-quarters of a million laying around being held by a vendor off site, you ask questions.'

Martinez has declined to clarify how and when he learned of the interestbearing account. But district spokesman Chi-Chung Keung did acknowledge by email Friday "funds held with ASCIP on our behalf would be subject to their audit process."

Despite his removal from the district's audit Yarbrough committee, said he's going to do everything in his power to see that the fund undergoes a thorough accounting.

"I'm going to find out where the money came from and where it went, and I'm going to see whose fingerprints have been all over this," he said.

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Courtesy of Calaca Mamas

CALACA MAMAS celebrates the life of lost loved ones year round in Anaheim.

PLANS

Continued from page A1

is a great way to taste the changes.

On Nov. 1 at 7 p.m., Chapter One will host a four-course dinner that will celebrate the cuisine of the Mexican region of Jalisco. Diners can look forward to dishes like a fun play on torta ahogada using heirloom blue corn telera and braised hanger steak with Nueske bacon and Rancho Gordo Peruvian beans. Each course will be paired with Lalo tequila cocktails.

Tickets are priced at \$99 per person. RSVP by emailing sales@chapteronetml.com.

CALACA MAMAS CANTINA

1550 S. Harbor Blvd., Anaheim, (714) 215-4226

Located across the street from Disneyland, Calaca Mamas Cantina is run by sisters Angela and Mariam El Haj, who gained restaurant experience managing multiple food franchises. Their Mexican-American Day of the Dead-themed restaurant is their first original concept and honors loved ones who have passed year round with a white double-sided altar at

the restaurant's entrance. The sisters lost their father in 2009 and their mother in 2019 and during their grieving found com-

fort in the Día de los Muer-

tos holiday. The menu

features enchiladas verdes, shrimp ceviche and beerbattered poblano chili rellano along with tacos, burritos and more.

For Día de los Muertos, a menu of themed cócteles is being offered through Nov. 1, like a Marigold Sunrise, made with tequila blanco, grenadine and orange juice. All diners are greeted with the marigold-adorned altar filled with framed photos of employees' late loved ones along with photos of the El Haj sisters' parents.

RAYA AT RITZ-CARLTON,

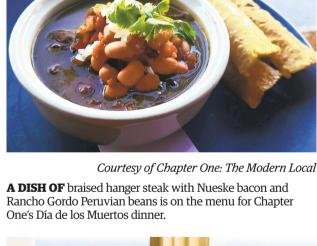
LAGUNA NIGUEL One Ritz Carlton Drive, Dana Point, (949) 240-2000 Raya at the Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel is offering

Muertos dining experiences this holiday season. Monday through Thursday until Oct. 31, guests can enjoy a special version of their afternoon tea service, Té de los Muertos. Tea sandwiches are reimagined with Mexican flavors like hojaldras de chicken con mole with queso fresco and pastries like café de olla roll cake and coconut dulce de leche tarte. Two seatings are available at 2 and 2:30 p.m with adults priced at \$115 and children at \$95.

On Nov. 1, chef Richard Sandoval and chef de cuisine Irving Nunez will present a special five-course Día de los Muertos dinner with dishes like empanadas

two different Día de los

Guests are invited to de longosta and black bring photos of departed



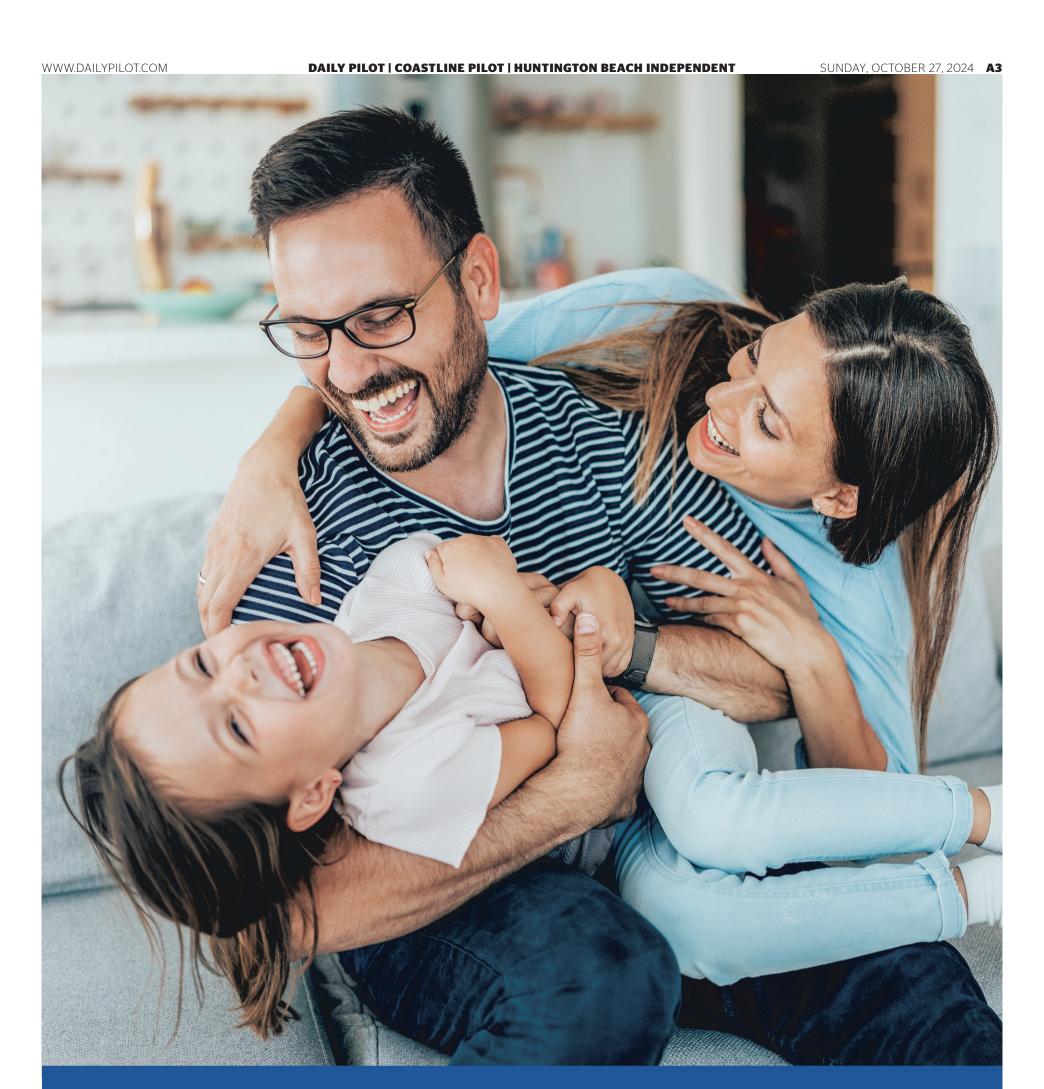
Courtesy of the Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel

RAYA OFFERS two Día de los Muertos dining experinces this season, including a Té de los Muertos afternoon tea service.

enmoladas, similar to enchiladas but prepared with a dark, rich mole sauce. Dinner for adults is priced at \$193.96, \$75 for children.

loved ones to add to the elaborate ofrenda at the resort.

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Garden Grove supports new anti-camping rule

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Garden Grove has become the latest city in Orange County to try to bolster its enforcement hand on homelessness by supporting a new camping

Discussed during the Garden Grove City Council meeting on Tuesday, the law seeks to prohibit camping on public property. It also aims to curb homeless encampments from setting up within certain distances next to buildings, ATMs, schools and daycare cen-

The city would also be authorized to remove unattended or abandoned personal property from public spaces subject to a 90-day retrieval period.

A staff report cited a 49%increase in calls for police service related to homeless encampments since 2017. Police statistics contend that at least half of all petty crime and theft in Garden Grove is committed by people from encampments.

Council members stressed the city's outreach efforts in presenting the ordinance as a balanced ap-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

GARDEN GROVE hosts the Central Cities Navigation Center and is pursuing rules to address homelessness.

proach.

"We've got all these carrots, but we needed a stick," said Councilman George Brietigam. "The whole intent of it is for it to be used compassionately." Garden Grove has taken a number of steps to address homelessness in the form of outreach efforts.

Last year, Garden Grove became the first city in O.C. to partner with CalOptima for a street medicine pilot program that provides healthcare services for people living on the streets.

Since then, Anaheim and Costa Mesa have launched similar collaborative ef-

Garden Before that, Grove worked with Be Well OC and Moving Forward for mental health and homeless outreach serv-

The city also partnered with Fountain Valley and Westminster for the Central Cities Navigation Center, which opened earlier this year and offers 85 shelter beds by referral.

Brietigam claimed that

Garden Grove's comprehensive approach has led to a drastic drop in home-

According to O.C.'s Point in Time homeless count this year, 239 people in Garden Grove are experiencing homelessness with 163 of them unsheltered.

That's down nearly 40% from the biennial tally's report of 391 homeless people in 2022 but up by more than a dozen from the prepandemic count in 2019.

Earlier this month, Anaheim moved forward with sweeping bans against people sleeping on sidewalks, selling bike parts at parks or even smoking near bus stops. A second vote to formally pass the laws is slated for Oct. 29.

Newport In August, Beach expanded its anticamping law to include people sleeping in their

The wave of enforcement measures follows the U.S. Supreme Court recent ruling that anti-camping laws are constitutionally protected without regard to available shelter bed space.

Brooke Weitzman, executive director of the Elder Law & Disability Rights Center, told TimesOC that O.C. cities still have to consider legal protections, including the 4th Amendment prohibition on seizure or destruction of property, when passing homeless laws after the Supreme Court's ruling.

"It is a true disappointment that at a moment when our cities know the fastest-growing unhoused population is seniors, and when our shelters struggle to meet the unique needs of seniors, and when our county needs to reckon with the mismanagement of public funds that exacerbated the housing crisis specifically for seniors failing to get them critical resources over the past four years, to see cities threatening the very lives of those seniors by targeting them for handcuffs instead of housing," Weitzman said.

Garden Grove Police Chief Amir El-Farra insisted that officers tasked with enforcing a camping ban in the city would not be heavy handed in their approach.

We always lead through compassion and outreach," he said. "If it arises to the level where we need to take enforcement action, we will

Councilwoman Nguyen-Peñaloza asked what could be done, if anything, about encampments along county and Caltrans property where Garden Grove has no jurisdiction.

"When it's county, the flood channels or the Caltrans area along the freeways, that can take days, weeks, months before it's cleaned up and acted upon," she said. "In that time frame, we have a lot of criminal activity occurring in these specific areas."

Garden Grove City Atty. Omar Sandoval noted that the proposed law wouldn't be able to address those encampments directly.

Jurisdictional gaps aside, all seven City Council members voted to approve the anti-camping law.

A second, procedural vote to pass it into law is slated for a future council meeting. Once passed, the bans would take effect in 30 days.

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Irvine OKs plans to build its first homeless shelter

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

The Irvine City Council took a major step Tuesday toward addressing homelessness by authorizing the purchase of two properties for a future shelter site.

Council members voted 4-1 to allocate \$20 million to acquire and upgrade the two adjacent buildings in the Irvine Business Complex along Armstrong Ave-

City officials are looking to transform the nearly 4acre site into Irvine's first bridge shelter for homeless and at-risk people that will incorporate medical care, financial literacy and job

training services. Dubbed "The Sanctuary," the shelter is described in a staff report as "a crucial piece of infrastructure" key to the city's planned multipronged approach homelessness, which officials are calling "The Sys-

"This is really setting a new standard in how a city can address its homeless and at-risk population," Councilwoman Tammy Kim said. "Unlike any system currently in place, I really think this initiative really is going to set us apart because it's comprehensive."

The number of homeless people living in Irvine varies by different measures.

According to this year's Orange County Point in Time homeless count, 50 people are living on the streets of Irvine.

During Tuesday's council meeting, City Manager Oliver Chi noted that 124 people are receiving homeless services and that 300 Irvine Unified School District students are homeless.

What is more certain is how many shelter beds the city provides for homeless people: zero.

"We definitely need to be taking care of our homeless population," Councilwoman Kathleen Treseder said. "I hear from residents. They notice that the population is increasing. As far as I understand it, it's mostly elderly folks and women with children. We need to make sure that they are taken care of."

A previous effort by county officials in 2018 to consider opening an emergency homeless shelter in Irvine drew fierce opposition from residents.

The Orange County Board of Supervisors responded by scuttling their shelter plans in the city.

Tuesday's council meeting proved a stark contrast



File Photo

IRVINE MAYOR Farrah Khan and Councilwoman Tammy Kim join a 2021 Irvine City Council meeting. "We cannot rely on other cities to take care of our homeless population," Khan said this week when the City Council voted to build its first homeless shelter.

to past protests with only a ing on the proposed shelter, some in support, in an otherwise empty chamber.

"The location of this is in a place where it makes the most sense," Kim said. "It is the furthest away from residential, it's furthest away from our schools, in case there's any concerns."

handful of residents speak- ary wouldn't be a traditional details in criticizing the real shelter but a "radically different" overarching cam-

> Designs for the Sanctuary were otherwise sparse, including how many shelter beds it would accommodate.

Councilman Mike Carroll, the lone dissenting vote against the shelter pur-

Chi said that the Sanctu- chase, seized on the lack of estate deal — and the urgent timeline given to coun-

cil members to approve it. "You should not casually put your vote down for \$20 million on a facility that could bring a lot of difficulty to our city, if it's not

fully fleshed out," he said. Carroll raised concerns that the shelter plan did not

go through any city commissions, including Irvine's planning commission and was similarly dismayed about not hearing from any apartment residents near the proposed site.

He suggested that Irvine should instead pursue a collaboration with Tustin on a shelter site near the Irvine Business Complex but just outside its city lim-

"We cannot rely on other cities to take care of our homeless population," said Irvine Mayor Farrah Khan, as she noted past efforts to work jointly with Tustin did not pan out.

By approving the purchase, Irvine made a \$1 million nonrefundable deposit on the properties two days after the vote.

The city is slated to close the deal and solicit proposals for a medical provider and operator of the shelter by next month.

At the Irvine City Council meeting on Nov. 26, council members are also slated to consider an anti-camping and quality-of-life law, another prong in its "System" approach to addressing homelessness.

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CAREER

Continued from page A1

phonic Voices." Pacific Symphony has also become the largest budgeted orchestra formed in the last 50 years and was recognized by the League of American Orchestras as a Tier 1 Orchestra, one of America's youngest orches-

tra to earn the distinction. In an intimate and passionate conversation with KUSC 91.5 FM radio host Rich Capparela, St.Clair reflected on how far the Orange County classical music scene has come since he began his tenure at Pacific Symphony more than three decades ago. As the longest-tenured American-born conductor of a major U.S. orchestra, he reflected on his career in Orange County and his efforts to create programs that fit the community while also challenging the audience.

"After this long of a relationship with you, I feel I have become a sort of an artistic or musical conscious for Orange County," said St.Clair. "It is not just want I want to do but what is good for us. Sometimes I give you what you want and sometimes I give you what you need. Everybody needs to have spinach and broccoli in their life. It's good for you."

St.Clair spoke about his early career in academia as a trumpet teacher and regaled the audience with stories of his time spent with the illustrious Leonard Bernstein.

"One night after a concert in Vienna I kept calling him Mr. Bernstein," said St.Clair. "And he said 'Cowboy, if you call me Mr. Bernstein one more time ...' and he kind of kind of leapt across the table and mock-choked me."

Although St.Clair said Bernstein often went by "Lenny," he could never bring himself to refer to the legendary conductor and composer with such familiarity even though they

were friends. "I called him Mr. B, because I could never call him anything but Mr. or

Maestro," said St.Clair. St.Clair spoke passionately about his philosophies on classical music, at times getting up from his chair. In the middle of one such impassioned monologue, St.Clair turned to Capparela and joked, "Sorry, did you have ques-

tions?' This summer Pacific Symphony brought its outdoor concert series to Irvine and last year brought in pops conductor Enrico Lopez-Yañez to head up a program of popular music. St.Clair emphasized the dedication the orchestra has to each performance, regardless of the venue or the subject matter, crediting the musicians as ones of "virtuosity

and versatility.' "Any given week, we could play the ballet, we could do an opera, we could do a pops, we could be in our symphony-onthe-go truck in someone's park in their hometown, we could be outside playing the film score to Harry Potter,'" said St.Clair. "The musicians of Pacific Symphony put 100% of their talents into everything. There is nothing that doesn't deserve everyone's top effort and attention.'

St.Clair made sure to express his gratitude to the Orange County community and also his pride in being associated with it.

"In 2006, when we played our last concert in Vienna, the review came out and said, 'I don't know where Orange County, Calif., is but wherever it is, it is obvious that they care about classical music and their orchestra," said St.Clair. "What a compliment for all of us.'

The conversation with St.Clair was followed by a Halloween-themed performance titled "Classical Spooktacular," courtesy of Pacific Symphony. The performance featured the music like John Williams' "Devil's Dance" from the 1987 film "The Witches of Eastwick." The night also featured an original piece by composer Kenji Bunch titled "The Devil's Box" with a special virtuoso performance by Meredith Crawford on viola. Inspired by the long association between the Devil and fiddle, Bunch imagined the viola as a supernatural instrument and suggests a Cajun bowing style known as "devil's elbow," in which the bow hair is wrapped

around the instrument.



Sarah Mosqueda

PACIFIC SYMPHONY Music Director Carl St.Clair gives a passionate talk at at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall.

In the remainder of St.Clair's 2024-25 season, music lovers can look forward to even more unique classical music experiences like "Redis-

cover Verdi's Requiem" in June 2025 with St.Clair's commentary guiding the audience through the piece before it is performed. A full calendar of events can

be viewed at pacificsymphony.org.

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Fundraiser aims to put new roof on Kellogg House

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Kellogg historic House at the Heritage Museum of Orange County in Santa Ana, built in 1898, needs a new roof, museum officials say.

Saved from demolition for educational purposes in 1980, and moved from its original location at 122 Orange St. and Walnut Avenue to a then-empty lot at Fairview and West Harvard streets, the structure's authentic wood-shingle roof at the time was only expected to hold up for about 25 years.

"The roof is the original roof since they moved it here, which is almost 40 years ago," said Candace Chromy, executive director at the Heritage Museum. "We are lucky we have gotten 40 years out of it."

Last winter Chromy and the rest of the Heritage Museum team noticed water damage inside the threestory Queen Anne Victorian home.

"After a lot of our really heavy rains, we had a problem with leakage in one of the bedrooms upstairs," said Chromy.

Built by Hiram Clay Kellogg, a civil engineer and architect who was a key figure in establishing Orange County, the home has neoclassical elements indicative of the Queen Anne style that was most popular between 1880 and 1910. Kellogg's love of tall wooden sailing ships can be found in elements throughout: an oval dining room meant to emulate an officer's mess, built-in cabinets and shelves courtesy of a ship's carpenter and an authentic 18th-century spruce mast from a decommissioned ship at the center of the spiral staircase are just some examples of Kellogg's nautical flair.

The water damage is above what would have been Kellogg and his wife's bedroom, and water has also been running down through the walls causing



HERITAGE **MUSEUM** of **Orange County** is raising funds for repairs to the historic Kellogg House's roof.

Courtesy of the Heritage Museum of Orange County

damage in the dining room. For now a tarp has been placed on the roof, one that isn't visible from the front of the house. Chromy said it is a short-term solution.

"We are concerned about the long-term damage if we don't replace the roof soon; it will make it even worse when we do do it," said Chromy. "We don't want to have damage to the inside of the house as well. All of our ceilings are beautifully painted, some with handpainted work of flowers and things, and it would be sad to lose that piece of it."

The roof repairs would cost an estimated \$45,000.

Educator Dr. Mary Nolan, who 45 years ago worked with the special services and enrichment activities department of the Santa Ana School District, spearheaded the relocation of the Kellogg House in order to create education opportunities for students in SASD, which didn't have the funding for field trips. Federal grants paid for the move, and the house has since become the centerpiece of the Heritage Museum, which was founded in 1981 and opened to the public in

Over the years the Kellogg House has been outfitted in Victorian furniture and authentic antiques. Over the years, the museum also acquired the historic 1899 Maag Family Farmhouse and a blacksmith shop that is home to the O.C. Blacksmith Guild. Each year the museum hosts thousands for weddings, events and, of course, school field trips.

"Almost all of school tours go to the Kellogg House, and there are not a lot of places where kids can do hands on activities like they can here," Chromy.

The learning experiences at Kellogg House give students a chance to dress up in Victorian costumes and get a sampling of what a typical day was like in Orange County 125 years ago.

"People come back, and they remember they made butter or washed clothes on a washboard here as kids," said Chromy. "It is nice to know we have a lasting impression on people.'

A fundraising campaign for the new roof is live at givebutter.com, and the Kellogg family has offered to match contributions up to \$20,000. Chromy said the team hopes fundraising efforts will ensure the Kellogg House remains an educational tool for the commu-

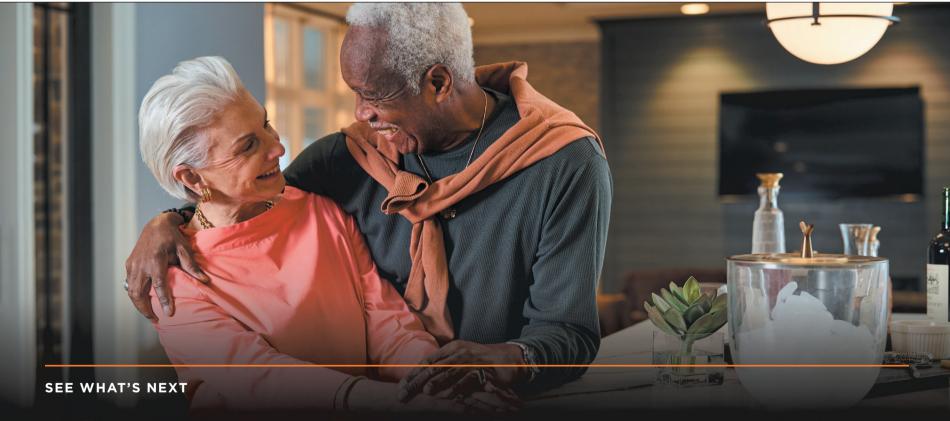
"We are more of a living history museum, not just a place where you go and look through cases. We don't want to lose that.

sarah.mosqueda @latimes.com Twitter: @SarahNMos

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

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COLUMN | PATRICE APODACA

A call for compassion as O.C. elections near

ith just a matter of days to go until Election Day, many of us are feeling a stomach-churning mixture of dread, optimism and a fervent desire to just get the darn thing over with.

I realize that the vast majority of us are pretty firmly set in our beliefs, and those convictions will guide the decisions that



port. And by the time this column is published, many will have already cast their ballots, rendering any final

attempts at persuasion

moot. Nevertheless, I wish to make a last-minute, heartfelt plea to keep a few thoughts in mind, particularly as they pertain to races for positions on school boards, city councils and other local governing bodies here in Orange

Mostly that plea has to do with qualities that have been disturbingly scarce during this election cycle: Compassion. Open-mindedness. Kindness. Whatever the results, it's never too late to take another look, to reconsider whether the policies that some candidates support will actually help us be a better society, one that cares about the

LGBTQ+ **SUPPORTERS** of

all ages the walk to the end of **Huntington Beach** pier to hang a rainbow Pride flag measuring 33 feet by 24 feet during a rally in May 2023.



safety and well-being of all people, including those who are misunderstood

and shunned. In particular, I am concerned about the anti-LGBTQ+ policies that have been championed by many candidates for local school boards and city councils.

California has some of the strongest laws in the nation to protect and support LGBTQ+ youth, including the right of students to openly express their gender identities at school. Earlier this year, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a new law — the first of its kind in the nation — that will ban school districts from requiring staff to notify parents when a student expresses a desire to be known by a different name or pronoun.

This step was seen as necessary after some dis-



tricts, including Orange Unified, passed policies requiring that parents be notified by school staff if a child expresses a desire to be referred to by a different gender identity.

Despite the new law, however, the battle over such policies rages on. Lawsuits have been filed challenging the law and some districts are carrying on with their policies in defiance of the state. The issue is now figuring prominently in local politics, as many candidates are promoting their "parental rights" agendas.

Keep in mind that these notification policies can put vulnerable kids at heightened risk by forcibly outing them to their families. In the name of protecting families and other students, they endanger those who are already more likely to suffer from depression, suicidal thoughts, bullying, harassment and housing insecurity.

That's what happens when kids who, struggling and feeling like outsiders, are pushed into situations that they aren't ready for or emotionally equipped to confront by adults who don't understand the potential consequences of their actions.

The policies also place an unfair burden on teachers and other school employees to forcibly out their students. Do we really expect educators to become gender police at a time when they are leaving the profession in droves, citing unprecedented stress, and attracting new blood into teaching has become increasingly diffi-

Yet many candidates for

local school boards have vowed to keep up the fight for parental notification policies, even to the point of pursuing litigation against the state, a legal battle that promises to be as costly as it is polarizing.

The fight over parental notification policies isn't the only issue related to how we treat the LGBTQ+ community that's on the

Once again, Huntington Beach leads the way when it comes to policies that promote intolerance. And that ignoble reputation could worsen after the election.

During the past couple of years, four members of the seven-seat City Council have pushed through an extremist agenda. They banned the rainbow pride flag from city property, and they've taken aim at Huntington Beach's public library system.

In June, a proposal to privatize management of the city's libraries fizzled when the bidding company pulled the plug on the effort. The council members who initially backed the proposal had portrayed it as a cost-cutting move, but their support softened after a huge public outcry.

Perhaps the opponents of privatization weren't buying the cost-cutting rationale, instead seeing the proposal as yet another way for the council majority to cull books they

deemed personally objectionable. After all, the same council members had issued a directive earlier in the year to remove books referencing puberty from the children's section, and proceeded to form a parent-guardian review board that would be empowered to override the decisions made by the library staff in the selection of books.

Now the three council members who have steadfastly opposed these efforts are up for reelection, and they are being challenged by candidates friendly to the current majority. If the challengers prevail, they would likely add their weight behind any future attempts to wash away the gay from Huntington Beach.

As mentioned, it's unlikely that I can change anyone's mind about this issue. Nonetheless, I do hold out hope that some hearts will eventually open to those whose identities they erroneously view as threatening and that more people will begin to realize that the path to safer, more robust communities is through compassion and care for the marginalized among us.

PATRICE APODACA is a former Los Angeles Times staff writer and is coauthor of "A Boy Named Courage: A Surgeon's Memoir of Apartheid." She lives in Newport Beach.

MAILBAG

Aquarium would be a better use of Lower Castaways site

Regarding the Daily Pilot article on the Newport Beach City Council discussion of the possible uses for the bayside property at Pacific Coast Highway and Dover Drive known as Lower Castaways, after further research it is appar-

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ent that, by far, the best use for the property would be a community aquarium as proposed by Harbor Commissioners Rudy Svrcek and Don Yahn.

While a pool may be used by certain swim teams and some individual swimmers.

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an aquarium would be a facility that could, and would, be available and used by all the citizens of Newport Beach.

At a cost of \$47 million and \$2.5 million per year to maintain, the pool would be one of the most expensive projects per user in the history of the city. I also understand the council has further approved a \$500,000 immediate expenditure in order to advance the pool concept with very little exposure or input from the greater community.

The aquarium has already stimulated considerable interest in the philanthropic community with legacy naming a distinct possibility, thereby deferring a large part of the initial cost. Furthermore, an aquarium could be a financially selfsustaining enterprise potentially saving the city the \$2.5 million per year. A pool could be constructed much more inexpensively at another site, off the bay, such as at Mariners Park or any other city-owned parkland.

Newport Beach schools could, and would, take the opportunity to bring students to the aquarium. Kids of all ages would be able to learn about the aquatic life that abounds right in their own backyard and how climate change is affecting local coastal waters.

The last city owned property on the bay deserves a legacy use we can all be proud of and that will be a resource for all of the citizens of Newport Beach, not just a few. A swimming pool could be built much more effectively elsewhere. City Council, please consider a special meeting where all citizens of Newport Beach could openly review the pool concept, the aquarium or any other option for the lower Castaway site.

> **Richard Heinz** Newport Beach

Commentary was inspiring

Handyman Service 714-222-3055 Wood Restoration Specialist agree with the commentary by Matthew Armstrong completely (Commentary: Beware of 'parental rights' candidates, Daily Pilot, Oct. 20). Teachers, counselors and administrators have the training, experience and technical skills needed to implement curriculum, govern schools and ensure parents are informed and

If you ask your favorite teachers who have now retired, they will unanimously say, "We always cared about our students so deeply, but the politics were always what interfered." Armstrong exercised his right to criticize the so-called Parental Rights movement.

participative stakeholders.

Newport-Mesa is a tightknit community. Many of us have lived here our whole lives, gone to school together and know both the admirable and not-soflattering aspects of the parental rights candidates Armstrong criticized, their endorsers and the oftenhidden agendas represented. Before we go that far, I suggest that we focus this upcoming school board elections by focusing on the issues at hand, not personal criticisms.

Regardless of our feelings, what does the law say about medical confidentiality? What risks are there if conversations were divulged? At our public schools, what are the laws related to free speech versus bullying? Transparency is essential; how do we increase transparency of all the candidates, their salaries, their spending to avoid embezzlement crises like the famous 1992 Wagner case I remember? What does the research say about educational technology as a tool versus distraction? How can we differentiate trendy jargon from those based on rigor, diverse exposure, and studentchoice?

My own experience has shown the best school system has experts research policy, legislators in the capitols make laws and politicians serve to endorse, not give orders.

At best, parents and politicians use their networks and energy to raise funds to create optimal private supplementation of a public system. At worst, petty politicking can turn



Mel Melcon | Los Angeles Times

A SEA TURTLE swims inside a tank at the Aguarium of the Pacific in Long Beach. A reader suggests that Newport Beach open an aquarium at the Lower Castaways site.

things into the equivalent of a nullification crises we saw in Brown vs. Board of Education. If we cannot respect established laws, where does it stop?

Wise people know when to put their feelings aside and defer to the experts. No one cares about education in the classroom more than your local teacher: support and communicate, not

> Joseph Klunder Newport Beach

CdM High doesn't match flier claims

Voters in Area 3 for the Newport-Mesa Unified School District received a flier that included misleading statements that do not accurately reflect our experiences at Corona del Mar High School, which is the high school in Area 3.

Current data on the Corona del Mar High School website (under the programs tab in College and Career Counseling) demonstrates the success of CdM students. In addition to that published data, these statistics were presented at the CdM graduation for the class of 2024 delineating the success of students in academics, arts and athletics.

- Earned California Distinguished School Recog-

nition (1 of only 220 in the - Ranked in the top 8% in

the nation by U.S. News & World Report and in the top 4% in California by the California Department of

- Ranked in the top 1% of college prep high schools in America by Niche.com;

- 97 % of the class are attending college including many at top universities with athletic and academic scholarships;

ACT/SAT score above the national average;

- Five National Merit Scholar finalists including a National Merit scholarship winner (top 1/2 of 1% in the

- Arts: 12 Cappies (high school Tonys); Ñine Macys (high school Oscars);

- Athletics: Three CIF championships;

Three graduates chose to serve in our military.

Stemler has made misleading and disparaging statements about our local schools and is not the right person for this job. He is not informed about the current success of students in Area 3. In addition, he works full time as an attorney in San Bernardino County, which will make it difficult to support school events in person.

We hope that Area 3 residents will reelect Carol Crane. She's a parent of adult children who attended Eastbluff Elementary and Corona del Mar High School where Carol

See Mailbag, page A7

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school counselor myself, I

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Continued from page A6

served as the PTA president. Carol is willing and available to show up in person at school events across Area 3 and the whole district. She cares deeply about the children and families in our com-

best candidate for this job! We represent a group of nearly 70 parents who were willing to sign our letter but due to space constraints were unable to do so.

munity and is an amazing

volunteer who is the very

Brigid and Joe Cianfrani Catherine and **Adam Little Jesse and Nicole Brettingen Erin and Ron** Schoenbaum **Suzanne and David** Gauntlett

Newport Beach

H.B.'s reputation is on the line

Several residents from other coastal communities have asked me what the heck is going on in Huntington Beach. Much of what they know about our civic affairs comes from reading articles and letters in the Daily Pilot. Kudos to the newspaper for highlighting our local concerns. When even conservatives among its readership bemoan the ideology, extremism and, frankly, the incompetence of our leaders, it is time to pump the brakes and take stock of

our situation. The City Council majority has run amok over the past two years with its trashing of norms, its failure to address problems and needs, its pursuit of divisive culture war issues and its bad conduct. Worse, it has endorsed a slate of MAGA minions to take on the "responsible" incumbents of the council minority running for reelection this November that would both remove the guardrails from the excesses of the majority and plunge the community into turmoil.

The conservative critics coming to me do not want to see the largest coastal city in Orange County swept out to sea for fear of negative impacts on their localities as well. They would rather see Dan Kalmick, Natalie Moser and Rhonda Bolton keep their council seats and also elect a qualified city clerk (Regina Blankenhorn) over the amateur (Lisa Lane Barnes) with no municipal government experience being backed by council majority. It's about competence and caring and not partisan posturing.

Residents of Huntington Beach are justly worried about the reputation of their hometown. It was Will Rogers who stated "All I know is what I read in the newspapers." When Surf City is getting known for political tribalism more than tourism, you know we have a problem

Tim Geddes Huntington Beach

First impressions are lasting ones. If that is the

case, Michael Gates failed

miserably on Monday presenting in front of the U.S. Court of Appeals 9th Circuit.

If you want to have some fun, watch the first 35 minutes of the actual court case. Search for "YouTube City of Huntington Beach 23-3694".

To summarize, Gates argued against high-density housing by presenting his tried-and-failed strategy to argue that federal and state law don't apply to a charter city like Huntington Beach. This is not a case based on precedent; rather, Gates provides this as a case of "first impression" (I assume a legal term that means "I made this up"). In his rebuttal, Gates suggested that a charter city was "emancipated" from the U.S. Constitution, for which a judge called him out saying that the city is not a "free floating entity."

I ask you to watch it for the absurdity of the presentation and the absolute failure of our ambitious attorney as he stammers in front of the judges. Watch the judges challenge him at the podium on the merits of the case and even on it being presented in federal court. Watch the judges as they appear to be smiling at the laughably preposterous manner upon which the case is based.

You don't have to be a lawyer to see someone being laughed off the stage. And that, my friends, is the serious part of this letter.

Michael Gates stands in front of the City Council puffing out his chest at his grand ambitions to support the council majority, while spending millions of our dollars on ludicrous lawsuits that have no logical basis to any reasonable person.

Whether you are a conservative or liberal, I believe we can all agree that this nonsense must be stopped. Let us use this election as a referendum on the city's direction by voting against Williams, Kennedy, Twining, Lanes and Measure U. Only then can we reinstate true local control and discuss the issues as a community and not a zealot minority.

Larry Hersch Huntington Beach

H.B. library is under attack

After attending this week's City Council candidate forum at Golden West College, I was horrified to hear the lies and homophobic statements coming from the MAGA extremists running for office, particularly Don Kennedy, Chad Williams and Marissa Jackson. One of the most malicious comments came from Jackson. She stated to a room filled with young college students that she and her friends do not go to Huntington Beach Public Library because of all the pornographic books that could harm their children. Jackson is patently clueless. It's illegal for any public library to have por-

nographic materials. Since June 2023, Friends of the Huntington Beach Library members and librarians have asked repeatedly for a list of the pornographic books that concern these misinformed residents. We also offered to provide tours of the children's section so they could show us the books that were problematic. Not one single person has come forward.

Meanwhile, our book circulation rate among children and adults has soared, attendance at library programs has grown dramatically, and Friends of the Library membership is at a record high.

If Huntington Beach Public Library is such a dangerous place for children, why was it selected as the Orange County library with the best Storytime for the third consecutive year by thousands of parents from Huntington Beach and surrounding communities?

Only three City Council candidates have staunchly defended our award-winning public library and its librarians: Rhonda Bolton, Dan Kalmick, and Natalie Moser!

> **Carol Daus** Huntington Beach

Reasons to vote for Min

A vote for Dave Min is a vote for action on issues important to the lives of the people he would represent in the 47th District of Congress, covering the cities of Costa Mesa, Irvine, Seal Beach, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Laguna Beach and parts of Laguna Hills. This district was a "bedrock" conservative district, but after redistricting in 2021, views in this district were more mixed and in 2020 Orange County voters supported President Biden by a margin of 53.5%.

If elected, Min would follow the dynamic Katie Porter who opted out of her seat to run unsuccessfully for the open Senate seat vacated by Sen. Diane Feinstein.

Both Porter and Min support each other, having been colleagues as law professors at UCI.

Min has passed 28 bills in the state Senate including several protecting domestic violence survivors. He has taken on the gun lobby, big oil and antichoice extremists, and won. His other accomplishments include championing the COVID-19 Small Business Relief Fund, writing legislation to rein in PG&E and the utility companies and voting against every proposed tax increase on O.C. families. He is rated 100% by Planned Parenthood for his proposition enshrining reproductive rights in the state constitution and the Sierra Club for his stances on offshore oil drilling, protection of open spaces and prevention of wildfires.

Most noteworthy and important has been Min's stance on gun safety, passing important legislation in that area. He is supported by the Orange County police, firefighters, teachers and nurses, and has received the endorsement of the Los Angeles Times.

> **Lynn Lorenz** Newport Beach

THE DAILY **COMMUTER PUZZLE**

By Stella Zawistowski

ACROSS 1 More or 5 Walk slowly 9 Good thing to have 14 Car or truck 15 Dwell 16 Actor Nick 17 Tehran's country 18 Word that might end 19-Across 19 Prayer before a meal 20 Charitable gift 22 Playoff slots 23 Midmorning hour 24 Hinge (on) 25 "The Sound of Music" role 28 Puppeteer Lewis 30 Secret agent 33 Unlock 34 Sharp perception 35 Cow's noise 36 "Altogether ooky" clan: 3 wds. 39 Fossil fuel type 40 Bobbing on the water

41 Nevada city

vehicles: Abbr.

43 Misty-eyed

46 R&B singer

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56 Basic unit in

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63 Take a breather

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42 Paths for

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A5.

well) 2 Spain's currency 3 Lee of comics 4 Light piano piece 5 Unadorned 6 Long 14-Across, for short

7 Kitchen

60 63 22 Having suffered a loss 24 Chef Gordon

SUDOKU

39

By the Mepham 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.

40

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appliance 8 Bear's lair 9 Actress Jolie 10 "I apologize" 11 Strip of wood 12 _-a-Sketch 13 Casual shirts 21 and crumpets

25 The M in DMV 26 Garden pest 27 Film holders 28 Vector's counterpart, in physics 29 Comedy 30 Express delight 31 Bohemian folk dance 32 Toys that "walk the dog" 34 Commercial charges: 2 wds. 37 NBC news show 38 Dispute settler 44 Anger 45 Floor models 46 Carrying a weapon 47 Singer Tori 48 Working _ to five 49 Obtain 50 Don't leave 51 Ripped 52 Silent performer 53 Taylor Swift's _ Tour 54 Pay to use 56 High poker card

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