

Daily Pilot & Times OC

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'Musical meltdown moments'

Art of Music Experience at O.C. Fair prompts visceral reactions as it celebrates the creation of album cover art.

BY ANDREW TURNER

Before you rock your stomach with all manner of fried food, the Art of Music Experience could make for an entertaining warm-up act at the Orange County Fair.

Those who have stumbled upon the exhibit, making its debut inside the Huntington Beach building at the fair, have been transported into a concert-goer's paradise.

Upon entering, visitors see a room full of neon signs representing many of the hotshots in music. They know the names, and in many cases, they know the faces. The imagery associated with the music is what the showcase was designed to draw attention to.

A wide variety of periods and genres of music, from Barbra Streisand and the Beatles to Tu-



FLOOR MAN
John Guerzon portrays Gene Simmons from the rock band KISS in the Art of Music Experience exhibit at the Orange County Fair on Thursday. Guerzon heard it was heavy metal day, so he dressed the part for visitors.

Don Leach | Staff Photographer

See *Moments*, page A6

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A RENDERING of the Newport Beach float entry in the upcoming Rose Parade on New Year's Day.



Courtesy of Visit Newport Beach

Newport plans its first Rose Parade float since 2006

BY LILLY NGUYEN

The Rose Parade on New Year's Day will feature a familiar name for coastal Orange County — the city of Newport Beach, which will be participating in the parade for the first time since 2006, when the city was celebrating its centennial.

Gary Sherwin, chief executive officer and president of Newport Beach & Co., the city's nonprofit marketing agency, confirmed participation earlier this summer and said the proposal for the float entry was recently approved by the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Assn.

The Newport Beach float, which links together five different small floats, draws inspiration from the city's Christmas Boat Parade. Sherwin said the intent was to tell the story of the city, and organizers could think of no better way to do that than through using the floral display to depict one of the biggest events staged annually in Newport Harbor.

The cost of the float is expected to be in the low six figures, according to Sherwin. For operating purposes, Newport Beach & Co. receives about 18% of the bed taxes collected via tourism and is

See *Float*, page A7

ALSO FROM TIMESOC & THE PILOT:



Courtesy of Project FoodBox

NEWPORT BEACH NONPROFIT PARTNERS WITH GRIDIRON GIANT TO PROMOTE FRESH FOOD AWARENESS PAGE A7



Photos by Edwin Goei

TRAM HUONG NGUYEN grills seafood at Little Saigon Night Market, held in front of Asian Garden Mall.

Into the night: Shedding light on four after-sunset markets in O.C.

BY EDWIN GOEI

In many places outside of the United States, eating street food is a part of everyday life.

When I was growing up in Indonesia, street food was the best food. We knew that when it comes to our favorite dishes and snacks, the tastiest came from a seller who specialized in only that thing. And the best place to sample it all was at the night markets at the center of town.

There was a hawker who fanned a coal hibachi to roast chicken *satays* as its sweet white smoke billowed into the night air. There was the buttery smell that snaked out of the cart frying *martabak*, a thick Indonesian pancake filled with chocolate and peanuts.

These kinds of wistful memories of night markets aren't unique to me. Anyone from Latin America to the Middle East

See *Markets*, page A2



TJUANA-STYLE tacos are one of the offerings made fresh to order at the Santa Ana de Noche market.

County seeks to recover \$1.8M from Chevron for Talbert Channel oil leak cleanup in 2022

BY SARA CARDINE

A construction crew working for Orange County's Public Works Department was strengthening the flood control capacity of the Talbert Channel in Huntington Beach on Oct. 6, 2022, when workers noticed a sheen on the surface of the water.

Just one year earlier, 25,000-gallons of crude oil spilled from a ruptured pipeline connection to an offshore platform, reaching Huntington Beach's coastline and threatening wildlife near Talbert Marsh, just 2 miles away from the channel work site.

Was this the start of another spill? County officials responded immediately to contain what was determined to be oil that had leaked from an abandoned line near Huntington Beach's Sowers Park when a contractor struck a nonpressurized line underground.

An emergency response team was assembled as representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Fish & Wildlife's Office of Spill Prevention and Response consulted with the county's Public Works Department to manage cleanup.

Stepping in to assist the effort were representatives from Chevron Corp., which initially owned and operated the now-abandoned pipe.

"As local pipeline experts with historical operating knowledge of the area, Chevron volunteered to participate in the unified command [response]," Public Works



Courtesy of California Department of Fish & Wildlife

A LIGHT SHEEN of oil can be seen gathering at a floating boom placed in the Talbert Channel in October 2022, after oil leaked from an abandoned pipeline. Orange County officials estimate the response cost \$1.8 million.

spokesman Shanon Widor wrote in an email Friday.

An oil-spill containment crew from Los Angeles-based Patriot Environmental Services was called to the scene, where members installed floating booms upstream and downstream of the sheen, from Indianapolis Avenue southward to Hamilton Avenue.

The section of the abandoned line that had been the source of the leak was excavated and capped to prevent further seepage, and remaining oil within the

line was removed.

Even after the work was complete, a county hazmat team conducted air monitoring while environmental staff were deployed to the site overnight to monitor conditions in and around the channel.

County officials, who are continuing to monitor the channel, estimate the total response cost \$1.8 million. However, when they reached out to Chevron to discuss remuneration for the cleanup effort, no real response was given.

The Orange County Board of Supervisors in November retained the services of Costa Mesa legal firm Ring Bender, LLC, whose attorneys successfully assisted the county in a lawsuit against Houston-based Amplify Energy following the October 2021 oil spill.

In a closed session meeting Tuesday, supervisors unanimously agreed to pursue litigation against Chevron and any other responsible parties for the cost of last year's work.

Supervisor Katrina Foley said leaders know, based on their experience from the Amplify spill, that the owner and operator of faulty infrastructure was liable for costs associated with pipeline removal, oil cleanup and other mitigation efforts.

"We requested Chevron reimburse taxpayers for this. [But] we have not heard from them. They didn't leave us a choice," Supervisor Katrina Foley said in an interview Thursday. "We don't think taxpayers should have to be responsible for a private oil company's pipelines."

The Talbert Channel is a tidally influenced flood control channel that runs downstream from the Fountain Valley Channel into the Talbert Marsh which, along with neighboring wetlands, provides a habitat and migratory rest stop for thousands of birds and other sensitive species.

Although the October 2022 incident was contained to the channel and did not result in any known impacts to wildlife at the marsh, Foley recognized its ecological significance, saying channel waters "need to be kept as clean as possible."

As of Friday, an official legal complaint had not yet been filed by the county's attorneys. Foley expressed hope some sort of agreement could be reached before matters went to court.

"Our goal is to work things out," she said Thursday. "Nobody wants to go to trial."

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MARKETS

Continued from page A1

to Europe, where laws don't prohibit the gathering of vendors on public streets, would tell you the same thing: Night markets are great. They're cheap, fun, and most importantly, you can smell and see the food you're about to eat being prepared in front of you. But for a long time, save for county fairs and the occasional festival, the night market concept barely existed in the U.S.

Enter 626 Night Market, which began in 2012 in the San Gabriel Valley. It recognized the pent-up demand and quickly became huge. These days the ticketed event brings in 100,000 attendees with more than 250 participating food, merchandise and craft vendors. Others like FoodieLand and Smorgasburg, both in multiple cities, have also tapped into the yearning for night markets.

But there are alternatives throughout O.C. And better yet, ones that eschew the cost of admission, parking fees and the exorbitantly high food prices often found at those ticketed events.

What follows is a round-up of four outdoor night markets in Orange County readers can experience this summer and beyond, encompassing Latin American, Asian, Middle Eastern and Southern California food cultures.

SANTA ANA DE NOCHE

Of the four night markets on this list, Santa Ana de Noche's origin is the most mysterious. The Instagram account @santaanadenoches has been dormant for more than a year. Messages I sent remain unanswered, but the first posted photo gives a clue to when it started. It announced an event held at the intersection of South Broadway and Central Avenue in September 2021 to celebrate Mexican Independence Day. Part of the original lineup included six vendors who offered churros, crepes, bacon-wrapped dogs and, of course, tacos.

But these days, if you looked up that address on Google maps, you'd notice a location marker labeled "El Centro," with several customer testimonials that attest the spot is now ground zero of a weekly night market to rival those in Latin America.

It's easy to imagine how the event might have evolved naturally in this habitat. Not far from its epicenter is a food truck parking lot where owners store their vehicles at night. And since the block — a secluded industrial area — has the perfect conditions for a night market to take root, it's conceivable that more and more trucks joined in until it became what it is today, with some even setting up tented dining areas.

Since Santa Ana de Noche is not a walled-off event, the more-than-a-dozen vendors that now line the edges of the thoroughfare do so while it's still kept open to vehicle traffic. The result is a careful but chaotic ballet of pedestrians, cars blaring music and the occasional vendor pushing a cart of Mexican-style gelatin desserts.

One of the most popular vendors, and an original participant of the 2021 event, is a truck called Cachanilla. It holds court prominently at the T-intersection. Under a tent, its *taquero*, the pastor of *al pastor*, conducts his street-side sermon over a sputtering hot griddle to an enraptured congregation. He flips his marinated meats, blesses them with sprinkles of a fiery seasoning blend, then chops them to bits with a cleaver. In a flurry of movement, he assembles his \$3 Tijuana-style tacos with a baptizing splash of salsa and smear of guacamole.

His are not the only tacos to be found. On another corner you hear the thwacking sounds of a cleaver chopping more *carne asada*. Next to that, you smell the steam escap-

ing the griddle of another taco stand mixing with the cinnamon sugar aromas of at least two churro trucks. But most importantly, everywhere you turn, you see everything you'll eat being cooked in front of you: from *sopes*, whose *masa* shells are fried fresh, to *tortas* oozing cheese. Eat your heart out, Taco Tuesday.

Where: At the intersection of South Broadway and Central Avenue in Santa Ana

When: Every evening from 7 p.m. to 2 a.m., with the biggest attendance of vendors on weekend nights

Instagram: @santaanadenoches

LITTLE SAIGON NIGHT MARKET

As Orange County Fairgoers look forward to another summer consuming their yearly allowance of funnel cakes and deep-fried Oreos, those who go to Little Saigon Night Market look forward to eating *banh trang nuong*, a sort of Vietnamese pizza made with grilled rice paper and dried shrimp, washing it down with freshly pressed sugar cane juice.

Held in the parking area in front of Asian Garden Mall in Westminster since its debut in 2011, with only 10 food vendors, Little Saigon Night Market has become an indelible part of the summer months for Orange County's Vietnamese community. There was a hiatus during the pandemic, but otherwise it has been held consistently every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. starting in mid-June to the first weekend in September.

Those new to the experience will find a visual, olfactory and aural overload. Enticing smells don't just emanate from the smoke-shrouded stalls grilling marinated pork skewers but also from vendors frying tiny pancakes called *banh khot* in dimpled pans and rows of shellfish roasting over flames on the half shell. Throughout the venue, the



Edwin Goi

COOKS PREPARE roasted corn and pork sticks at the Little Saigon Night Market.

competing cacophonies of a Vietnamese cover band and kids setting off firecrackers are inescapable. And this season, it's only gotten busier.

According to organizers, the event typically attracts around 2,000 people per night. But this year, they're seeing even more attendees, some of whom may or may not have been made aware of the event from an uptick of attention by TikTok and Instagram influencers.

Regardless of whether you are new to it or have been coming since the

beginning, there's something for everyone to eat. A vegetarian can munch on a potato tornado or roasted corn while the hardcore foodventurer can crack into *hot vin lon*, fetal duck egg eaten with salt, pepper and lime juice. But even an Anthony Bourdain-wanna-be might encounter unfamiliar delicacies here. What are those things steaming in the upright metal pipes? They're *banh ong*, fluffy, green-colored cylinders of cake made with rice flour and *pandan*. What's that sausage on a stick made of? It's called *nem nuong*,

cured pork flavor-packed with garlic and lemongrass.

And as the Little Saigon Night Market's popularity grows, so has the number of food vendors, which doubled since 2011. You can even have *pho* from Pho Akaushi, which prides itself on using the pricey Wagyu beef in its soups. And if you're wondering how practical a steaming container of pho would be while strolling a crowded night market, know that it's still less awkward than O.C. Fair's Maui chicken in a

See **Markets**, page A4

Segregated past marked in Westminster

Former students gathered at new Mendez Monument Park to recall a historic court case.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

When Socorro Perez told her grandchildren of how Orange County schools were segregated in the 1940s, preventing her and her Mexican friends and siblings from attending school with white children, they just didn't believe her.

"They say, 'Grandma, how can that be?'" Perez told a small crowd gathered at Mendez Monument Park on July 26.

Perez was joined by three other former students of the segregated school: Dolores Ponce, Luisa Hernandez and Frank Mendoza, on Tuesday to celebrate the decision in the historic Mendez vs. Westminster court case, an early precursor to the full desegregation of public schools in America. The four of them shared stories of their education and answered questions



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

FORMER WESTMINSTER City Councilman and school board member Sergio Contreras stands beside a reunion of former 17th Street School students Dolores Ponce, Socorro Perez, Frank Mendoza and Luisa Hernandez, from left, as they are presented with certificates of recognition and a class picture at the new Mendez Monument Park on Tuesday.

about what life was like back then.

Mendez Monument Park at 7371 Westminster Blvd.

was spearheaded by Sergio Contreras, executive director at United for Student Success at Orange County

United Way and a former Westminster City Council member and a school board member there in

2017.

"When we started this project, there was nothing depicting the case," said

Contreras. "I didn't learn about it until I was in my 20s."

Contreras hoped the park, which opened in December, would serve as a space for students across Orange County to learn about how far our public schools have come.

An exhibit displays a timeline of the case that starts with Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez fighting for their children's right to attend 17th Street School, a white school, rather than the "Mexican school," Hoover Elementary.

"Everything over there was state of the art," Perez said comparing the 17th Street School to Hoover.

Westminster Councilman Carlos Manzo and Mayor Chi Charlie Nguyen also attended the event. Manzo said Perez's grandchildren are not the only ones who find it hard to believe such a case happened so recently in Orange County's history.

"It was always sad for me growing up Latino and not

See *Past*, page A5

Grant helps kids pretend in Irvine while parents learn

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

A young shopper at Pretend City Children's Museum in Irvine tossed toy groceries into the toy shopping cart and pushed it toward the pretend supermarket check out. Another child typed away on a toy computer.

While the children played pretend, their parents learned thanks to a \$75,000 grant from the PNC Foundation to Pretend City that was used to host monthly early childhood development classes at the museum.

"We are immensely grateful to the PNC Foundation for this generous contribution, which has made a tremendous impact on the lives of many fam-



Patrice Smith

A CHILD PLAYS with a toy computer at Pretend City Children's Museum in Irvine during PNC's final Parent Education workshop on July 18.

ilies," said Carly Snyder, education manager of child development and outreach at Pretend City. "Through

this collaboration, we have been able to provide essential resources and create a supportive community

for parents and their children."

Pretend City is a Children's Museum designed for children to learn about the inner workings of a city in a sensory environment. Interactive exhibits include a beach and marina, construction site, cafe, farm, dentist and doctors' offices, a gas station, library, grocery store, a home, a UPS store and emergency services. The PNC Foundation is an entity from PNC Bank that supports local nonprofit organizations, and its grant made it possible for Pretend City to host two-hour monthly classes for six months in partnership with local nonprofits like MOMS OC, Orangewood Foundation and Inland Empire Families.

Besides the monthly classes, participating families also received free meals during the classes, assistance with transportation to the program in the form of gas cards or complimentary Uber rides and access to Pretend City Children's Museum.

On July 18, 20 families from MOMS OC attended the final Parent Education workshop, which focused on early childhood education.

"Children could come to Pretend City while parents were getting educated and do a lot of pretend play," said Gabriela Velasco, infant development specialist at MOMS OC.

MOMS OC programs aim to combat challenges created by poverty, lack of

health insurance and barriers to care for local mothers, by offering assistance during pregnancy, as well as following birth. Velasco taught "Mommy and Me" classes at Pretend City in both English and Spanish.

"Our vision was for our families to get early intervention and have more resources," said Velasco.

Participating families felt the impact of the early childhood development education.

"As a first-time parent, this program has helped me understand the milestones my son should be achieving," said one parent from MOMS OC. "We are so grateful for the opportunity to participate, receive edu-

See *Grant*, page A5

MARKETS

Continued from page A2

pineapple bowl.

Where: Asian Garden Mall at 9200 Bolsa Avenue in Westminster

When: Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. from June 16 through Sept. 3.

Instagram: @asiangardenmall

WEEKEND NIGHT MARKET

If you like the O.C. Fair but don't like paying the O.C. Fair admission or fighting the O.C. Fair traffic, Weekend Night Market is for you. Compared to the others on this list, the food and music you'll encounter are the most in tune with mainstream tastes. Think burgers. Think barbecue. Think funnel cakes while a live cover band belts out classic rock.

Weekend Night Market was started by organizer Christy Pardini, who had been running Bixby Knoll's popular Uptown Village Market for years. She and her Long Beach-based all-female team began their inaugural Weekend Night Market event back in 2019. The Long Beach market still occurs every Thursday at the Promenade, but they've since expanded by rotating the event to four Orange County cities every month this summer.

The Huntington Beach night market is held the first Friday of the month at Golden West College's parking lot. The Mission Viejo night market occurs every third Saturday. The Los Alamitos event takes place every second Saturday. And the one in Tustin — mostly an arts-and-crafts event with games and a beer garden — happens every third Thursday.

What you find at all the Weekend Night Market events is the laid-back attitude of a tailgate party and an ever-changing theme. The one in Huntington Beach tends to be the most food-focused and is marketed as H.B. Foodie Friday. The last occurrence on July 7 featured barbecue from a vendor called S&E's Food Team, which served ribs, pulled pork and brisket to an eager crowd.

At the food-truck-gathering, at least two *loncheras* offered tacos of every kind, and another truck tendered Hawaiian shave ice. Other vendors set up their cooking equipment under tents, like the gentleman steaming his "best in town" tamales in huge



Photos by Edwin Goei

A TAMALE VENDOR readies an order at the Weekend Night Market in Huntington Beach, which last took place on July 7.

pots. Next to him, a burger vendor sizzled his cheese-topped patties on a flat-top.

This isn't to say you won't find something exotic that will delight or beguile. A company called Aro Chili, which sells bottled Asian chili oil, set up shop at the July 7 event to offer a variety of dumplings crisped up in a pan. Flavors ranged from a Korean barbecue beef to an Indian-inspired dumpling filled with spiced potato. They charged \$10 for six pieces, which were liberally dolloped with drips of chili oil as an enticement to buy a whole jar.

The next H.B. Foodie Friday event on Aug. 4 will highlight desserts. How sweet will that be?

Where: Various locations, including Huntington Beach at Golden West College; Mission Viejo at North Paseo; Los Alamitos at 10932 Pine Street and Tustin at the District

When: 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., first Friday of the month for Huntington Beach; third Saturday of the

month for Mission Viejo; second Saturday of the month for Los Alamitos; third Thursday of the month for Tustin

Instagram: @weekend_night_market

ISLAMIC NIGHT MARKET HOSTED BY MUSLIM YOUTH OF ORANGE COUNTY

The Muslim Youth of Orange County had an immediate hit on its hands when it hosted its first night market earlier this year for Ramadan. Held at the back of the Islamic Center of Anaheim, it attracted over 4,000 people from the community who came to break their fast with halal food, drinks and desserts from 14 different vendors. There were lines upon lines to enter the event, which started at 10 p.m. and went on to the wee hours of 4 in the morning.

In fact, Ramadan Night Market was so successful, the organizers realized that for their next night market — an Islamic New Year



SIDRA MOBIN, left, and Sinthia Alam, with AptBOB x Paani Phus-ka, offer a dish of phuska at the Islamic Night Market at Portola Middle School in Orange, which was sponsored by the Muslim Youth of Orange County.

celebration — they needed to find a venue with more space than the Islamic Center's tiny lot.

They decided on Portola Middle School in Orange. Its basketball courts would hold all the food vendors, which now ballooned to about 30 sellers. And its sports field would provide enough breathing room for all the rest they had planned, which included carnival games, a henna tattoo station, shopping tents, a supercar show, exhibits and a live concert at sunset.

Admission would be free for early registrants but \$5 online a few days before the event and at the door.

And when it happened on Saturday, July 22, there were indeed space to spare and more food choices than the original Ramadan Night Market. A Chinese vendor offered bao buns with cute pig faces but without the pork filling (it was red bean). Mi Hibachi, a West Covina-based food truck specializing in 100% halal teppanyaki, slung fried rice with steak, chicken and shrimp.

There were tacos using halal meat and halal burgers. A Mexican Muslim woman sold tamales under a tent labeled "Halal Tamal." Those who know and love the Indian snack called *pani puri* found a vendor who sold them under the name of "phuska." But there was Middle Eastern fare, such as wraps with

soujouk sausage, and Turkish sand coffee boiled in ornate vessels heated by hot sand.

The most popular vendor by far was Kababji Grill, a brick-and-mortar Lebanese restaurant from Anaheim's Little Arabia District, which set up a coal pit to roast *kafta* (seasoned ground beef) and *tawook* (marinated chicken). Its heady smoke attracted attendees to buy a wrap for \$9.99 or a plate for \$17.99, which included two portions of the roasted tender meat, rice, onion, tomato and a swirl of hummus.

At sunset, groups bowed in prayer as a man sang over the loudspeaker. Later, when the darkness of night settled in, fireworks lit up the sky.

It remains to be seen whether the organizers will move ahead with plans to hold another night market on Sept. 16 to commemorate the birth of the prophet Muhammad. Or whether they will do just one night or four when Ramadan comes around again next year. In the meantime, you can follow @myoc4u on Instagram to be kept abreast of updates.

Where and when: Check Muslim Youth of Orange County's Instagram for the location, date and time of its next night market.

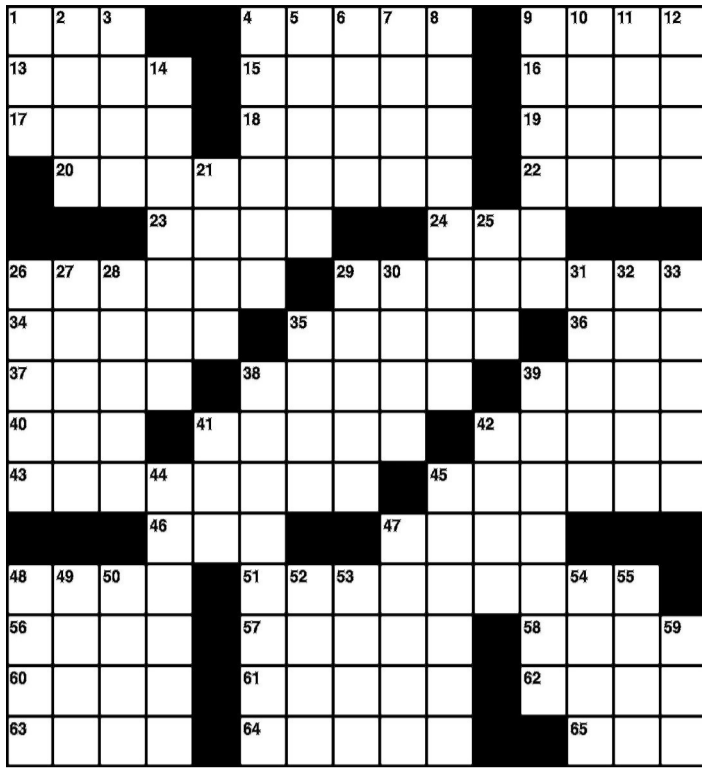
Instagram: @myoc4u

Edwin Goei is a contributor to Times Community News.

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Matthews

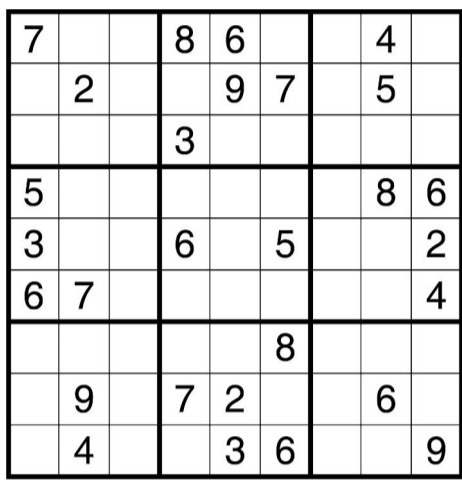
- ACROSS**
 1 TV's "Chicago _"
 4 Wall board
 9 Matterhorn's range
 13 Zealous
 15 Make amends
 16 Occupy the throne
 17 Queen Margrethe II, for one
 18 Orange peels
 19 Opposite of slack
 20 Inane
 22 Embraces
 23 Mouthwash flavor
 24 Part of a univ.'s web address
 26 Leaning
 29 Pet birds
 34 Smug smile
 35 Cautiously shrewd
 36 Elected official: abbr.
 37 Lyme disease transmitter
 38 Prepared for a selfie
 39 Put on the payroll
 40 Variety; sort
 41 Cruise stops
 42 Sink
 43 Answers
 45 Like TV dinner potatoes
 46 Strange
 47 "Bonanza" role
 48 Stylish
 51 Incorrect
 56 Pull hard
 57 Cut of beef
 58 Cut short
 60 Web surfer's stop
 61 One of the planets
 62 Fuzzy fruit
 63 Horse's gait
 64 Treat a wound
 65 90 degrees



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.



For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A7.

- from ENE
DOWN
 1 Angry
 2 Gabor's namesakes
 3 Eat
 4 Mom or dad
 5 Inclined

- 6 Nary a one
 7 Concludes
 8 Decreased
 9 Godfrey or Ashe
 10 Outdoor meal
 11 Sink stopper
 12 _ out; begins a journey

- 14 European nation
 21 Go under
 25 Dawn to dusk
 26 Up and at 'em
 27 Photographer's directive
 28 Tastes a lollipop
 29 Throws
 30 Eons
 31 March 17 merrymakers
 32 Mysterious
 33 Buy stuff
 35 Drape puller
 38 Contemplated
 39 Leg rest
 41 Group of whales
 42 Pedestal
 44 Place for loose change
 45 Calendar pages
 47 Party-givers
 48 Atypical sac
 49 Head covering
 50 Two _ four is two
 52 Laugh loudly
 53 Infrequent
 54 Author Leon
 55 Piglet moms
 59 Sweet dessert

Tribune Media Services



FRANK MENDOZA points to himself in a class picture from 1944 as sculptor Ignacio Gomez takes a photograph.

Don Leach | Staff Photographer

PAST

Continued from page A4

learning about this case until later in life," said Manzo. "That to me is sad that this is not more common knowledge."
 The 1947 case, which saw five Mexican American families challenge school segregation, predated the 1954 landmark Supreme Court decision in Brown vs. Board of Education, which ruled separate but equal educational facilities unconstitutional.
 The park features two statues by sculptor Ignacio Gomez, one of the Men-

dez parents and the second of two schoolchildren holding books, meant to represent the 5,000 children in the class action case.
 Contreras said while it is important to celebrate how far California schools have come, there is still much work to do to achieve equity for students in O.C.
 "The fight still continues as we continue to build equity for all students in Orange County," said Contreras. "Whether that is college readiness or career readiness. The struggle continues."
 The park also features a

black-and-white photograph of the four former students and their classmates in front of the segregated school in 1946.
 "That's me," Mendoza said. "The most handsome one."
 At the end of the program, the four former students were each presented with their own framed copy of the photo.
 As she smiled for the cameras with her photo, Perez quipped:
 "Now my grandchildren will have to believe me."
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GRANT

Continued from page A4

educational opportunities and be part of the museum."
 The grant to Pretend City is part of PNC's Grow Great initiative, which focuses on preparing children from ages birth to 5 years old. Since launching in 2004, Grow Great has supported nearly 8 million children with programs like the ones at Pretend City.
 "Supporting Pretend City Children's Museum and its programs for Orange County and Inland Empire families is exactly how PNC operates in the communities we serve," said Denise Scott, PNC client and community relations director for Orange County-Inland Empire in a statement. "For nearly two



Patrice Smith

FAMILIES FROM MOMS OC participate in PNC Parent Education Workshops at Pretend City Children's Museum.

decades, we have championed high-quality, early childhood education through our PNC Grow Up Great initiative, and we're pleased to work with a mission-aligned organization like Pretend City."

The funding helped Pretend City and the nonprofit partners reach a total of 70 families.
 sarah.mosqueda@latimes.com
 Twitter: @SarahNMos

The Bungalow Tastes of the Summer Season Menu

Join Us Monday-
Thursdays For a
Special 3 Course
Summer Menu For
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The Bungalow Tastes of the Summer Season
\$50 per guest, three courses included

FIRST COURSE SELECTIONS
select one

<p>Corn Chowder Fresh corn, Applewood smoked bacon</p> <p>Bungalow Salad Greens, hearts of palm, olives, feta, red onion, bay shrimp, tarragon vinaigrette</p>	<p>Classic Caesar Salad Chopped hearts of romaine, herb croutons, tomato, shaved Manchego</p> <p>Strawberry Summer Salad Baby spinach, fresh strawberries, goat cheese, toasted pecans, raspberry vinaigrette</p>
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ENTRÉE SELECTIONS
select one

<p>Prime Filet Mignon 8 oz. prime filet mignon, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, fried shallots</p> <p>California Chicken Breast Pan-seared chicken breast, oven-roasted tomatoes, avocado, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes</p> <p>Miso-Marinated Chilean Sea Bass Soy glaze, coconut rice, stir-fried vegetables, mushrooms, lemongrass ginger beurre blanc</p>	<p>Bone-In Rib Eye 16 oz. prime bone-in rib eye, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, fried onion strings (Twenty Dollar Supplement)</p> <p>Blackened Scottish Salmon Roasted corn and avocado salad, chimichurri sauce</p> <p>Double Pork Chop Thick-cut grilled all natural pork chop, creamy caramelized onion barley risotto, creamed kale, sherry sauce</p> <p>Australian Lobster Tail 10 oz. drawn butter, grilled lemon, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes (Fifteen Dollar Supplement)</p>
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DESSERT
select one

<p>New York-Style Cheesecake Fresh whipped cream, raspberry coulis</p> <p>Vanilla Crème Brûlée Vanilla custard, fresh raspberries</p>	<p>Peach Cobbler A La Mode Vanilla bean ice cream, whipped cream, caramel sauce</p> <p>Berries & Ice Cream Fresh seasonal berries, vanilla bean ice cream</p>
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20% Gratuity will be added to parties of eight or more.
A 3% processing fee will be added to all credit card transactions. For guests that choose to pay with cash, the 3% fee will be waived.
*Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase your risk of food-borne illness.



forum

COMMENTARY | SARAH MOSQUEDA

Taco María, a restaurant that felt like home

I came to Taco María in Costa Mesa at a formative time in life, almost accidentally. I was 29, a reporter sent to film chef and owner Carlos Salgado making guacamole, a unique interpretation that included concord grapes. The short video was to accompany a review written by the resident food critic at the magazine I was working for at the time. I returned to try the food for myself with my Mexican parents, and we left impressed. A few months later, looking for a part-time gig to supplement my entry-level income, I answered a help-wanted ad at Taco María for a server. It was 2014.

This week, Taco María announced it would close its doors on July 29. As one of the three Michelin-starred restaurants in Orange County, the restaurant's absence will leave a hole in the county's culinary landscape. It will also leave a hole in my heart.

I worked at Taco María as a server for three years, and although I worked my last shift there as full-time employee in 2016, I returned often to have dinner or to fill in as a back server when someone called out.

Many things set Taco María apart from the other restaurants I worked at before. Each night before service, after family meal had been put away and lineup was over, the few minutes staff had to dim the lights and turn on the music were electric. When the door was unlocked and the first table was seated, a controlled energy imbued the room that wouldn't subside until the last ticket was stabbed.

And then there was the food. Taco María became known for many dishes: Aguachile. Duck Mole. Mushroom Chorizo. Taco María served the best fish taco I have ever had in my life, and it remains the standard by which all subsequent fish tacos have been measured: beer-battered black cod on a handmade blue corn tortilla slicked with burnt scallion aioli and topped with lime-dressed cabbage and usually some kind of seasonal fruit. It was a



Josie Elle Photography

SARAH MOSQUEDA and Ryan Garlitos outside Taco María, where the couple first met.

masterpiece.

What I will miss more than the dining experience and the food however, is the work environment Salgado and his wife and general manager Emilie Coulson Salgado cultivated.

Professionally, the standards were high. A certain level of integrity was expected from every employee and a level of care for the job we did, whether grilling meat or making tortillas or polishing wine glasses or washing dishes. We strove to work at the caliber of a Michelin-star restaurant, even though at the time Michelin didn't give stars in Orange County. I learned about sourcing ingredients responsibly. My eyes were opened to the many ways my Latinx culture was consistently devalued by a society that believed tacos should cost a dollar. Food became political. We were given the day off to vote. I was compensated well and even moved into a new tax bracket. Emilie taught me how to make granola. Lessons in hospitality stretched beyond the dining room and served me in my life outside the restaurant.

Personally, I learned to be proud of the Mexican food I grew up eating. I felt connected to my cultural



Sarah Mosqueda

ONE CARNITAS and one fish taco, served on handmade blue corn tortillas at Taco María.

identity in a way I never had before. A Pulitzer-prize winning writer, a Chicano studies professor and many famous chefs dined at Taco María, and I had the opportunity to meet them all. My co-workers became friends, and those friends became family. I fell in love. I met my husband, Ryan Garlitos, a sous chef with Taco María since the food truck days. We took our engagement photos at the restaurant because it made more sense to us and our story than a beach or field at sunset.

When we learned of Taco María's closing, my husband remarked that it

felt like learning your parents had sold your childhood home. A home can be more than a house or more than the place you live. Home is where you feel the most like the best version of yourself.

The Salgados have assured diners they will reopen in a new location that feels more like a proper fit than the tiny restaurant at SoCo ever did. While I look forward to the new space wherever it ends up, for me Taco María always felt like home.

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MAILBAG



Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

A READER SUGGESTS capping the 55 Freeway as a way to create more building space for facilities like the Emergency Operations Center proposed in Costa Mesa.

Residential neighborhood not a good place for the EOC

In response to the Daily Pilot article of May 2, "Local leaders weigh in on state plan for Costa Mesa's Fairview Developmental Center": There is a way for the city to get all of the Fairview property for housing and amenities and, by so doing, take a big step toward meeting the state of California housing mandate the city must plan and zone for. The idea is to create a more appropriate industrial-type area for the state's planned Emergency Operations Center by capping a nearby portion of the SR-55 freeway. The cap would be at grade level, and would be, in essence, a very wide version of the existing bridges over the freeway that connect east and west Costa Mesa.

The EOC's planned helipad and 10-story lattice tower festooned with two-story whip antennas are not well-suited for a residential neighborhood like that planned for the Fairview property. So, it makes sense to site the EOC elsewhere in the city to forestall reasonable NIMBY political fights.

The state, in turn, could have quick freeway access and keep the components of its planned EOC together for optimal convenience in an emergency. Further, importantly, it would not have to compromise design because of adjacent residences.

Freeway capping has been around for some

time. Cities have capped portions of their freeways. For example, Dallas built the 5.2-acre Klyde Warren Park above its recessed Woodall Rodgers Freeway.

The 55 Freeway in Costa Mesa is ideal for capping because so much of it is recessed. That is, the pavement and shoulders of the freeway are significantly below grade level of the surrounding city streets. This recession allows the supporting substructure for the cap to be simpler, thus minimizing design and construction costs.

Dozens of cities have built caps like this. The caps' uses range from parks to office buildings to convention centers.

This capping concept that creates more buildable "land" might open up even more possibilities in Costa Mesa. For example, if the city capped more of the recessed 55 within its boundaries, it would create acres of buildable space "out of thin air," so to speak. This new "land" could be used for not only the state's EOC but also for other uses such as a park, other civic uses, industrial/commercial businesses, and a wildlife corridor to connect the Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve to the nature parks and preserves in the Santa Ana River estuary in Costa Mesa.

Tom Egan
Costa Mesa

MOMENTS

Continued from page A1

pac Shakur and Linkin Park, can be found displayed throughout the building. Artist likenesses and larger-than-life reproductions of album covers fill the halls.

Joy Feuer, the co-founder and curator of the exhibit, said future plans for the exhibit will be announced at a later date.

"The reason we love this model is we wanted the collection to be seen," Feuer said. "This is all about its second life. These are the original works that hung in all these iconic locations from the late 1980s to about the mid-2000s. They haven't been seen until now, so they're being seen for the first time at the Orange County Fair.

"We love that it's part of the fair admission, so people who come to the fair, they can come in and out of the exhibit multiple times while they're visiting the fair. They come back again. We love it because it's inclusive. It's all family, it's all ages. We're watching people have what I love to call musical meltdown moments almost every corner of the show."

As one works through the maze, they also recognize various industry elements incorporated into the creation of the exhibit. Stacks of instrument cases are lying about, and stage lighting comes down from the ceiling, shining colorful



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

VETERAN JASON PONDEXTER poses in front of a mural of Tupac Shakur in the Art of Music Experience.

and creative designs on the floor while music plays in the background.

Feuer, who worked in the music industry for 17 years with EMI Music and Capitol Records, had hoped to create an experience that would lead to music lovers sharing their own stories. Those elements are part of that, but it also places an emphasis on the relationships of the musical artists and those who created the visual gateway between their soulful songs and the public.

"The way that we put the framework of this collection together was to focus on the backstory, the stories about the album cover art, the creators of the album cover art," Feuer said. "It's about the art directors, the graphic designers, the illustrators, the photographers, people that don't always get the lime-light in the wake of these

iconic covers, but they were integral to creating them.

"Oftentimes band members are very involved in creating their art. Some are even involved in creating the font that's on an album cover, so we really want to share that intersection."

Interactive experiences can be found throughout the Art of Music Experience. Music lovers can rank their top 10 album covers, have caricature portraits created, and a face painting and glitter station can get them ready for the show.

There are documentary videos playing in a couple of corners. There is also a station where the oversized album covers are being created in real time. Scotty Roller, a graphic artist and illustrator and the founder of 714 Creative, finished an 8-foot square reproduction of the Foo Fighters' "But Here We Are" album cover on Thursday. The band's



GUESTS WALK by Frank Sinatra's trademark wink in the Art of Music Experience at the O.C. Fair on Thursday.

11th studio album was just released in June.

An Orange County native who graduated from Valencia High in 1989, Roller said his start was creating a flier for a house party that a punk rock band was playing at. For as big as the music industry is, he said it acts like a small community. Everyone knows everybody.

Intermittently, he would receive requests for work based on his past creations. About 15 years ago, he said he threw himself fully into creating gig posters, which led to album covers, T-shirt designs, backdrops and more.

"There are people, young and old, that didn't realize what went into creating not only the covers themselves, but then the advertising aspect of recreating those covers and painting them in such a large scale so that they could help promote and sell those records once they were made," Roller

said. "Once they see me and the other three artists painting and what it actually takes, then they get a whole new appreciation for what the process was, what it is, and it makes them look at it different."

Rand Foster, the owner of Fingerprints Music in Long Beach, said he had a longstanding working relationship with Feuer. They would collaborate on promotional events when Feuer worked on the marketing side of the music industry.

When the chance came up to have a pop-up store inside the exhibit, Foster was uncertain if it would be successful. In what has acted as the perfect storm, the environment has proved stimulating for music collectors. Foster has been pleasantly surprised, referring to it as an "oasis" from traditional fair offerings.

"In my mind, I was like, 'I don't know. Are people

going to want to carry records around at the fair?' Foster said. "It's a lot of activity, it's a lot of hot, it's a lot of bumping into things. I was like, 'I just don't know that that's the best environment to have a fairly expensive bag of records under your arm.' We kind of came into it feeling like, 'Well, it will be a good showcase for the store. We can show people what we have, and it will be kind of [a] promotion.'

"The first day we were here, we realized that one of the vendors who sells little air-conditioning towers gives you a free dolly with purchase, and we saw people pushing around air conditioners. I was like, 'Oh, they're going to buy records.'"

Foster filled the pop-up shop with vinyl records. Featured among the selections was the music of Taylor Swift, whose Eras Tour has dominated headlines in the music and entertainment world this summer.

"Taylor moves the needle, and she has completely energized an entirely different part of the consumer base," Foster said, explaining that Swift is driving a revival for CDs. "... We were teenage kids hanging out in a record store, and I know that feeling of that kid coming in going, 'Oh, I hope they have Taylor Swift.' I know that feeling. I certainly want to make sure that we're a place for that."

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Fresh foods nonprofit partners with gridiron giant

BY MATT SZABO

Davante Adams projects as a high pick in fantasy football drafts in the upcoming weeks.

The Las Vegas Raiders receiver, a six-time Pro Bowl selection, had 100 receptions for 1,516 yards and a league-best 14 touchdowns last season.

But Steve Brazeel hopes the choice that Adams himself recently made will help bring awareness to production of a different kind.

Brazeel is the founder of Newport Beach-based Project FoodBox, which routes farm fresh fruits and vegetables from farmers to nonprofits, food banks, faith-based organizations and others throughout the western United States.

Brazeel said Project FoodBox was born out of the United States Department of Agriculture's now-defunct "Farmers to Families" food box program, which launched in 2020 to try to offset food insecurity caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

More than 4.5 million food boxes have shipped, resulting in more than 73 million meals. And Adams is now on board.

Adams visited Three Square Food Bank in Las Vegas on July 21, meeting with employees and members of the community and helping to stock and distribute fresh produce. He announced that he will feature Project FoodBox as his chosen cause and beneficiary for the NFL's "My Cause My Cleats" initiative.

Adams will personally help design special cleats



Courtesy of Project FoodBank

WIDE RECEIVER Davante Adams, who grew up in East Palo Alto, helps sort produce at a local food bank in Las Vegas. Adams named Project FoodBox for California and Nevada Food Banks his beneficiary for the NFL's annual "My Cleats My Cause" initiative, which supports community causes important to players.

featuring Project FoodBox and wear them in a designated game this season.

"Where I grew up, we didn't always have access to the things you need to maintain a healthy lifestyle," said Adams, a native of the Bay Area's East Palo Alto, in a statement. "I'm in a really fortunate position now to be able to help address those disparities. I believe everyone deserves nutritious, fresh foods, and programs like Project

FoodBox make that possible."

Brazeel is also the founder and chief executive of Project FoodBox's parent company, SunTerra Produce Traders, as well as Elevated Foods. He was introduced to Adams through a mutual friend.

He said Project FoodBox really struck a chord with Adams.

"We're incredibly excited to partner with Davante to really create awareness of

the work that these food bank partners are doing, to shine a light on it," Brazeel said. "We're obviously over-the-moon excited to see what kind of cleats that

Davante and his team design, excited to see the unboxing here in a couple of months."

Project FoodBox has worked with more than 100

farmers so far to purchase produce, Brazeel said, rather than having food donated.

"We have this bounty of fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown in California every day of the year, and we've figured out a way to partner with these farmers to create equal access to these farm fresh fruits and vegetables in all of our communities," he said.

The success has led Brazeel to seek other ways to help out locally. He said Project FoodBox, which works with dozens of food bank partners, has also pivoted its operations to participate in a medically tailored grocery box program in Orange County.

That's through a partnership with CalOptima, which handles the Medi-Cal population in the county.

Brazeel said the program will soon expand to five other counties in Southern California, delivering healthy fresh fruit and vegetables as a covered benefit to each one.

"We're super-excited that we have these multiple points of entry to bring healthy, fresh fruits and vegetables to all of our communities," he said.

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FLOAT

Continued from page A1

estimating it will receive about \$6.7 million in funding in 2024.

"The Tournament of Roses has always had a long history with the city of Newport Beach, and there was a partnership where ... for a number of years, we took the royal court down there for a weekend," said Steve Perry, float entries chair for the Tournament of Roses, in a recent interview. "It seemed like a good fit when I saw Visit Newport Beach trying to do an ad for people to visit. We have other sponsors, and it was 'Let's see if Newport Beach would be interested in putting a float in the parade to show all the great wonderful things that are available.'"

"What better way to reach more people than be in the Rose Parade with our international viewing over 40 million people?" he continued. "Local, national — well if it's going to [be seen in] London, and Tokyo, why not come to Pasadena?"

Newport Beach will be one of a number of California city floats featured during the parade New Year's Day. That list, as of earlier this summer, includes La Cañada Flintridge, Sierra Madre, Downey, South Pasadena, Burbank, Alhambra and Torrance. Florida's Fort Lauderdale will also be participating.

Sherwin said officials from the Tournament reached out in March to gauge Newport Beach interest.

"I think when we were in the parade in 2006, we saw it as a one-time-only deal because it was part of the centennial celebration, but not as a long-term relationship," Sherwin said.

After meeting with Perry, the organization decided to reestablish its relationship with the Tournament of Roses, he said.

Newport Beach's float will be built by Phoenix Decorating Co. in Irwindale. Sherwin said the company is capable of "turn-keying" the float and having it ready to go, but that Newport Beach & Co. is considering having a community day in late Decem-

ber when residents can drop by the builder's warehouse to help put flowers on the float.

"Whether or not we have two people or 50, the float will be done, and Phoenix Decorating will make sure it gets done," Sherwin said.

By that point, the float should be mostly completed. Much of the welding for the "super structures" is expected to be begin in August and completed by October. The seeds, vegetation and floral elements are added just before the Jan. 1 date of the parade to keep them fresh.

Sherwin notes participation is not a city project but one the tourism marketing agency is undertaking on behalf of Newport Beach.

"People love the Rose Parade. The reason the Rose Parade was created was to sell homes and promote tourism. It was started by the Valley Hunt Club way

back when, and they wanted to have a parade on New Year's Day to show how glorious the weather and lifestyle was in Southern California, so people would move, start businesses or visit," said Sherwin. "While people were freezing on the East Coast, they'd look at all these floats and the weather in California.

"This was over 100 years ago, and it was a very different world back then, but ... it's a chance to affiliate with something that helps promote our lifestyle and our weather and who we are and be a part of an international phenomenon — when we do marketing for the Christmas Boat Parade, I look to the Rose Parade a lot for inspiration. To be officially in it is especially meaningful, I think."

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Sweetgreen branches into Orange County

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

In spite of the 90-degree weather, diners lined up outside Sweetgreen in Irvine on July 18 to get the first taste of the popular seasonal salad and bowl concept.

The Los Angeles-based fast-casual restaurant is branching out in Southern California with the opening its first Orange County location at Irvine Spectrum Center.

"We are thrilled to finally be opening here in Orange County," Sweetgreen co-founder Nicolas Jammet said on the morning of Irvine's grand opening. "It is an incredible community, and we are thrilled to be opening our doors here."

Sweetgreen was conceived as a way to bridge the gap between inexpensive but unhealthy fast food and nutritious but pricey quick meals, by Jammet and partners Jonathan Neman and Nathaniel Ru. In 2007, the three recent college graduates launched Sweetgreen, which prioritizes organic, quality ingredients, fresh produce and relationships with farms and purveyors.

"We spend a lot of time making sure that we source our ingredients really thoughtfully," said Jammet.

Local suppliers for Sweetgreen Irvine Spectrum include Dynasty Farm, which provides kale, Coke Farm, which provides summer squash, zucchini, cabbage and red beets, and Frog Hollow Farm, the source of seasonal peaches used on the peaches and goat cheese salad, which is served over kale with cucumbers, mint, basil and roasted almonds in a balsamic vinaigrette.

A chalkboard at the Irvine location lists produce and condiments being served that day and the farms and purveyors they come from, like carrots from Karn Ridge Farm and goat cheese from Drakes Farm.

"We are proud to be expanding within our current home state of California, giving us even more opportunities to work with the incredible partners who provide the fresh ingredients that we use in our restaurants every day," said Neman.

Sweetgreen also collaborates with other well-known brands to create limited-edition offerings.



Photos by Sarah Mosqueda

SWEETGREEN IN Irvine has a core menu of seasonal salads and warm bowls, with additional locations planned for Tustin and Huntington Beach.

The honey barbecue sauce, for example, was created in collaboration with chef Charlie McKenna of Lillie's Q in Chicago, and used in the BBQ chicken, made up of blackened chicken, shredded cabbage, red onions, tomatoes, apples, cilantro, tortilla chips, chopped romaine and shredded kale, served with green goddess ranch and, of course, honey barbecue sauce.

For the grand opening in Irvine, popular local coffee shop Coffee Dose Cafe provided complimentary coffee from its mobile cart, and Peaches Floral hosted a build-your-own-bouquet flower bar. In addition, for every meal sold on opening day, Sweetgreen donated a meal to Food Finders, a nonprofit that coordinates the daily pick-up of surplus food for trans-

portation directly to nonprofit partners or for distribution to those experiencing food insecurity.

Two more Sweetgreen locations are set to open in Orange County before year's end.

"We have Tustin coming soon and Huntington Beach, which we are really excited about," said Jammet.

Sweetgreen Tustin is expected to open in late summer/early fall at 15090 Kensington Park, while the Huntington Beach location will join the lineup at 5 Points Plaza at 18685-7 Main St.

"And we are continuing to expand up and down the coast," Jammet said. "We just opened one in San Diego a week ago."

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SWEETGREEN OPENED its first O.C. restaurant at the Irvine Spectrum.

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