

Daily Pilot

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James Carbone

ATTORNEY MORGAN STEWART, center, represents former patients of Dr. William Moore Thompson IV who allege they were sexually assaulted while under his care. Stewart discussed a civil suit against Thompson and Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian on Thursday.

Civil suit targets Hoag, doctor accused of assault

Attorneys file suit on behalf of 75 alleged victims of Dr. William Moore Thompson IV, a general practitioner accused of sexually assaulting male patients.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Several former patients of Dr. William Thompson IV, who is facing multiple charges of sexual assault, described him as someone they trusted without question during a news conference Thursday announcing a civil lawsuit has been filed in Orange County Superior Court against Thompson and Hoag Hospital. Julio Hernandez, one of the plaintiffs who

spoke during the media event held in Irvine, called the doctor a "wolf in sheep's clothing."

Many of the 73 men represented in the suit said they sought out Thompson's care for infectious conditions or for his services as a primary care doctor.

Other alleged victims said they received treatment from him by circumstance — emergency room visits they said went awry when Thompson allegedly subjected them to what they felt were excessive and invasive tests.

All were in agreement that they came out of their time with Thompson feeling the same way: that they could not trust doctors, and that it would be a long time before they would find one that they could trust again.

They also maintain that the hospital Thompson was affiliated with — Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian — was culpable.

On his website, which is no longer live, Thompson described himself as someone who could provide "general practitioner services to the LGBTQ community."

Complaints of Thompson's behavior were investigated by the California Department of Consumer Affairs and the Newport Beach Police Department and he was arrested on Sept. 20, 2023. At the time, he was charged with sexually assaulting nine male patients between 2016 and 2020 under the pretense of "necessary" medical examinations by the Or-

See **Suit**, page A4

Vision for equine center set in C.M.

BY SARA CARDINE

Hands-on equine experiences and exhibits, regional horse shows, therapy sessions and public visiting hours — operators of the Orange County fairgrounds' Equestrian Center are beginning to craft a new vision for the decades-old facility.

Orange County Fair & Event Center officials on Thursday presented ideas for future programming that may take place on the 7-acre parcel, which has histori-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

OC FAIR & Event Center officials plan to redesign programming at the fairgrounds' Equestrian Center.

See **Equine**, page A2

Costa Mesa weighs blueprint of affordable housing ordinance

BY SARA CARDINE

In Costa Mesa — where the average cost of a two-bedroom rental rose from \$1,630 in 2012 to roughly \$2,850 in 2022 — residents and city leaders agree more affordable housing is needed.

But exactly how to get there remains to be seen, as officials continue to work out the details of an inclusionary housing ordinance that would potentially require new residential developments to set aside units for low-income tenants or pay in-lieu fees to fund other housing projects.

The city's planning commission recently recommended a draft ordinance for consideration by the Costa Mesa City Council, which considered the matter last week. Commissioners in December

suggested affordability requirements be applied to only projects of 2 acres or more that contain at least 60 dwelling units per acre, meaning it would take 120 units to trigger the provisions of the ordinance.

The commission further recommended projects with a density of 60 or more units-per-acre would need to dedicate either 10% of the total units for low-income tenants earning 80% or less of Orange County's \$127,800 area median income or 5% for very-low income tenants who earn 50% of that income level.

Several affordable housing advocates on Tuesday decried the 2-acre trigger, claiming it set the bar for affordability too high.

See **Housing**, page A2



File Photo

HIVE LIVE, a proposed 1,050-unit residential project for Costa Mesa's Susan Street. If the city approves an inclusionary housing ordinance it will apply to Hive Live.

'Trying case' ends in murder verdict

Jury finds Marcus Anthony Eriz guilty in 2021 freeway shooting that killed Costa Mesa 6-year-old Aiden Mesa.

BY ANDREW TURNER

A Costa Mesa man was convicted of murder on Thursday in connection with a freeway shooting that killed a 6-year-old boy in 2021.

Marcus Anthony Eriz, 26, was found guilty of second-degree murder and shooting at an occupied motor vehicle, both felonies, and sentencing enhancements for discharging a firearm causing death.

Eriz faces 40 years to life in prison. A sentencing hearing has been scheduled for April 12.

Eriz and his girlfriend, Wynne Lee, were arrested as suspects in a vehicle-to-vehicle shooting along the 55 Freeway in Orange that resulted in the death of Aiden Leos. The Eriz trial began with opening statements on Jan. 18, and closing arguments were heard on Wednesday.

Lee, who is standing trial separately, faces a felony charge of accessory after the fact, as well as a misdemeanor for having a concealed firearm in a vehicle. Authorities have said she was driving the car from which Eriz fired the fatal shot. She could face up to three years in state prison and one year in the county jail, if convicted on all charges.

"If you shoot somebody or use violence in this county and you harm an individual, you will pay the price," Orange County Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer said in a news conference following the verdict's announcement. "... If you go out and you take the law into your own hands, and you use violence or force, you will pay. Mr. Eriz is looking at 40 years to life. His life is over, and it's because he took the life of this precious, innocent

See **Murder**, page A4

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



James Carbone

CDM GIRLS' BASKETBALL RAINS IN THREES IN WIN OVER NEWPORT HARBOR PAGE A3

GOLDEN WEST COLLEGE TAPS MERIDITH RANDALL AS NEW PRESIDENT PAGE A2

Golden West College announces new president

BY MATT SZABO

Meridith Randall's commute to work is not far. She lives in Huntington Beach, a couple of blocks from the Golden West College campus, where she has served as interim president since last April. The interim tag is now gone. Randall has been selected as Golden West College president by the Coast Community College District Board of Trustees. Her move to the permanent position was approved on Jan. 17. "I feel like it's a great fit for me," Randall, 62, said in a phone interview. "I really enjoy the people here, and I enjoy the community. We're excited — there's a very positive feeling on campus moving forward."

Randall joined Golden West as a vice president of instruction in July 2020. She was promoted to interim president after Tim McGrath stepped down from the post last spring. McGrath resigned after losing the support of faculty over his handling of some security incidents, according to Coast Report, the student newspaper at Orange Coast College. He had received a vote of no confidence by the Golden West College Academic Senate.

"My No. 1 job and goal was to bring stability, to essentially calm the campus down," Randall said. "We did have some safety



File Photo

MERIDITH RANDALL, right, was given a certificate of recognition from state Assemblywoman Diane Dixon during the Language Arts Complex grand-opening ceremony at Golden West College last October.

issues and other things that we were able to take care of immediately. The interim period, from my perspective, was taking care of some long-standing issues and getting things on track. Now, it's a new era. It's an opportunity for the college to really make connections with the community that we haven't had, and move forward on several projects

that we've been talking about." Randall said one major project is the expansion of both Golden West's healthcare program and its facilities. She noted that hospitals in the area and other healthcare facilities are hurting for employees. "There's pretty high turnover," she said. "It's very hard for people to move into our area be-

cause of high rental costs. So, we currently have a nursing pathway from the high schools, and we'll be expanding that to more high schools. We also have an agreement with Cal State San Bernardino for our students to get bachelor's [degrees] in nursing. All of those are things that we can build on." Randall said the college has expanded its non-

credit programs that are free to community members in areas like auto tech, security guard training and senior healthcare tech. This spring, Golden West will also provide about 50 students up to \$2,000 a month to help with rent and/or childcare, through state funding. She also trumpeted improvements on campus, including the recent com-

pletion of the Language Arts Complex and added student spaces for studying or socializing, though many students take classes online. "As we came out of COVID, we realized that a lot of our faculty really flourished teaching online, and a lot of our students did well learning online," she said. "We have kept the ratio at about 40% online and 60% on ground, and that seems to be working for a lot of our students. We're really dedicated to flexibility." Randall has nearly 30 years of experience in higher education, including 17 years as a chief instruction officer in the California Community College system. She holds a bachelor's degree from Amherst College, a master's degree from Cornell University and a Juris Doctor degree from New York University School of Law.

"Golden West is fortunate to have someone with proven community college leadership experience and a record of advancing student success," said Coast Community College District Chancellor Whitney Yamamura in a statement. "As former vice presidents of instruction, spending years working together for the betterment of the system, I grew to know, respect and appreciate Meridith's skills and abilities."

matthewszabo@latimes.com
Twitter: @mjszabo

EQUINE

Continued from page A1

ally been run by a contractor overseeing boarders and trainers who offer privately arranged riding lessons. They've given themselves a deadline of June 14 — the date by which the center's current activities must cease — to develop a more public-facing, in-house operating model similar to the property's Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall veterans museum. Speaking to board members in a regular meeting on Thursday, OCFEC chief executive Michele Richards described ongoing talks with local and county officials, equine therapy providers, nonprofit organizations and local equestrians regarding how the center might meet the needs not only of the fair-going public but the broader community. She said her team intended to spend the next several months developing



James Carbone

SASHA WALTERS, of Huntington Beach, left, Charlotte Sheppard of Newport Beach and Riley Kearney of Newport Beach, attend a contentious Dec. 14 meeting of the OC Fair & Event Center Board, where the future of the fairgrounds' Equestrian Center hung in the balance.

programming through a collaborative approach, before determining how such visions might be realized. "Centennial Farm and Heroes Hall did not get built overnight, so we need a plan to introduce these programs. We'll need to recommend an operating budget and then develop a timeline for roll-out," Richards said Thursday. Board members decided during a Dec. 14 meeting, in which scores of equestrians gave testimony of the vital services already being provided at the center, to cancel a request for proposals from operators interested in continuing under the old model. Even if an operator had

been found, it was unclear whether needed capital improvements at the facility would have been funded by OCFEC, already operating the center at a significant deficit or on the dime of an operator who would essentially be leasing the site. The board instead directed staff to devise a plan for how a reimagined Equine Center might be more integrated into the year-round offerings provided at the fairgrounds. Aside from educational visits and small regional horse shows, operators are considering offering riding lessons under hired or contracted trainers, as well as continuing the practice of evacuating large animals during emergencies and boarding privately owned horses. "Once the public programs I've mentioned are planned and an overall programming schedule is established, remaining boarding opportunities could be offered for privately owned horses," Richards said. Staff are also looking into whether area law enforcement agencies that employ equine units might be interested in maintaining a public presence at the facility. "Currently the law enforcement mounted units in various Orange County cities and the Orange County Sheriff's Department all train together in Norco," Richards said. "There could be an opportunity to board some of those horses at the center and use the center for training and conducting public training demonstrations open free to the community." Corona del Mar resident Carolyn Beaver, who boards a horse at the Equestrian Center and takes lessons there, said she and other equestrians were glad to have been included in talks over the new plan for the site and that boarding has been included as a public benefit of the center. "We very much appreci-

ate the direction CEO Richards has proposed. We think it's the right direction," she told the board. "We look forward to working collaboratively with all of you to help more people experience the joy of horses." To keep the conversation going, the board agreed to place the item under the purview of its facilities committee, which would provide monthly progress reports at future meetings ahead of the June deadline. OCFEC Director Barbara Bagnaris said given the shrinking footprint of equestrian options in Orange County and beyond, she was hopeful for a new vision of the center. "Change is always tough, but I see this going somewhere big," she said. "We're setting the model for what could be done. And with the community focus, I couldn't be any happier. I look forward to moving forward with this." sara.cardine@latimes.com
Twitter: @SaraCardine

HOUSING

Continued from page A1

"[You'd be] making it easier to build market-rate units and providing little encouragement to create affordability," said Dianne Russell, a former planning commissioner and member of the Costa Mesa Affordable Housing Coalition. "If you support it, you're making a clear choice for market-rate developers over the people who trusted you and elected you."

Other advocates, however, said while they supported an affordability program, creating more market-rate housing would be crucial to improving the city's overall inventory, which benefits renters at all levels. Consultant Kathe Head, president of Los Angeles-based firm Keyser Marston Associates, said Costa Mesa hopes to incentivize developers to build more affordable units by rezoning certain areas and corridors in town, under the voter-backed Measure K, to allow

for much higher densities and, consequently, higher land values. From the enhanced value created, an inclusionary ordinance would then "claw back" part of a project's profitability by imposing affordability requirements, creating a situation in which both land holders and the city benefit. "Instead of 100% of that value inuring to the property owner, we're saying that as one of the requirements of this rezoning, this benefit, we're going to ask you to provide affordable housing," Head explained. Builders and developers however, maintained such an ordinance would simply halt building altogether. Tim O'Brien, a senior managing director at Legacy Partners, urged city leaders to take a conservative approach to establishing set-

aside requirements. "If it's too low, you'll [still] have a production of units," he said. "If it's too high, it will be another five to seven years of no housing, period." Councilwoman Andrea Marr said getting the support of the development community in helping draft an ordinance has been difficult. "We've talked about up-zoning, we've talked about adding incentives and adding more value to properties, and that's still not considered an incentive by the definition of some folks," Marr said. "The notion we're impeding development, to me, is just absurd. This council has done more to create housing than certainly the last three councils before it," she continued. "And, yet, maybe we're

not threading the needle quite right. If I sound frustrated, it's because I am." Marr recommended removing the planning commission's 2-acre trigger, finding that would apply to fewer than 11% of the parcels in Costa Mesa being rezoned under Measure K. She instead suggested a 15-unit trigger for apartments or home ownership projects, a figure closer to the 10 units initially recommended by staff. She further suggested developers of projects from 15 to 50 units be allowed to decide whether to produce affordable units or pay an in-lieu fee to fund other citywide housing initiatives. Projects of 50 units or more would be required to produce actual housing. For affordability setbacks, Marr proposed projects with a density of 60 or

more units per acre be mandated to set aside 11% of units for low-income tenants or 7% for those deemed very-low income. Projects under 60 units-per-acre would have a choice between designating 6% as low-income and 4% as very low-income units. Development agreements for large-scale projects would be exempt from the mandates of the ordinance in Marr's proposal, so long as an applicant agrees to provide an equivalent community benefit. The builders of home ownership projects, such as condominiums, could pay in-lieu fees instead of building affordable units, if they chose. Although council members voted 4-2 to move ahead with Marr's proposal (with Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Harlan and Councilman Manuel Chavez opposed and Don Harper absent), they agreed more consideration, and information on an in-lieu fee structure, would be forthcoming on a second reading of the item. "This is just a first reading," said Councilman Loren Gameros as the meeting stretched past midnight. "We're not running with any of this — this is not going to make or break any sort of development agreement or change the individual value of someone's house."

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CONTACT US

Carol Cormaci, Executive Editor
carol.cormaci@latimes.com

Beth Raff, Advertising Manager
(424) 225-9928
beth.raff@latimes.com

10540 Talbert Ave., Suite 300 West, Fountain Valley, CA 92708

Reporters:
Sara Cardine, Costa Mesa
sara.cardine@latimes.com
Lilly Nguyen, Newport Beach
lilly.nguyen@latimes.com

Matt Szabo, Huntington Beach and Sports
matthew.szabo@latimes.com

Andrew Turner, Laguna Beach and Sports
andrew.turner@latimes.com

Send Letters to the Editor to erik.haugli@latimes.com. See Mailbag for guidelines. The Daily Pilot, established in 1907, is published Wednesday through Sunday by Times Community News, a division of the Los Angeles Times. Subscriptions are available only by subscribing to The Times, Orange County.

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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

sara.cardine@latimes.com
Twitter: @SaraCardine

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Berry's 24 points push Newport Harbor win

BY ANDREW TURNER

Jack Berry dribbled inside the arc and spun into a jump shot, draining a mid-range jumper just as time expired in the first quarter.

The junior point guard had already hit his third shot from a similar spot on the floor, a sign of things to come on a night that he could not be stopped.



James Carbone

NEWPORT HARBOR'S Jack Berry (11) and Cole Leinart (33) celebrate during the Battle of the Bay game at Corona del Mar on Saturday.

Berry scored 24 points and dished out four assists, as the visiting Sailors came away with a 58-48 win over Corona del Mar on Saturday in the Battle of the Bay boys' basketball game.

"We go into [each] game always thinking we're going to win, no matter who we're playing," said Berry, who was serenaded with "MVP" chants outside of the gym after the game. "Our whole team, especially our first five, ... we're always connected, we're always talking to each other about what we can do better."

"Even in this game, the environment's crazy. It could go either way, but we know in our hearts that we should win every single game."

The shot to end the first quarter gave Newport Harbor (20-4) the lead for the fourth time in a back-and-forth opening period.

After Luke Mirhashemi found a cutting Jackson Harlan for Corona del Mar (20-4) to retake the lead 10 seconds into the second quarter, Gavin Guy assisted Cole Leinart's fast-break basket, and the Sailors never trailed again.

Berry followed with a three-pointer from the left wing to give Newport Harbor its first two-possession lead at 18-14.

Leinart also made two threes to key a 10-point individual output in the second quarter. The Sailors went into halftime up 28-20.

"It's everything that was spoken about and more," Leinart, a Mater Dei transfer, said of playing in his first Battle of the Bay. "It's so fun. It's so electric, and playing with this guy [Berry], he gets the fans hyped up with his buckets. I have no words. It's honestly awesome."

A Corona del Mar team that wanted to push the ball often could not due to Newport Harbor's methodical half-court offense. The Sailors' advantage hovered between nine to 13 points for much of the second half, dropping down below that when Ganon Overfelt drove baseline to make it 53-46 with 2:23 remaining.

Riggs Guy scored off an offensive putback a minute later, capping his nine-point, 10-rebound performance and re-establishing the Sailor's double-digit edge.

"It's a great group of

kids," Newport Harbor coach Robert Torribio said. "We preach competitive, being unselfish and being joyful, being happy to be here. It's 15 kids who that's their personality."

Newport Harbor, which had a 15-game winning streak snapped with back-to-back losses to begin its Surf League schedule, completed a sweep of its Sunset Conference cross-over counterparts from the Wave League.

The Sunset Conference is heavily represented in the CIF Southern Section Division 2A poll. Newport Harbor is ranked fourth, Corona del Mar sixth, and Marina is 10th.

Maxwell Scott poured in 20 points, including a trio of three-pointers, to pace the Sea Kings in the crosstown rivalry game. Nick Salmon added 10 points and six rebounds.

"We had some shots just kind of rim out tonight," CDM coach Jason Simco said. "Jack Berry had some tonight that went in."

andrewturner@latimes.com
Twitter: @AndrewTurnerTCN

GIRLS' BASKETBALL



CORONA DEL MAR'S Julia Mork (22) drives to the basket against Newport Harbor in the Battle of the Bay girls' basketball game on Saturday.

James Carbone

CdM rains in 3s in 55-28 win over Newport Harbor

BY ANDREW TURNER

The Corona del Mar girls' basketball team could not have asked for a better start than it had on Saturday against its crosstown rival.

Sawyer Blumenkranz made two three-pointers, then Julia Mork did the same, and finally Sienna Knodegah found the range from distance after grabbing an offensive rebound.

When that sequence finished, the trio had combined to make the Sea Kings' first five three-point attempts of the evening, scoring the initial 15 points of the game.

Blumenkranz, Mork and Knodegah went on to make a total of 10 three-pointers in the contest, as Corona del Mar beat Newport Harbor 55-28 in the Battle of the Bay on Saturday night at home.

"We have a really good shooting team, this year especially," said Mork, who led all players with five three-pointers in the contest. "[There is a] trust, just passing the ball, shooting it. Even when I miss a few, [we] just keep believing in ourselves and keep believ-

ing in our teammates." The gym filled up with the promise of a Battle of the Bay doubleheader on the hardwood, made possible by one team's decision to give up their home game.

"Kudos to everyone who put it together," CDM coach Brason Alexander said. "[Newport Harbor coach] Jillian [Angell] over there was willing to give up their home game. This is a great thing for the community. You see all the kids in the gym, so that's just awesome. ... They did a nice thing there. I think it's awesome. It's great for those girls."

Mork had a game-high 15 points to go with five rebounds and three steals for CDM (12-13). Knodegah scored a dozen points, and Blumenkranz had 11 points and two steals.

Mackenzie Kish and Samira Dass each recorded multiple steals for the Sea Kings off the bench.

"We're a team," Alexander added. "We have to play all 10 or 11 girls and really rotate. We pride ourselves on defense. ... If we're going to win games, it has to be on the defensive

side. The kids have done a nice job. They're all buying in. They're all trying to get tougher, smarter."

Kaitlyn Leibe has added to her game since being utilized primarily in the post early in her career at Newport Harbor (8-16). Now a senior, Leibe was bringing the ball up the court, contributing across the board. She had six points, four rebounds, three steals, three assists and three blocked shots.

"Sometimes, she shoots a little too much, and we need to pull that off a little bit," Angell said of Leibe. "Sometimes, we're like, 'OK, you need to get inside. You're the biggest person on the court. You still need to get inside and make a move.' [She is] finding that balance where you can still do both."

Ava Nolan sank two three-pointers en route to a team-best seven points for Newport Harbor. Gianna Briggs added six points, and Abigail George chipped in with three points, four rebounds, two assists and two steals.

andrew.turner@latimes.com
Twitter: @AndrewTurnerTCN

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

- ACROSS**
 1 Try to silence
 6 Texter's "see you later"
 10 Elderly
 14 Winter jacket
 15 Operatic solo
 16 Expo
 17 Daring poker bet
 18 Hat, metaphorically
 19 A-OK
 20 Hard- (stubborn)
 21 Fall flower, for short
 22 Get more of, as a magazine
 23 From Italy's capital
 25 Business abbreviation
 26 Cleaning cloth
 29 Disease prevention method
 34 Eatery in an Arlo Guthrie song
 36 Dash lengths
 37 The Hawkeye State
 38 Full of variety
 40 Steered, as a plane
 42 Declare
 43 Chomp on
 45 Instrumental piece
 46 Eateries
 49 Day on Mars
 50 Lung filler
 51 Button that zeroes things out
 53 Shun
 56 Sault_ Marie
 57 Provides money to
 61 Plant with fronds
 62 All- (cookware brand)
 63 Approximately
 64 Iranian currency
 65 Rabbit relative
 66 Tea holder
 67 " _ Murders in the Building"
 68 Looked over

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67							68				69			

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.

						3	8	1	
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1	9	7							

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A2.

- 69 New Jersey county
DOWN
 1 Breadth
 2 Ring above an angel's head
 3 Web addresses
 4 Lindsey Vonn, for one
 5 Cede control of
 6 Airport surface

- 22 Messenger molecule
 24 Giver of back rubs
 25 Won't back down
 26 Speed-measuring tech
 27 Not dead yet
 28 Donates
 30 Little devil
 31 Tiny amounts
 32 Have a loan from
 33 Tennis star Rafael
 35 "Without a doubt!"
 39 Organ with a canal
 41 Suffer disgrace
 44 Raw beef dish
 47 Help
 48 Required
 52 Big brass instruments
 53 Hairstyle with a pick
 54 Blood vessel
 55 Spoken exam
 56 Do in
 58 Signals OK
 59 Bro
 60 Mythological underworld river
 62 "Evita" role
- Tribune Media Services

Theatre for Young Audiences and Families

Alice's WONDERLAND

Book, music and lyrics by **Julia Riew** and **J. Quinton Johnson**
 Conceived by **Linda Chichester** and **David Coffman**
 Directed by **Rob Salas**

FEB. 10 - 25, 2024

In this pop and hip-hop musical, Alice is a brilliant, passionate teen who creates a video game called "Wonderland." When a virus shuts it down, Alice leaps into an unforgettable adventure.

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SUIT

Continued from page A1

ange County district attorney's office.

Thompson was, at the time of his arrest, an infectious disease specialist. His LinkedIn page indicates that he ran a clinic in Orange County full time on Superior Avenue.

Court documents list a total of 21 counts of felony charges against Thompson that include sexual battery by fraud, forcible oral

copulation, sexual battery by fraud and sexual penetration by means of fraudulent representation of professional purpose.

Thompson pleaded not guilty to all charges on Nov. 2.

Although, as of Dec. 29, the number of victims, all listed in the civil suit as John Does, has reached 73, attorneys at the Manly, Stewart & Finaldi Law Office say they believe the total number of victims could reach into the hundreds.

A second civil lawsuit is expected to be filed in the next two weeks, bringing the total number of identified victims to more than 80, according to the attorneys.

Over the span of a decade, Dr. Thompson is alleged to have utilized his position as a medical doctor to sexually abuse men that sought treatment from him.

for his own sexual gratification.”

The 730-page-long lawsuit announced Thursday details experiences that patients had with Thompson and, in the complaint, attorneys allege the Hoag knew of Thompson's harassment but failed to stop or report his actions to law enforcement or the California Medical Board to protect their own financial interests.

The suit does not specify the monetary damages sought, leaving that figure to be determined at trial.

Hoag issued a statement after the press conference saying it condemned Thompson's alleged conduct and “recognizes the courage it takes for former patients to come forward.”

Dr. Thompson operated an independent medical practice and was not employed by Hoag or its affiliates,” the statement reads. “He had clinical privileges at Hoag Hospital which were summarily suspended by the medical staff following the filing of criminal charges against him.

For the last seven decades, Hoag has been committed to providing world-



James Carbone

A PHOTOGRAPH OF Dr. William Moore Thompson IV was on display at a press conference for a civil suit alleging the physician victimized and sexually abused his patients.

class care defined by respect, integrity, compassion and excellence for all patients, including members of the LGBTQ+ community.”

An attorney for Thompson could not be immediately reached for comment.

According to court documents, Thompson has been out on a bail of \$500,000 since his arraignment. He is expected to appear in court at the Harbor Justice Center on March 15.

Though a number of victims identifying as members of the LGBTQ+ community shared testimony at the press conference Thursday, Matthew Lervold — identified as John Doe

29 in the lawsuit — described the alleged crimes as targeted at men at large.

Not all of us up here are LGBTQ. There are those of us who are not part of that community and got abused by Dr. Thompson, Lervold said. “The #MeToo movement was a terrific thing for everyone in this world. But the men felt a little left out through that time. It was a women's movement, and it was a powerful one, but [sexual assault] does happen to men too, and it happened to us.”

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CITY OF COSTA MESA

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held by the Costa Mesa City Council at its regular meeting at City Hall Council Chambers, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.

Application No.: PA-22-22 (Evolv Herbal) Applicant/Agent: 1858 Newport Blvd Trust/Mark Adams Site Address: 1858 Newport Blvd. Zone: General Business District (C2)

Description: Planning Application 22-22 is a request for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a 2,280-square-foot retail cannabis storefront with delivery within an existing single-story commercial building located at 1858 Newport Boulevard.

Environmental Determination: The project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1), Existing Facilities.

Public Comments:

Members of the public wishing to participate in the meeting may find instructions to participate on the agenda. Members of the public may also submit written comments via email to the City Clerk at cityclerk@costamesa.gov

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MURDER

Continued from page A1

little boy through no fault of his own.

“We will never forget Aiden Leos. We will always remember what he stood for, and we will always cry with the parents who lose their children before their time has come.”

The jury, comprised of 10 men and two women, began deliberating for the case late Wednesday afternoon. Jurors took approximately two hours to come to a verdict, as the court indicated that the jury had reached its decision at about 10:15 a.m. on Thursday.

Eriz appeared to have little or no reaction outwardly as the verdict was read.

Spitzer, who wore a turquoise tie for the proceedings after asking Aiden's mother, Joanna Cloonan, what her son's favorite color was, said he informed her of the verdict.

Cloonan responded positively to the verdict via text, said Spitzer, who said he told her she was a “hero” for testifying during the trial.

A traffic altercation broke out on the 55 Freeway in



Andrew Turner

SENIOR DEPUTY Dist. Atty. Daniel Feldman, center, who prosecuted the case against Marcus Anthony Eriz, speaks at a press conference on Thursday after a guilty verdict came in for two felony charges, including second-degree murder.

Orange just after 8 on the morning of May 21, 2021. Aiden had been riding in the back of the Chevrolet Sonic driven by Cloonan on his way to a kindergarten class in Yorba Linda.

Cloonan was cut off by a Volkswagen Golf SportWagen operated by Lee, who is said to have gestured with a “peace sign” as she drove by. Cloonan pulled up alongside the couple and displayed the middle finger.

Randall Bethune of the Orange County Public Defender's Office, representing Eriz, had argued that Cloonan's hand gesture was

enough of a provocation to bring a voluntary manslaughter conviction into play. Jurors were also allowed to consider involuntary manslaughter.

Senior Deputy Dist. Atty. Daniel Feldman, the lead prosecutor in the case, had submitted to the jury that the second-degree murder charge should hold up under the criteria for implied malice or committing an act that he knew to be dangerous with a conscious disregard for life.

Feldman told the jury that Eriz had passed a firearm safety test to have the weapon in his possession and that he had customized it to prove his knowledge of firearms. The prosecution also used comments from Eriz during an interview with investigators, in which he revealed he had been bringing a firearm in the car with him for months because people were being “hostile” on roadways.

“I am so grateful to this jury because 12 people, citizens of Orange County, made it very clear that is not the new world order because people are acting irrationally and crazy out on our roads today,” Spitzer said. “That's not OK. Had the jury allowed that to be voluntary manslaughter, if they had bought the defense's argument, they would have sent a message that it's OK to carry a gun in your car, and if somebody comes by, and you get into some kind of exchange and you fire your weapon, you are only responsible for voluntary manslaughter.”

Aiden died at Children's Hospital of Orange County in Orange, authorities said. The cause of death was a perforating gunshot wound, the shot that killed him having traveled through his liver, lung and heart before exiting through his right abdomen. The prosecution and the defense agreed to those facts in the case.

Before dismissing the jury, Judge Richard King told the jurors that the court would be offering counseling to the jurors of what he described as “a very trying case.”

andrew.turner@latimes.com Twitter: @AndrewTurnerTCN

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LEGAL NOTICE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING Planning Commission City Hall Council Chambers at 505 Forest Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at 6:00 PM The CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH will hold a public hearing on the request below. You may participate in-person at City Hall. Case No.: Temporary Use Permit 2023-2276 and Coastal Development Permit 2023-2277 Address: 845 Laguna Cayon Road, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 | APN: 641-231-13 Applicant: Rywin Trading Inc. Property Owner: Eric Bostwick PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant requests approval of a Temporary Use Permit and a Coastal Development Permit to continue the use of outdoor dining until January 1, 2026. No changes regarding the temporary use are proposed from their previously approved Temporary Use Permit. COASTAL ZONE: The above-mentioned projects are located within a non-appealable area of the Coastal Zone. Information regarding California Coastal Commission appeal processes can be found at https://www.coastal.ca.gov/cdp/cdp-forms.html CEQA: Staff recommends the Planning Commission determine that the proposed projects are categorically exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land) and, in the alternative, State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities). MORE INFORMATION: The agenda packet will be available on the City's website at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled public hearing (https://www.lagunabeachcity.net/live-here/city-council-meetings-agendas-and-minutes) and at the Community Development Department public counter during the following hours: Monday - Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., closed alternating Fridays. HOW TO COMMENT: If you have any comments or concerns about the proposed projects, please communicate those thoughts to Louie Lacasella, Senior Administrative Analyst, at (949) 497-0736 or email to llacasella@lagunabeachcity.net. In order to allow sufficient time for members of the Planning Commission and staff to review and consider your written comments, written public comments will be accepted for consideration up until the close of business (i.e., 5:30 p.m.) on the business day before the date on which the Public Hearing is scheduled. Comments may also be made during the Public Hearing in person in the Council Chambers. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with a disability who require a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in a meeting may request such modification or accommodation from the Planning Division at (949) 497-0329. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to the meeting. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if you challenge this application in court, the issues raised shall be limited to those raised in the public hearing or in written correspondence delivered to the public agency prior to, or at, the public hearing.