



## Report cites security flaws in O.C. jails

The county grand jury notes several lapses, including an insufficient chain-link fence at the Theo Lacy facility.

BY BEN BRAZIL

The Orange County Grand Jury identified several security flaws in Orange County jails in a report released this week, including security weak points that could lead to contraband being brought into jails and an insufficient chain-link fence at a maximum-security jail.

The report highlighted the need for a block wall at the Theo Lacy facility because the current fence between the jail and the vacant Orange County Animal Shelter “presents a major security risk.”

In February, there were about 1,800 inmates at Theo Lacy, which is located in Orange, near the large shopping plaza the Outlets at Orange.

The grand jury also stressed that the Theo Lacy facility's front desk is a security risk because there isn't enough separation between the public and jail staff. There is currently a 2-foot-tall plexiglass wall on top of the desk. The grand jury recommends that it be raised to 8 feet.

“The main entrance is a hub for the public to enter the facility,” the report says. “[Orange County Sheriff's Department] personnel are behind a desk with a 2-foot-tall plexiglass wall atop the desk that could be easily breached.”

The grand jury report also found several other security gaps in the jails and provided recommendations to the Sheriff's Department, including the installation of security booths and video surveillance cameras in the attorney bonds entrance at the Central Men's Jail because the current security system at the entrance is inadequate to prevent the trafficking of contraband.

“An [Orange County Grand Jury] tour of the [Central Men's Jail] in September 2020 revealed the Attorney Bonds Entrance area had significant security issues,” the report says.

“There were no video surveillance cameras in the area, and no separation between attorney and

See **Jails**, page R2

## ‘I try to show people who they are’

Artists paint portraits of Orange County's homeless

BY VERA CASTANEDA

Artist Damin Lujan had never painted with acrylics or oils until he took a class in partnership with nonprofit Faces of Mankind and an Anaheim emergency shelter.

“I was a little afraid of this class. But when I got to sit next to Victoria and hear her story over dinner, I couldn't wait to pray and paint her,” Lujan wrote in the art gallery's label.

His portrait of Victoria, whom he met through Bridges at Kraemer Place, shows her looking directly at the viewer with an arched brow and a smile.

Her face is painted in shades of pink and purple undertones. She's adorned with gold flowers on a collage background of Bible pages.



Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

**TOP PHOTO:** Artists Brian Peterson, 34, center, Scott Schaible, 23, left, and Marybeth Stafford, 68, pose for a portrait at the Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center in Anaheim. **ABOVE:** “Faces of Mankind: Portraiture for Social Change” is a display of 35 portraits of unhoused and formerly unhoused friends created by the Faces of Mankind artist collective and nonprofit.

It's one out of 35 paintings on view at Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center's “Faces of Mankind: Portraiture for Social Change” show.

In addition to Anaheim, the gallery includes portraits of unhoused and formerly unhoused residents from Santa Ana, Riverside and Detroit.

Brian Peterson was working as a car designer for Kia Motors in Irvine and founded the Faces of Mankind project in 2015 as a response to the homelessness in the Santa Ana neighborhood he moved into with his wife.

Typically, he befriends unhoused people and asks if they want to be part of the project.

He takes a couple of candid photos while asking them about their life — happiest

See **Artists**, page R7

## While you were in quarantine, a major new art museum rose

BY DEBORAH VANKIN

During the dark and quiet days of pandemic shutdown, the new Orange County Museum of Art building, under construction at Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa, slowly but steadily took shape and is now about three-quarters complete.

The \$93-million building by Morphosis Architects, the 80-person studio founded by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Thom Mayne, was designed to be many things: the new home for a contemporary art museum — more than a decade in the works — that will nearly double exhibition space and raise the institution's profile, for one. A community gathering space in sprawling and

disjointed Orange County, with a grand staircase that Mayne modeled after New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art steps, for another. A fluid, light-filled structure that will be architecturally and programmatically simpatico with the five other arts entities on Segerstrom's campus — “a good neighbor,” as new Director Heidi Zuckerman put it on a recent construction site tour.

What the museum was not designed to be: an architectural response to a global pandemic, configured for an art audience who may still be wary of indoor cultural experiences.

But that is how OCMA is emerging, unintentionally. The museum, which plans to open Oct. 8, 2022, may be an ideal post-

COVID-19 art destination, says Zuckerman, who assumed her post in February.

Mayne's design is indoor-outdoor, with skylights, retractable walls, more than 10,000 square feet of green space and an outdoor plaza accommodating up to 1,000 people for events. Not to mention the front steps, where audiences will sit for performances, artist talks and other happenings. Zuckerman, a California native and avid hiker, intends to display artworks, including paintings, outside. The world changed as OCMA was rising, and now the museum is on point for the times, if inadvertently.

“During COVID, there was this

See **Museum**, page R8



Gina Ferazzi | Los Angeles Times

**THE NEW** Orange County Museum of Art, under construction at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. To the left is a sculpture by Richard Serra, “Connector.”



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# Jury sides with park ranger in food dispute

Controversy centers on a couple's visit to Doheny State Beach to feed homeless people.

BY MEGHANN M. CUNIFF

As Kathy Lemly tells it, the beachside confrontation that led her and her husband, Don Lemly, to the federal courthouse in Santa Ana this month began with

an ominous comment from a watchful state park ranger.

"I heard someone say you're not going to feed these people are you?" she recalled on the witness stand. "I turned to my husband and said 'I think we can expect trouble today.'"

The San Clemente couple's visit to Doheny State Beach to feed homeless people ended with Don Lemly in handcuffs and Ka-

thy Lemly calling 911 on the ranger who arrested him, part of an ongoing controversy in South Orange County about daily food handouts at the beach, the people who attend them and the law enforcement officials tasked with patrolling the area.

They sued in U.S. District Court for alleging constitutional violations including false arrest and excessive force, but a jury rejected

each claim last Tuesday after a four-day trial.

Their lawyer, Jorge Gonzalez, suggested jurors award Don Lemly \$50,000 to \$100,000 for the August 2018 ordeal, but the jury awarded nothing, just as lawyers for the park ranger, Nicholas Milward, requested they do.

"There's some dangers going on that Mr. Lemly, he's just not aware of. Sure, people are nice when he's

handing them the food," Milward's lawyer, Deputy Atty. Gen. Ezra Siegel, told jurors.

Milward acknowledged in testimony that he'd made the comment about not serving when the Lemlys arrived, but he said he didn't decide to stop the feed until later, after he'd dealt with an unruly man who was there for food. Milward said he was concerned the man would re-

turn and cause more trouble.

"I felt it was best to take away what was attracting him, which was the feed," said Milward, a state park ranger for 13 years and a lifeguard for seven. "I didn't want him to come back and start another confrontation."

When the Lemlys told Milward they had a right to

See **Dispute**, page R4

A RENDERING of the Jamboree Housing Corp.'s Ascent supportive housing community in Buena Park.

For Jamboree by Architecture Design Collaborative



## O.C. nonprofit turning motel into housing for the homeless

BY BEN BRAZIL

An Orange County nonprofit recently broke ground on a project to transform a motel into a permanent supportive housing facility, with about half of the units set aside for the mentally ill.

When the Jamboree Housing Corp.'s new 57-unit project is completed, it will be the nonprofit's first permanent supportive housing community in Buena Park.

The development — named "Ascent" — is replacing the defunct Airport Inn, located about 3 miles from Knott's Berry Farm. The location was chosen for the project due to its proximity near a medical clinic, public park and public transportation.

Households qualify to stay at Ascent if they earn between 30% and 50% of the median income of Orange County, which was

\$103,000 in 2020. The average resident is expected to pay about \$283 a month.

Considering that surrounding communities can frequently become agitated at the prospect of having financially struggling people living next to them, Jamboree and the city held community meetings and discussed the project at City Council study sessions. However, due to public concerns, there will be surveillance at Ascent and people will need a key fob for entry.

Jamboree will oversee supportive services for all residents, which includes managing medications, mental health counseling and life skills training. The Orange County Healthcare Agency will be the service provider for the tenants with mental illnesses.

"Ascent is the perfect example of what's possible when you have a committed city partner, targeted

county dollars and a creative development team like Jamboree who can transform old structures into new, community assets like supportive housing," county Supervisor Doug Chaffee said in a news release.

Jamboree has partnered with the city on two other affordable housing projects in 2013 and 2016. Those provided about 140 apartment homes for families.

For the Ascent project, Jamboree worked with the city to establish a new zoning code classification for "permanent supportive housing." According to a staff report, the city believes this is the "next-step housing solution" for homeless people transitioning from a shelter to permanent housing. The city also has a homeless shelter that started accept-

See **Housing**, page R4

## Santa Ana City Council approves more funding for deportation defense fund

BY BEN BRAZIL

Undocumented Santa Ana residents fighting deportation proceedings may have better access to legal services after Santa Ana increased funding to its critical deportation defense fund this week.

The City Council authorized another \$100,000 for the fund as part of its approval of the city's budget on Tuesday night, bringing the total fund to \$300,000. The council also made the defense fund a recurring line item on each year's budget.

The city's deportation defense fund, started in 2017, allows Santa Ana residents facing potential deportation to secure an attorney they would otherwise not be able to afford. Santa Ana is the only city in Orange County to provide legal defense support to immigrants facing deportation.

Several groups had been advocating for the expansion of the fund, including the O.C. Justice Fund, Vera Institute of Justice, the Harbor Institute for Immigrant and Economic Justice, VietRISE and the Immigrant Defenders Law Center, which has been the contracted recipient of the fund since its inception.

The groups held an online forum with Santa Ana Mayor Vicente Sarmiento and Councilwoman Jessie Lopez a few weeks ago before the funding increase and budget were initially approved on June 1. This week's approval was the second reading of the budget.

"We're encouraged of the further commitment in making sure that Santa Ana residents and those who have ties to Santa Ana will continue to have legal support if anybody is placed into removal proceedings," said Lisa Okamoto, an attorney with Immigrant Defenders Law Center. "I'm grateful that not only have they continued to fund it but that they have increased the funding as well."

Okamoto said the increased funds will allow attorneys to take on more cases, and the firm's case managers are now also better equipped to further help clients with housing and food insecurity, a common struggle for people involved in removal proceedings.

The advocacy groups were also pushing for an expansion of the fund to better serve the Vietnamese community of Santa Ana. More than 25,000 Vietnamese Americans live in the city.

Amid reports of growing Asian-hate incidents around the country, Councilwoman Thai Viet Phan and others have been pushing for better representation for the Asian communities of Santa Ana. As part of the budget approval, the council also created a Vietnamese Community Liaison in the city, which Phan had been advocating for.

Allison Vo, youth organizing coordinator with VietRISE, pointed out in an interview



Irfan Khan | Los Angeles Times

**A GUARD PATROLS** the Adelanto detention facility. Orange County's immigration detainees were transferred there after a contract between the Sheriff's Department and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency in 2019.

that there has only ever been one other Asian elected official before Phan claimed a seat on the council late last year. Phan is the first Vietnamese American and first Asian woman on the council.

"It's an affirmation that this is a service that is absolutely needed when we are trying to advance immigrant justice," Vo said of the council's expansion of the defense fund. "This is about equal access to justice and ensuring that immigrants are not excluded from due process. So it sends a very strong message that Santa Ana is committed to this, and I think there's an opportunity as well for other cities to witness the success of this program and see how they can also implement a legal defense fund for their immigrant communities."

"The Vietnamese community is the second most impacted community to be impacted by immigration enforcement. In Santa Ana alone, given the history of exclusion and lack of access to government resources as a result of language capacity, but also language and cultural competency, a lot of the Vietnamese residents have been left out. We wanted to make sure that the increase for this fund also made a concerted effort to reach the Vietnamese community and begin strengthening the bridges for trust and belonging."

Okamoto said Immigrant Defenders is working on how best to further reach the Vietnamese community in Santa Ana, such as working with the Vietnamese liaison and other in-person outreach efforts.

"It's one of our goals and intent with this expanded program to ensure that our outreach and our legal services can reach the Vietnamese community," Okamoto said.

benjamin.brazil@latimes.com  
Twitter: @benbrazil

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## JAILS

Continued from page R1

inmate, creating an opportunity for contraband to enter the facility."

The grand jury also said that contraband could be brought into the Intake and Release Center because there aren't enough Sheriff's Department personnel trained to scan inmates. The grand jury recommends that all inmates should be scanned "to enhance security and reduce contraband coming into the jail."

The grand jury also recommends for the department to require mandatory COVID-19 testing for all jail staff.

"Lack of mandatory COVID testing for jail personnel creates a high risk of infection to inmates and others," the report says.

Despite the security and coronavirus testing issues it highlighted, the grand jury found that the jails and facilities were acceptable and in overall compliance with state and federal standards.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Carrie Braun said in an emailed statement that the construction projects recommended by the grand jury are consistent with Barnes' plans and will be reviewed.

She did not specify which projects she was referring to, and said that some projects have been delayed due to the department's efforts to mitigate COVID-19 and until funding is available.

The grand jury report acknowledged these delays.

"The Grand Jury's report provides a factual account of the complex work and tremendous dedication of the custody and healthcare personnel working in the Orange County Jail system," Braun said.

"We are pleased that the Grand Jury recognized Sheriff Barnes' proactive efforts to manage COVID-19. Additionally the Grand Jury commended the efforts to meet the behavioral health needs of the inmates in custody."

Braun also provided comment on the Theo Lacy fence that the grand jury highlighted.

"The fence separating the Theo Lacy Facility from the vacant Animal Shelter is a double fence (essentially two layers of fencing) with razor wire atop both fences," Braun said.

"The area adjacent to the fence is a restricted area, utilized only by lower security inmates who are monitored and do not pose a significant escape risk. We are constantly in a state of assessment regarding security and making improvements to provide the most secure facilities possible."

The grand jury report also analyzed healthcare in the O.C. jails, identifying a few flaws with Correctional Health Services, which is a part of the county's healthcare agency.

The grand jury recommends that Correctional Health Services staff receive more crisis intervention

training. The report also recommends mandatory COVID-19 testing for all health staff.

"Lack of mandatory COVID testing for [Correctional Health Services] staff creates a high risk of infection to inmates and others," the report says.

Jessica Good, a Health Care Agency spokeswoman, said the department is aware of the grand jury report and will respond through the county executive office's established process.

Each department has 90 days to formally respond to the grand jury.

The security flaws in the O.C. jail system are all the more crucial in light of the much-publicized escape of three inmates from the Central Men's Jail in Santa Ana in 2016. The incident led to a statewide manhunt that lasted more than a week.

In the aftermath, many questioned the security lapses in the Orange County jails that led to the escape.

A grand jury investigation concluded that deputies were not adequately trained and supervised by managers, leading to security and policy violations.

Former Sheriff Sandra Hutchens said at the time that the jail break was an "embarrassment" and acknowledged security flaws in the jail that needed to be changed.

benjamin.brazil@latimes.com  
Twitter: @benbrazil





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President, Bank of America Orange County

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**THE KELLOGG HOUSE**, built in 1898, at the Heritage Museum, which is hosting “From Dinosaurs to People” on June 27.

# ‘Dinosaurs’ return to Heritage Museum

The Heritage Museum of Orange County is preparing to host its first in-person event of the year, “From Dinosaurs to People.”

The free-entry event showcases Orange County’s cultural and natural history with a variety of vendors, demonstrations and activities including guided nature tour walks, Dino Encounters’ robotic dinosaurs and posters for photo-ops and arm painting (in lieu of face paintings).

Local high school students will unveil their mural series on unknown histories, which was postponed for a year. Representatives from local Vietnamese, Cambodian, Buddhist and Sikh communities will be present to discuss the topics covered in the mural.

The first 100 guests will receive goodie bags.

“Last summer, this event was named Best Family Festival by Macaroni Kid, which is a very popular mommy blog group,” said Jamie S. Hiber, executive director. “It gave us inspiration to continue. It’s a perfect way to welcome our community back to the museum by hosting our most beloved event.”

The event started in 2015 when the museum partnered with John D. Cooper Archaeological and Paleontological Center to showcase its Orange County fossil findings to residents.

In the past, museum staff also organized demonstrations featuring Tongva and Acjachemen tribe representatives, live animal rescue groups specializing in reptiles and wolves as well as gold panning.

Due to COVID-19 and a shortage of staff, the museum scaled back some activities.



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**A GAZEBO** courtyard at the Heritage Museum. “From Dinosaurs to People” is the museum’s biggest in-person event of the year.

## IF YOU GO

**What:** “From Dinosaurs to People”

**When:** June 27, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Where:** Heritage Museum of Orange County, 3101 W. Harvard St., Santa Ana

**Cost:** Free

**Info:** [heritagemuseumoc.org](http://heritagemuseumoc.org)



**A WORKER CLEARS** leaves with John Magg Farmhouse in the background at the Heritage Museum of Orange County.

Donors, sponsors, community partners, PPP loans, grants and federal funding have helped the museum reopen with about half of its usual staff.

“I can’t say we’re out of this yet, but we are emerging from it and we’re really

excited,” Hiber said. “The museum is very fortunate and to have gotten this far ... and I really hope that all of this time has shifted our direction in the community and what we can do to educate and collaborate.”

— From staff reports

# Patchwork Show Modern Makers Festival returns

Patchwork Show Modern Makers Festival returns to Orange County on June 26 and 27.

Through the free outdoor event, participants can view and purchase handmade goods such as clothing, handbags, accessories, jewelry, art and apothecary items from independent artists and crafters. The featured artisans, the majority of which are based in O.C., were chosen through a jury process.

There will also be several DIY craft stations and Patchwork Junior, which is dedicated to artisans who are under the age of 18.

The festival started in Santa Ana with 25 vendors in 2007 and grew to a multicounty festival with more than 100 vendors at each event. This year the festival will also make its way to Santa Ana, Long Beach, Oakland and Ventura at

dates to be announced at a later time.

Patchwork is produced by Dear Handmade Life, an Orange-based business that brings together creatives and small business owners through events and education. In addition to the festival, Dear Handmade Life also hosts a podcast, blog and the Craftcation Conference.

“COVID has been rough on creatives,” Nicole Stevenson, Dear Handmade Life CEO, said.

“Many of them were already living on a tight budget and relied on in-person craft shows or wholesale sales to local small shops for the bulk of their revenue and then COVID closed both of those for a while. But creatives are resourceful, and many took it as an opportunity to grow their online businesses and focused on building their website or

## IF YOU GO

**What:** Patchwork Show Modern Makers Festival

**Where:** 245 El Camino Real, Tustin

**When:** June 26 to 27, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Cost:** Free

**Info:** [dearhandmadelife.com/patchwork-show](http://dearhandmadelife.com/patchwork-show)

online platform (like Etsy) sales. Even though craft shows are coming back and people are shopping in person again, I think it will be a while before those things are as profitable as they were pre-COVID so it’s great that now these makers have built up their online sales and added a new strong income stream.”

Festival organizers are planning to follow COVID-19 safety guidelines



Photo courtesy Dear Handmade Life

**A LOCAL ARTISAN** demonstrates cross stitching during the festival at her booth.

such as social distancing, mandatory mask wearing,

no food, capacity guidelines and sanitizing sta-

tions.

— From staff reports

## DISPUTE

Continued from page R2

feed the homeless there because of a settlement with the American Civil Liberties Union, Milward replied, “The ACLU’s a freaking joke.”

He then knocked a soda away from Don Lemly that he told jurors he feared could be used as a weapon, grabbed him and walked him over to a curb, cursed at him to sit down, handcuffed him and cited him for failing to comply with a police officer’s orders.

A bystander captured the encounter on his cellphone, and photographs show bruises and bloody cuts on Lemly’s wrists from the handcuffs.

Jurors saw everything several times during trial, then deliberated about

three hours before siding with Milward.

The verdict ends a legal crusade that Don Lemly described in testimony as a righteous cause. The 72-year-old retiree told jurors: “If people who are in comfortable circumstances like I am don’t stand up for what’s right and call out somebody who’s a bully in law enforcement, then our society is in big trouble.”

“I’m fortunate enough that I have the time and availability to be able to pursue this,” Lemly said.

The jury’s decision also follows key defense testimony from Milward and other law enforcement officers about ongoing problems with the feedings and the people they bring to the beach. A sheriff’s investigator who spent a month watching the feed compiled a report for the city of Dana

Point that concluded 70% of the approximately 600 people served had criminal records.

“The majority of the people that attend the feed are criminals. Drugs. Domestic violence. Stabbings. Fights,” Milward testified. “I knew a lot of them by name and date of birth.”

“I feel that it didn’t do the state beach well to have that event daily,” he added.

The verdict won’t deter Lemlys and other volunteers, who are organized through the religious coalition Welcome Interfaith Needs Network. The Lemlys — Don Lemly is Welcome INN’s current president — volunteer through their church in San Clemente, St. Andrew’s by the Sea United Methodist Church. Don Lemly cited the Bible’s Gospel of Matthew when explaining why to jurors:



Meghann Cuniff

**VOLUNTEER JAN GREENBERG** walks back to the food set up after assisting men Doheny State Beach on June 16.

“We believe that people, no matter what their circumstances, deserve to have decent food.”

The Lemlys have served food at Doheny for about 12 years, but the feeds have been around longer. They

moved the feeds to a church in Dana Point several years ago, but the church’s priest asked them to leave after a late-night stabbing, so the group returned to Doheny.

The ACLU settlement ref-

erenced during the confrontation and at trial occurred in 2008, after the ACLU of Southern California sued the state for threatening the group with ticketing and arrest for serving the meals. State park rangers argued the group needed to get a gathering permit, but the ACLU argued the requirement interfered with the group’s 1st Amendment rights. Under the settlement, the state agreed to stop enforcing the permit requirement.

In defending Milward, Siegel emphasized to the jury that the ACLU settlement still meant the event had to comply with park rules and obey police orders.

“It didn’t give them unlimited rights,” Siegel said.

**MEGHANN M. CUNIFF** is a contributor to TimesOC.

## HOUSING

Continued from page R2

ing new residents last year.

“California is in the midst of a homelessness and housing crisis that can only end if cities get creative when it comes to boosting housing production,” Mayor Connor Traut said.

The total cost to develop Ascent is about \$18.7 million, \$8.2 million of which was funded by the county’s

Section 8 housing vouchers.

Supportive housing is widely considered to be the key to ending chronic homelessness. A 2017 study by UC Irvine, Jamboree Housing and Orange County United Way found that it costs twice as much for someone to live on the street than to house them.

The county committed in 2018 to add 2,700 permanent supportive housing units by June 2025. So far, 306 permanent supportive

housing units have been completed toward that goal.

Another 535 are under construction and 339 other units are in the process of being funded. The public can track the county’s progress online. There are 6,860 homeless individuals in the county, according to the 2019 Point-In-Time count, which is the most current.

With its more than 30 Orange County properties and 2,800 living units, Jamboree

has been on the front lines of that movement, especially over the last few years since several shelters were built in response to a lawsuit filed by homelessness advocates that attempted to stop the eviction of homeless individuals at a Santa Ana Riverbed encampment.

Jamboree has properties in Brea, Fullerton, Orange, Anaheim, Santa Ana, La Palma, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Laguna

Beach, Irvine, San Clemente and Mission Viejo.

In its infancy, Jamboree’s sole goal was to develop affordable housing in Irvine, where it’s based. Now with an office in Sacramento, the nonprofit has since developed more than 90 affordable housing and permanent supportive housing facilities throughout California, and it is now the second-largest nonprofit builder of quality affordable housing in California.

About 15 years ago, the organization started offering its resident services programs, and about 10 years ago Jamboree began focusing on providing housing to the formerly homeless and mentally ill. A flagship technique for Jamboree has been dedicating about 10% of a facility’s units for those living with chronic mental illness.

[benjamin.brazil@latimes.com](mailto:benjamin.brazil@latimes.com)  
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Don Leach | Staff Photographer

A CH-47 CHINOOK helitanker drops water on the brush during a presentation of the new HeloPod Dip Tank water refilling system for the city of Laguna Beach in November 2020.

# Southland fire crews to get more helicopters for the wildfire season

BY CITY NEWS SERVICE

LOS ALAMITOS (CNS) — A 180-day program providing additional firefighting helicopters to departments in Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties has begun.

The Quick Reaction Force program includes two Boeing Chinook CH-47 helitankers, one based at Van Nuys Air Tanker Base and the other at the Joint Forces Training Base Los Alamitos, and a Sikorsky S-61 helitanker, based in Ventura County.

The CH-47s are considered the world's largest fire suppression, retardant-dropping helicopters with the capacity to carry 3,000 gallons. Unlike other firefighting helicopters, they have the ability to fly at night.

"That's a lot of firefighting power, if you will, when you can drop 3,000 gallons of water onto a brush fire. It's an important tool," Orange County Fire Authority Capt. Thanh Nguyen told City News Service. "We're grateful that we will be able to use it. It's impressive."

The program is being financed with nearly \$18 million from Southern California Edison.

Millions of residents in Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties are among the most vulnerable living within wildfire-prone areas, fire experts said.

Extreme drought conditions and dry vegetation, along with predictions of a dire wildfire season ahead, led to the formation

of the QRF program.

"Generally, when we get a wildfire, it's accompanied with strong winds," Nguyen said. "[Helicopter] pilots have a lot to contend with."

The QRF program contracts exclusively for up to 180 days with Coulson Aviation to combine aerial firefighting resources, preassembled in Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties, with a mobile retardant base and hover-filling tanks.

The helicopters' capabilities were demonstrated on Monday at the training base in Los Alamitos, where OCFA Chief Brian Fennessy described the speedy firefighting response that will be possible for fire incident commanders calling for deployment, who can say, "Get me the QRF."

"One's coming from Orange, one's coming from L.A., one's coming from Ventura County," Fennessy told KTLA5.

"We're going to jump on that fire, hopefully beat it down before it becomes a problem."

For the Los Angeles County Fire Department, the CH-47s will enhance the department's air operations fleet, which includes five Sikorsky S-70 Firehawks and five Bell 412 helicopters, in addition to a seasonal contract with Quebec for the 90-day lease of two CL-415 SuperScoopers expected to arrive in early September, officials said.

dailypilot@latimes.com  
Twitter: @TheDailyPilot



Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

PATRICK MCCANN, 8, of Bellflower holds on tight as he rides a zip line at the playground near the Visitors Center at the Orange County Great Park in Irvine on May 20.

# A great time at the Great Park



PHYLCIA MCCANN, left, of Bellflower and her sons Lucas, 2, center, and Jack, 4, play with a zip line at the Orange County Great Park in Irvine.

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“People may forget those living on our streets or see them as living in guilt, shame, failure and all the things that we try to avoid.”

— Brian Peterson

ARTISTS

Continued from page R1

moments, family, dreams. Then he prints the photo in black and white and begins to paint.

Once he's finished, he reveals the portrait to his subjects and asks them to sign it.

When the artwork is sold, 50% of the proceeds go into what Peterson called a love account. The subjects of the paintings decide how to use the money.

Some have purchased clothing, a van, train tickets, wheelchairs, army cots or rented hotel rooms. The majority choose to purchase bicycles.

Artists receive 40% of the proceeds and 10% goes back toward the nonprofit.

Some paintings in the Muzeo show, like Lujan's portrait of Victoria, are up for sale from about \$2,000 to \$7,000 through the Faces of Mankind website.

“I try to show people who they are,” Peterson said. “People may forget those living on our streets or see them as living in guilt, shame, failure and all the things that we try to avoid. I'm saying, what if I can show who you actually are in a painting full of color and life?”

Peterson emphasizes the friendship portion of the project as essential to treating people with dignity.

“There's always the risk when you're either photographing someone or painting someone of exposing people to the world in unhealthy ways,” Peterson said.



ARTIST MARYBETH STAFFORD, 68, of Corona, at the Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center in Anaheim. “Faces of Mankind: Portraiture for Social Change” is a display of 35 portraits of unhoused and formerly unhoused friends.

Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer



ARTIST SCOTT SCHAIBLE, 23, a resident of Detroit, at the Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center in Anaheim.

“Dignity for me starts with friendship. It puts us both at a level where I'm not above you. I'm just trying to be human, and I hope that it translates into the paintings.”

His relationships with his subjects don't always last. Although he spent much time with Matthew, the subject of his first portrait, they're no longer speaking.

At one point, Peterson helped Matthew get lined up for free permanent housing.

“When we had to sign

some paperwork to the house, I thought it was the greatest victory in my entire life,” Peterson said. “The minute Matt heard the word paperwork, he began to feel like it was a trick ... and so he now believes that I'm trying to hurt him.”

Peterson later added he doesn't think their story is over and is open to connecting again.

The purpose of Faces of Mankind is to connect with people and share their stories through art but not



BRIAN PETERSON, shown with his wife Vanessa, became a full-time artist after quitting his job as a pastor.

necessarily to solve homelessness.

When co-curators Kelly Chidester and Katie Adams Farrell approached Peterson, they were looking for work to fill half of Muzeo's main gallery space in conjunction with the traveling National Endowment Arts exhibit “For All the World to See: Visual Culture and the Struggle for Civil Rights.”

The show is a collection of photographs, TV clips, art posters and historic artifacts that trace how

images and media transformed the modern civil rights movement.

Farell said the through line between the side-by-side shows is how visual culture influences people, particularly how it can help us to see each other with more humanness.

“Imagery and visuals are really big with both of those exhibitions,” Chidester said.

“What do we want our visitors to walk away with? We kept coming back to this idea of humanity and

IF YOU GO

**What:** “Faces of Mankind: Portraiture for Social Change”

**When:** June 16 to Aug. 11, Wednesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Where:** Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center, 241 S. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim

**Cost:** General admission \$10

**Info:** [muzeo.org](http://muzeo.org)

equality. Even though both of those exhibitions touch on different struggles, the main theme of the visuals is how that informs our perceptions of each other and our communities.”

Since transforming the project into a nonprofit model, Peterson's role has changed. He quit his car designing job in 2019 to become a pastor at Vineyard Anaheim.

About nine months into the pandemic, he decided to also quit his job as a pastor to become a full-time artist.

“In the midst of the pandemic, I went to zero income and started to pursue art,” he said. “It's not like I hadn't done any art. I realized I needed to get back to the guy who's an artist and loves to create with his community ... and my job was hindering that progress.”

Peterson sees his art as a form of worship and wants to take on the responsibility of helping others do the same in their respective cities.

In addition to helping artists Scott Schaible in Detroit and Marybeth Stafford in Riverside develop their projects, he's received messages from others in Bakersfield, Tennessee and as far as Africa seeking the same.

He hopes the project can spread on a global scale through coffee table books or full-length documentaries too.

For now, he's growing the nonprofit and out in the streets painting a portrait once a month.

[vera.castaneda@latimes.com](mailto:vera.castaneda@latimes.com)  
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MUSEUM

Continued from page R1

idea that people may never go back inside together again,” Zuckerman says. “I don’t think that’s going to happen now. But institutions that have the ability to allow people to be in this kind of hybrid indoor-outdoor space, I think, will be the most successful over time. It’s about what a museum can be for the 21st century.”

The pandemic was challenging for all cultural institutions, but OCMA took less of a hit than many museums.

After closing its longtime Newport Beach location in June 2018, it had been showing exhibitions in a temporary space, a former Room & Board furniture store in South Coast Plaza Village.

During the pandemic, OCMAExpand opened for two months in the fall but then closed permanently. With a small full-time staff and light overhead, the museum rode out the pandemic relatively unscathed, avoiding staff layoffs and furloughs. Its \$16-million endowment grew 20% during 2020.

“The institution was living within its means and was able to weather the storm,” Zuckerman says.

But the 53,000-square-foot building project — positioned next to the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall and seen as the final element of Segerstrom’s cultural campus — was not immune to the challenges of 2020.

Construction slowed as smaller crews worked while socially distanced, and the pandemic brought manufacturing delays. Fundraising, steered throughout the pandemic by former director Todd D. Smith — before his departure in August — and interim director Sarah Jesse, slowed to a crawl. The museum pushed its opening date from 2021 to mid-2022 and then fall 2022.

Zuckerman, formerly director of the Aspen Art Museum in Colorado, oversaw the creation of a \$45-million building there de-



Gina Ferazzi | Los Angeles Times

**NEW DIRECTOR** Heidi Zuckerman stands at the construction site of the Orange County Museum of Art in Costa Mesa.

signed by Shigeru Ban that opened in 2014.

Upon her arrival at OCMA, she accelerated the project, expediting construction and raising more than \$9.4 million in her first eight weeks. The building campaign stands at more than \$60 million.

Zuckerman made operational changes to the building as well — mostly tweaks related to security, staff offices or visitor experience. She added five board trustees and nailed down the new opening date. She also began acquiring art, beginning with an “eight-talisman installation” by L.A. artist Sarah Cain.

“Eight is the number of infinite abundance,” Zuckerman says. “They’re painted dollar bills suspended from the ceiling with fishing wire. The backs are silver or gold and the fronts are vibrant [colors]. I tell our team, ‘Walk under them, tell them what you need!’”

If there’s an overall vision for the museum beyond maximizing Mayne’s indoor-outdoor design for a post-COVID world, Zuckerman says, it’s “looking back

to move forward.”

In a nod to OCMA’s history, the opening special exhibition will be a resurrection of the museum’s long-running California Biennial, which began in 1984 and continued, nearly uninterrupted, until 2010. Zuckerman hired a three-generation curatorial team led by Elizabeth Armstrong, who has curated the biennial three times. She’ll be joined by Gilbert Vicario, chief curator at the Phoenix Art Museum, and independent curator Essence Harden.

The biennial will be “expansive,” Zuckerman says, incorporating artists throughout California at various stages of their careers. The work will include painting, sculpture, photography and video as well as architecture, design, music and fashion.

“I’ve always associated this institution with the California Biennial,” Zuckerman says. “It was a destination exhibition, on the circuit of people who would travel to see art. And I think some of the most interesting ones were curated by Liz Armstrong.”

With 25,000 square feet of exhibition space to work with, Zuckerman plans to switch up displays of the permanent collection, which consists of more than 4,500 works produced by California and Pacific Rim artists. It highlights movements such as Light and Space, Pop art, Minimalism, California conceptualism, and early and mid-century modernism. With deep holdings by artists such as John Baldessari, Charles Ray, Chris Burden, Vija Celmins, Jay DeFeo, Catherine Opie and Ed Ruscha — dating back to early in their careers — the museum is poised to present both thematic exhibitions and robust solo shows.

“There’s this old idea that permanent collection galleries were staid and never changed,” Zuckerman says, “and now museums can be more dynamic in how they’re using their assets. I think that’s how more museums will function in the future.”

Zuckerman, who hosts the independently produced podcast “Conversations About Art” and who

wrote the “Conversations With Artists” book series, will curate the opening reinstallation of the permanent collection, though it’s too soon to provide details, she says.

Meantime, Zuckerman is working on “right-sizing” the museum. That includes growing the staff of 10 to about 40 people, accelerating fundraising, building the board and increasing acquisitions. She also has launched a \$25 million endowment campaign. Zuckerman expects the museum’s \$3 million annual operating budget will grow to \$9.5 million.

Another goal: getting admission underwritten so the entry to the museum will be free.

“I believe access to art is a basic human right, it’s not a privilege,” Zuckerman says. “So our mission and vision is to connect as many people to art and artists as possible.”

Construction is on track for May 2022 completion, but OCMA won’t open until the fall so there’s time to iron out kinks and to provide a pause after the Museum of Contemporary Art

**“During COVID, there was this idea that people may never go back inside together again. ... institutions that have the ability to allow people to be in this kind of hybrid indoor-outdoor space, I think, will be the most successful over time.”**

— Director Heidi Zuckerman

San Diego premieres its expansion in April, Zuckerman says.

OCMA’s opening will be a 24-hour-long event that will include tours of the permanent collection by past curators and directors as well as live music, middle-of-the-night movie screenings and sunrise yoga.

Zuckerman’s hope for the evening — for the museum itself — is that it be “dynamic and organic and innovative and expressive and just hyper-present,” she says.

“Orange County doesn’t have a downtown, it doesn’t have a civic center. So the idea of our project is to become the anchor of Orange County. We can use art and culture as the connector for the community.”

It’s something that’s especially needed right now, Zuckerman says.

“One of the things that COVID highlighted was: If we don’t make efforts to be with other people, then we get isolated. I don’t think humans like to be on their own. We need each other, want each other, we do better together. And this space is really designed for that — to watch culture but also to watch other people.”

**DEBORAH VANKIN** writes for the Los Angeles Times.

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