

# Daily Pilot

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## H.B. to increase campaign contribution limits

The City Council votes to raise the limit from \$620 to \$4,900 per person or business, matching the state limit. The item was one of several to pass by a 4-3 vote Tuesday, pushed by the body's new conservative majority.

BY MATT SZABO

One of the first 4-3 votes of Tuesday night's Huntington Beach City Council meeting was to increase the salary of City Atty. Michael Gates.

But it was not the only 4-3 vote that the newly divided council made. Not by a long shot.

The panel also voted to increase the campaign contribution limits, amend the city's code enforcement process to bar anonymous complaints and authorize Gates to challenge the city's Regional Housing Needs Assessment num-

bers.

They also approved Mayor Tony Strickland's Council Liaison list, requested a CEQA review for the Great Pacific Air Show and voted to waive the attorney-client and closed session confidentiality privileges for meetings on an age-discrimination lawsuit that was against the city and Gates.

All came by the same 4-3 vote, with the newly elected conservative majority pushing the items through.

The increase in the campaign contributions limit would be from \$620 to \$4,900 per person or busi-

ness, which matches the state limits of the state Legislature for Senate and Assembly candidates.

Strickland, who served in both of those state bodies, introduced the item. He said when he considered running for City Council, people told him no one typically won the first time because of small donor limits.

"You're not going to get rid of money out of politics, but what you are going to do is empower candidates, where the money goes directly to them," he said.

See *Campaign*, page A2



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**CANDIDATES**, including Tony Strickland, holding mic, answer a question during the Basta! Huntington Beach City Council candidates forum at Redeemer Lutheran Church in July. Strickland won his race in November and is now Surf City's mayor.



Photos by Eric Licas

**HUNTINGTON BEACH** Police Officer Trevor Jackson watches as Bethany Alcantara, 9, gasps while they pass by dolls on display in Target during the Shop With a Cop Wednesday. The students selected to participate were recognized by teachers and principals for their work and behavior.

## Kids 'on the good list' reap rewards with shopping spree

BY ERIC LICAS

Dozens of students from throughout Huntington Beach who might have otherwise gone without presents this holiday season picked out gifts for themselves and their families Wednesday during the Police Department's annual Shop With a Cop event.

A total of 53 kids and teens from the Huntington Beach City, Huntington Beach Union High and Ocean View school districts began their day with breakfast at Woody's Diner. Some laughed or raised their hands for high-fives as they got to know police over pancakes and hot chocolate.

Westmont School kindergartner Joyful Leeds leaned over a plate of scrambled eggs while watching an officer shuffle overturned plastic cups at their table. She shouted with glee after selecting one hiding

See *Spree*, page A3



**POLICE CHIEF** Eric Parra addresses over 50 students from schools throughout Huntington Beach who went on a \$275 shopping spree during the department's Shop With a Cop event.

## Shots fired in mall's parking structure

BY ERIC LICAS

Gunfire rang out at South Coast Plaza Thursday evening, but there were no immediate reports of anyone being wounded.

It happened in the mall's northeast parking structure, Costa Mesa Police Sgt. Mike Manson said. An officer who was on the opposite side of the property heard the shots at about 8:30 p.m. and was the first to reach the scene. The officer found an abandoned vehicle, but anyone who might have witnessed the shooting had apparently left.

"By the time they got there, those suspects were in the wind and all that was left there were the car and bullet casings," Manson said.

Detectives obtained grainy surveillance footage showing at least one person opening fire Thursday evening. That person and one other were in the car, got into a collision in the parking structure and then fled the scene on foot, Manson said.

A detailed description of either of those people was not immediately available. Detectives were attempting to determine the motive for the shooting as of Friday.

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## ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Courtesy of the Corona del Mar Residents Assn.

**AROUND TOWN: CORONA DEL MAR HOME LIGHTING CONTEST WINNERS NAMED** PAGE A2

## Newport Beach gives lift to military families via Operation Christmas

BY LILLY NGUYEN

Preparing for Christmas is no easy feat for the average family, but that's especially true for the folks at Operation Christmas.

"Elves" made their way to Newport Beach City Hall Friday afternoon to retrieve the last donations collected by the city for the outreach program, which is organized by the Our Nation's Heroes Foundation. The donations are distributed to military families throughout Orange County.

"Chief elf" and founder Brad White said not all the presents had been counted yet Friday, but

**SEBASTIAN LEZAMA, 7,**

whose parents are service members, picks out a toy at Newport Beach city facilities for Operation Christmas.

the city was on track to meet if not surpass its total last year of more than 2,000 gifts.

Presents were collected from

See *Lift*, page A3



Photos by Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**SGT. CRISTIAN CASTANON** watches his daughter Luna, 3, choose a toy from the many donated from community members at Newport Beach city facilities for Operation Christmas.

AROUND TOWN

'Residents Light Up Cdm' contest winners named

The winners of the "Residents Light Up Corona del Mar" contest were announced this week. First place was taken by the Lyle family on the 400 block of Heliotrope Avenue...



Courtesy of the Corona del Mar Residents Assn.

THE LYLE FAMILY on the 400 block of Heliotrope Avenue has won the first place designation in this year's "Residents Light Up Corona del Mar" contest.

O.C. Water District elects Green as board president

The Orange County Water District board of directors has elected former Huntington Beach City Councilwoman Cathy Green as its 2023-24 board president. Denis Bilodeau and Van Tran will serve as first and second vice president...

2003 and 2009 and currently serves as vice president of the Assn. of California Water Agencies, the largest statewide coalition of public water agencies in the country. Green represents District 6...

County back in 'high' COVID-19 transmission tier

The Orange County Health Care Agency reported Thursday that the county is now in the "high" COVID-19 transmission tier based on the latest data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The agency is encouraging O.C. residents

to continue to get fully vaccinated if they aren't already, wear well-fitting masks, avoid contact with those who are ill or have COVID-19, self-test if in regular contact with someone at high-risk of becoming ill and monitor themselves for symptoms.

Southbound PCH lane to be closed in Laguna Beach

The California Department for Transportation will be conducting an emergency project on southbound Pacific Coast Highway that will require the closure of the right lane south of School/State Park in Laguna Beach. The closure will begin Wednesday, Jan. 4 and is expected to continue through Feb. 22.

Musselman earns water polo Player of the Year

Corona del Mar High alumna Maddie Musselman has been named the Total Water Polo Female Player of the Year for 2022. Musselman earned the accolade for the second straight year; voting was done by 32 water polo experts and eight media voters. Musselman, 24, is a two-time Olympic gold medalist in women's water polo and four-time world champion. She finished

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CAMPAIGN

Continued from page A1

"The citizens know who that money goes to, then they can make their educated choice ... This brings about more accountability in our candidates and campaigns. Most cities do go along with the limits of the state of California, and that will allow us to have a more

informed citizenry when it comes to elections here in Huntington Beach." "The strongest hit pieces are the ones done by outside groups, not by the candidates, because the candidates have to put their name behind that. If you want to see less negative campaigning, you pass this measure." Strickland noted that Westminster, the city im-

mediately to Huntington Beach's north, has no campaign contributions limits. Mayor Pro Tem Gracey Van Der Mark, who unsuccessfully ran for the Ocean View School District Board of Trustees in 2018, added that OVSD also does not have contributions limits. "This is not wildly outrageous," she said. "We're trying to just give the control back to the candidate, in-

stead of having to rely on independent expenditures to be in a successful race." Councilman Dan Kalmick said he was not against raising the limits but still voted against the item. "I'd like to get some context on a per capita basis," he said. "A state Senate race is a million people. We're one-fifth the size of a Senate district, so \$1,100 or

\$1,200 seems like a good trial to go. I just question why we need to do this today. No one's going to start raising money for a year and a half, usually, before we start running for elections [in 2024]." Councilwoman Natalie Moser also voted against the item. She said that when she ran for council in 2020, she had 244 itemized contributions averaging just

\$161 each. "Personally, I want people who are your regular residents to feel like they have power and can make a difference," she said. "I believe that we should not be adding and increasing our campaign finance contributions at this time because I think it does the opposite of that." matthewszabo@latimes.com Twitter: @mjszabo

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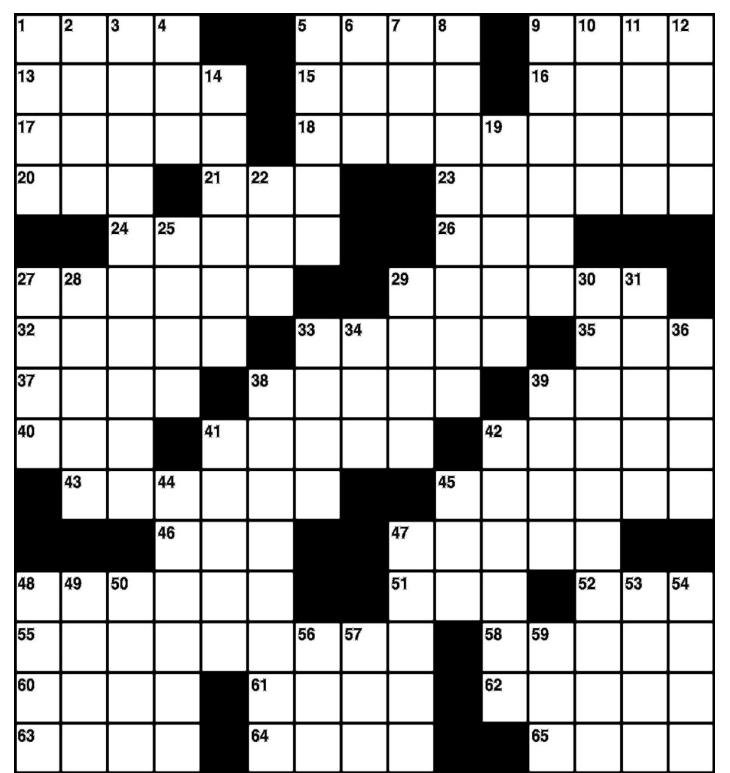


The state of what's next. Los Angeles Times

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

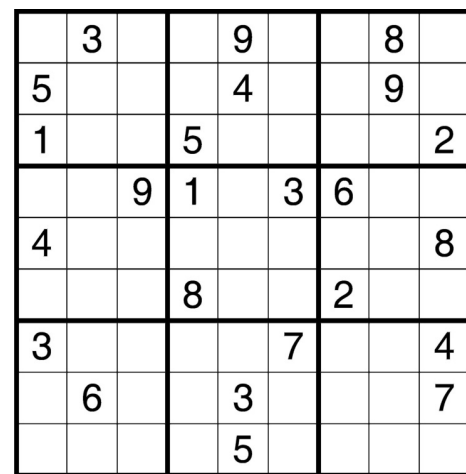
- ACROSS 1 "I Am I \_"; Neil Diamond hit 5 Lincoln & others 9 Sound of thunder 13 "To be \_ to be" 15 Funeral blaze 16 City in Nevada 17 Keaton or Ladd 18 Maybe 20 Recipe verb 21 Org. for Browns & Bills 23 Bicycle built for two 24 Orange Muppet 26 Sort; kind 27 Find not guilty 29 Colonoscopy finds 32 Bessie Smith's music 33 Puts on weight 35 Put \_ fight; resist 37 Go before others 38 Payroll deductions 39 Ginger cookie 40 Gobble up 41 Shoe parts 42 In a \_; very quickly 43 House of worship 45 Ribs 46 "We \_ Family"; Sister Sledge song 47 \_ in; inundated by 48 Pencil part 51 Eur. nation 52 White \_; termite 55 Like Lucille Ball & Raggedy Ann 58 Word with room or macaroni 60 Stare 61 Three squared 62 Actress Burke 63 Tributes in verse



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 A3.

- 64 Pegs for Palmer 65 Chocolate candy store DOWN 1 Ice cream concoction 2 Dry as a desert 3 Short of what is required 4 Actor Knotts 5 Granny Smith, e.g. 6 "See ya!" 7 Mess up 8 Parts 9 In a bad mood 10 \_ a hand; help out 11 Suffix for repent or convey 12 "Trees" or "If" 14 Summer Olympics sport 19 Corridors 22 In good shape 25 Was remorseful 27 Qualified 28 Shoe traction provider 29 Bakery display 30 \_ by law; illegal 31 Part of NASA 33 Powerful wind 34 Wood splitter 36 Gibbons & baboons 38 Broad-minded 39 Mrs. & Mme. 41 Shopper's binge 42 \_ up; got emotional 44 Prepares spuds 45 Small number 47 Mt. Aconcagua's range 48 Thus 49 Peruse 50 Tool with an arched blade 53 Short letter 54 Poet's contraction 56 Pass away 57 Des Moines-to-Chicago direction 59 Man's nickname Tribune Media Services





SOUTH COAST PLAZA  
WISHES YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A

*Happy Holiday Season*

