

Daily Pilot

SATURDAY, JULY 6, 2024 // dailypilot.com



Photos by Susan Hoffman

PASSENGERS OF OASIS V wave flags to people watching on Balboa Island during the Old Glory Fourth of July boat parade.

Boaters salute America

BY SUSAN HOFFMAN

Around 50 boats patriotically decorated in red, white and blue cruised Newport Harbor for a few hours Thursday afternoon in celebration of Independence Day.

As part of the American Legion Newport Harbor Post 291 tradition, prizes were given in various categories to participants.

Daniel Goncalves and Magda Michna, who hadn't yet moved into their new Balboa Island home, decided to camp out with air mattresses so they could take in the holiday festivities.

See **Boaters**, page A6



FROM LEFT, Bowie, Jaxin and Lexi play in the water as they shout out "Happy Fourth of July" to boaters in Newport Beach's Old Glory parade.

See **Stabbing**, page A5

Fashion Island suspects accused of murder

3 suspects face multiple charges, including an enhancement for killing a person over 65, in fatal armed robbery attempt.

BY CITY NEWS SERVICE

Three men accused of carrying out a brazen attempted armed robbery at Newport Beach's Fashion Island, then fatally running over the female victim — a 68-year-old tourist from New Zealand — have been charged with murder and other offenses.

Leroy Ernest Joseph McCrary, 26, of Compton, 18-year-old Lancaster resident Jaden Cunningham and Malachi Eddward Darnell, 18, of Los Angeles could all face the death penalty if convicted as charged, though prosecutors could pursue life sentences without the possibility of

See **Accused**, page A5



TEEN GRAND MARSHALL Fifi Garcia, left, and her guest smile during Huntington Beach's Fourth of July parade.



Photos by James Carbone

LOCAL BOY SCOUT troops hold the historic Freedoms Flag for the start of Huntington Beach's 120th annual Fourth of July Parade.

Fourth of July parade sparkles in Surf City

BY MATT SZABO

Overcast skies did not dampen the patriotism for thousands of spectators in Huntington Beach on Thursday morning.

The city hosted its 120th annual Fourth of July parade, billed as the largest Independence Day parade west of the Mississippi River.

Community groups, bands and floats paraded up Main Street, after beginning

the 2.5-mile route at Pacific Coast Highway and 9th Street. All seven City Council members also participated in the parade.

This year's parade, as usual, included

See **Parade**, page A6

Huntington Beach woman selected as Dole Caregiver Fellow

BY MATT SZABO

A loud firework boomed in northwest Huntington Beach on Wednesday evening, causing several car alarms to go off nearby.

Ann Nacino certainly understood why. The Fourth of July was just hours away. But the noise was still cause for concern.

"Oh my goodness gracious," Nacino said, letting out a sigh. "At this point, this is where I go check on my husband."

Nacino and her husband, Ray, are all about celebrating the country's independence. She's an Army wife who met her husband while they were in college at San Diego State in the mid-1990s.

Ann was attending on an ROTC scholarship. Ray, whose father also served in the Army, went to the ROTC office the next day and signed up. Following his 10 years of active service, the family moved to Huntington Beach with their three children in 2006.

The Nacinos, though, now have a more complicated relationship with the holiday. Ray doesn't do so well with loud noises. In recent years, he was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder following his deployments across Eastern Europe and the Middle East following 9/11.

Ann is striving to make a difference for Ray and others like him.

She was recently named as a 2024 fellow for the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, which was founded to empower, support and honor the nation's military caregivers. Nacino, one of 15 caregivers selected nationwide, will represent her peers in local and national advocacy initiatives, including a trip to Washington, D.C. in September for the ninth annual national convening.

The convening will also feature the unveiling of a new RAND Corp. study: "America's Hidden



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

ANN NACINO holds a picture of her husband, Ray, and father-in-law Oscar, both U.S. Army veterans. The Huntington Beach resident was recently selected as a national advocate for caregivers to wounded veterans.

See **Caregiver**, page A6

Police arrest Nevada resident in stabbing near Newport Pier

BY LILLY NGUYEN

A fight Thursday evening ended in the arrest of one man who allegedly assaulted another in a scuffle in the 2200 block of West Balboa Boulevard, according to law enforcement officials.

Newport Beach police said Friday the incident occurred at around 8 p.m. when a group of men got into a fight with another individual. The reasons for the fight are unclear, but the suspect is alleged to have used a knife to cut the victim's leg, causing a serious injury.

All parties were taken to a hospital for treatment. Authorities did not identify the victim but stated that Axel Kenneth Williams, 21, of Henderson, Nev., was arrested on suspicion of assault with a cutting instrument.

Court and jail records as of Friday afternoon did not indicate whether or not Williams remained in custody, nor was there information as to when he will be expected to appear in court.

Police shut down southbound Balboa Boulevard at 23rd Street Thursday evening as they investigated the incident, according to notices sent at 8:53 p.m.

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Driver charged in road death of cyclist in N.B.

BY CITY NEWS SERVICE

A 58-year-old man was facing felony charges Friday resulting from a fatal collision that killed a bicyclist in Newport Beach two years ago.

Ronald Elston Benjamin

was charged Monday with vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated without gross negligence and driving under the influence of a drug causing injury, both felonies, as well as a misdemeanor count of child

abuse and endangerment. He faces a sentencing enhancement for inflicting great bodily injury on the victim.

The collision occurred June 10, 2022. The victim was identified in the crimi-

nal complaint only as George H.

Messages left for police and prosecutors for further details were not immediately returned.

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Laguna Beach enters new fiscal year with \$147M budget

BY ANDREW TURNER

Laguna Beach wrapped up its budget discussions with the City Council adopting a \$147-million budget for operating and capital improvement costs on June 25 for the new fiscal year that began July 1.

There is an anticipated revenue of \$93.8 million to the general fund, per a staff report, while proposed appropriations from the city's primary operating fund amounted to \$94.6 million.

The report noted the general fund remained balanced with a 20% reserve of \$17.1 million.

Budgetary requests included \$193,000 for a cybersecurity position, \$500,000 for microgrid resiliency, and a \$150,000 funding match of community donations to renovate the 1931 Seagrave fire engine.

Assistant City Manager Gavin Curran indicated the cybersecurity position could serve as a preventive measure to maintain access to critical resources, protecting the productivity of the city.

"The bad guys are always working to find ways around that, so you're constantly trying to manage and add and change," Curran said. "When you don't have a dedicated person to do that, you can quickly fall behind. Fall[ing] behind is a risk. It's a risk that you can accept, and that just means that you're a little more vulnerable than you would be if you had the position.

"You have to remember that we're a full-service city, so you're dealing with police, fire, and not only just City Hall, so things and data we have to protect as best we can. We've been able to manage it with the staff we had, but it's becoming more and more sophisticated — the services we have and what you need to provide to protect."

Another \$500,000 has been set aside in the Measure LL fund to provide for three additional firefighters. Fire Chief Niko King said during a meeting of the City Council on June 11 that the additional personnel would be placed at Fire Station No. 1.

"The fire chief did apply for a grant to fund these three firefighter positions, which the council did approve as the standards of cover," Curran said. He noted that if the grant comes through there will be \$500,000 available to add the firefighters, but that a strategic plan also needs to be put in place to implement other recommendations that would improve coverage.

In order to power the emergency operations center at the Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center, a \$100,000 expenditure was made on a portable generator.

A recurring theme in Laguna Beach is that more ways need to be found to have visitors contribute to the services being provided around town. The topic

"The way to collect revenue from visitors to help cover more of the costs they create is through the bars and restaurants, where they are 80% of the customers."

— John Thomas

Laguna Beach resident

resurfaced with city officials considering the conversion of as many as 500 non-metered parking spaces to paid parking along Coast Highway in South Laguna.

Resident John Thomas suggested revisiting a business license fee for bars and restaurants, as well as a meal tax.

"The way to collect revenue from visitors to help cover more of the costs they create is through the bars and restaurants, where they are 80% of the customers," Thomas said. "Structured properly, a small fee passed on to a large number of visitors could eventually generate nearly as much revenue for the city as the hotel tax, and the revenue would be collected from the correct visitors, the ones who generate most of the added costs."

As for the potential for more paid parking along Coast Highway, city staff noted the process would include going through the California Coastal Commission. The conversion could result in an estimated \$1.25 million in annual revenue once pay stations and sign-

age were installed.

"I think parking in residential areas in any beach town is an issue you're going to face," said Michael Litschi, director of transit and community services. "People are looking for a place to park and get to the beach, so we're hearing from residents that there's parking issues right now in South Laguna without the meters in the neighborhoods."

"Sometimes, people will gravitate to areas that are designated as official parking places. If we did put meters in, we could also try to work with Caltrans to put parking sensors so they showed up and were shown as legitimate parking for people who were coming into town."

Litschi also took questions on demand-based parking, sharing that the city was currently operating with a seasonal approach. Parking rates have risen to peak levels for the summer art festival season through Labor Day.

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THE CROWD | B.W. COOK

Angelitos de Oro meet for luncheon in support of local Big Brothers Big Sisters organization

Some 1,500 nonprofit organizations in Orange County serve the greater good. All function under the mission of service to others. Not all last the test of time — the changing of the guard, the passing of the generational torch, economic highs and lows.

Among the standouts is an exclusive society of women who have bonded and served together for more than half a century, beginning in what was a very new frontier as Orange County came to life in the post-WWII era. They are the Angelitos de Oro, an auxiliary of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire.

Recently, some 100 active and sustaining members of Angelitos de Oro came together for an elegant annual luncheon in the dining room of the Pacific Club in Newport Beach. It was the ideal backdrop for this gathering, as the club exudes substance and style with outstanding food and service.

The ladies of Angelitos de Oro deserve the best. Since 1961 their fundraising to support the local Big Brothers Big Sisters programs has raised over \$8 million. On hand to congratulate the crowd, Angelitos President **Patti Boortz** announced that the 2024 luncheon added \$425,000 to the total — a record amount, she shared, as applause rang out.

An important aspect of the luncheon event was to present scholarship awards to recipients and introduce exceptional young advocates of the organization who serve as high school "Bigs." These are senior



Photos courtesy of Ann Chatillon

NATALIE PICKUP, Patti Estabrooks, Mary Lynn Rallis and Jackie Glass at the annual Angelitos de Oro luncheon. The four are underwriters or donors to scholarships.

students who mentor younger students in need of friendship, educational support and counsel. They are known as the "Littles."

Sloane Keene, chief executive of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire, introduced the "Bigs," each of whom addressed the assembled women, sharing very emotional and personal stories of survival and growth against great challenge.

Adding charm and humor to the serious purpose of the presentation, two longstanding Angelitos stepped up to the podium and brought the crowd to their knees with laughter. With no intention of turning their individual remarks into a comedy routine, **Marilyn Wooten** and **Trish O'Donnell** delivered an

irreverent yet warmhearted take on the task of serving a nonprofit for so many years. If a talent agent had been in the crowd, a contract to go on the road with an act would have surely been offered.

Front and center for it all was **Mary Lynn Bergman Rallis**, known for her spectacular fashion sense and dramatic hats. She outdid herself this year. She joined **Catherine Thyen**, **Kate Eastman**, **Cari Young**, **Sherry Bilbeisi**, **Gigi Spragins**, **Pam Howard** and **Karen Taylor**. Also there to support the cause were **Fran Bennett**, **Hyla Berteau**, **Jackie Glass**, **Sandra Pearlmutter**, **Pam Muzzy**, **Donna Bunce**, **Natalie Pickup**, **Marion Hartwich** and **Marie France Lefebvre**.

Coming up in the fall, the

annual Angelitos Shopping Card, priced at \$60 and produced with support from South Coast Plaza, will again offer savings at about 100 stores and restaurants. The 2024 Shopping Card week takes place Oct. 2 through 8, with a special kickoff on Oct. 1. To learn more, visit ocbigs.org.

NEW OCMA EXHIBIT

The Orange County Museum of Art is currently presenting "Yves Saint Laurent: Line and Expression," which opened to the public Thursday and will run through Oct. 23. The exhibit is the U.S. premiere, and the first presentation in Southern California, of world-revered fashion icon Yves Saint Laurent's legendary career. The display comes to OCMA with con-



AMONG THOSE attending the Angelitos de Oro annual luncheon, which benefits Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and Inland Empire, were Trish O'Donnell, left, Patti Boortz and Marilyn Wooten, president of Angelitos de Oro.

siderable effort and coordination, traveling from the Musée Yves Saint Laurent, Marrakech and Musée Yves Saint Laurent, Paris. Additional selections from the collection are on loan to OCMA from the Fondation Pierre Bergé- Yves Saint Laurent, Paris. A special preview of this landmark display of design was held last week hosted by OCMA chief executive **Heidi Zuckerman**.

"The opening of the YSL exhibition was truly extraordinary. It was my second favorite event at the museum following the 24-hour opening. To see the galleries filled with people beautifully dressed, many wearing YSL, amongst the stunning YSL dresses on gorgeously positioned mannequins, was a sight to behold!" Zuckerman said.

Among the glitterati present for the debut were museum trustee **Alison Hoeven**, joining the director of the Yves Saint-Laurent Museum in Marrakech, **Alexis Sornin** as well as **Elsa Janssen**, director of the Yves Saint-Laurent Museum, Paris.

Respected YSL curator

Gaël Mamine and exhibition designer **Claudia Huidobro** led guided tours of the exquisite exhibition.

The scope and breadth of the display covers decades of Saint-Laurent's work from 1963 forward, featuring original sketches paired with photographs and mannequins adorned with original designs. In addition, curated exhibits offering jewelry, accessories, and haute couture all providing insight into the artistic imagination and brilliant execution of one man's vision in the decorative and fashionable arts.

"The energy in the galleries was palpable," Zuckerman said. "The celebration of simultaneously sexy and elegant is perfect at OCMA!"

This is a must-see for Orange County devotees of art, fashion design and 20th-century culture that emanated in France from one man who then inspired the fashionable world with his artistry. For more information, visit ocma.art.

B.W. COOK is editor of the Bay Window, the official publication of the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach.

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Stella Zawistowski

ACROSS

- 1 Carpet variety
- 5 Des Moines native
- 10 Furniture wood
- 14 Of great height
- 15 In the loop
- 16 Hard to find
- 17 Actress Raines
- 18 Cut finely
- 19 "Got it": 2 wds.
- 20 Name of two UK queens
- 22 Job's tormenter
- 23 Modernize
- 24 "_ says" (kids' game)
- 26 Boy
- 29 Disney's Rapunzel adaptation
- 33 Wise Men of the Bible
- 37 Leaf gatherer
- 39 Waikiki party
- 40 Biz school subject: Abbr.
- 41 Gators' relatives
- 42 "What _ is new?"
- 43 Actor Alda
- 44 Toffee bar brand
- 45 Takes to court
- 46 Taught privately
- 48 Maple tree secretion
- 50 ^
- 52 Gets better
- 57 All worn out
- 60 Excerpt on TV: 2 wds.
- 63 "_ my word!"
- 64 Dalai Lama's land
- 65 Director Preminger
- 66 Sailing vessel
- 67 Top celebs
- 68 LummoX
- 69 Does sums
- 70 Japanese seaport
- 71 AOL et al.: Abbr.

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69					70						71			

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

- For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A5.**
- 2 Oscar winner Berry
 - 3 Bold poker bet: 2 wds.
 - 4 Donut coating
 - 5 Foot in poetry
 - 6 Toddler's boo-boo
 - 7 Desires
 - 8 Building designers
 - 9 Once known as
 - 10 Three-sided shapes
 - 11 "_ of Eden" (Steinbeck classic)
 - 12 Zone
 - 13 Sharp-witted
 - 21 Punching tool
 - 22 Male offspring
 - 25 Actress Mason
 - 27 Shooter of

- arrows
 - 28 Thrill seekers
 - 30 Humdinger
 - 31 Lack of difficulty
 - 32 Member's payments
 - 33 Vegetarian's no-no
 - 34 Civil rights group: Abbr.
 - 35 Horned farm animal
 - 36 Naive people
 - 38 "Kampground" company: Abbr.
 - 47 "Awesome!"
 - 49 Vietnamese soup
 - 51 Shin bone
 - 53 Food recall cause: 2 wds.
 - 54 Choir members
 - 55 Beamed: 2 wds.
 - 56 TV ads
 - 57 Big brass instrument
 - 58 Old Apple player
 - 59 Highway or street
 - 61 Classroom furniture
 - 62 Singer James
 - 64 Chinese philosophy
- Tribune Media Services

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N.B. art exhibition, new sculptures draw admirers

BY SUSAN HOFFMAN

The Newport Beach Civic Center was abuzz with people admiring more than 150 creations shown during the 57th annual Arts Commission Art Exhibition that was held in tandem with the addition of 10 pieces to the city's sculpture garden on the last Saturday of June.

"The turnout was excellent with attendees lining up before the Exhibit Hall opened at 1 p.m.," said Melissa Hartson, the city's Library Services director. She added that the steady stream of visitors continued until the one-day show closed at 6 p.m.

Susie Sprinkle Hudson, who won a third-place award as part of the 3D Art Category (sculpture and mixed media) for her "3



PAMELA AMBROSIO'S sculpture "Interplay" is made with fabricated steel, alcohol inks and resin.

Women in a Field of Poppies," was thrilled her application to be in the show had been accepted and that it also caught the eyes of the judges.

"My sewing machine is my paintbrush and my fabric is my paint," said

Sprinkle Hudson. "With all the shows I enter, if I'm accepted and 'on the wall' I've already won, so winning an award is icing on the cake! Albeit, super out-of-this-world icing!"

Steven Edwards, exhibiting for the first time



SUSIE SPRINKEL HUDSON stands with her third-place ribbon in 3D art (sculpture and mixed media) for "3 Women in a Field of Poppies" during the Newport Beach Civic Center art exhibit and sculpture dedication Saturday.

Photos by Susan Hoffman

anywhere, entered two unique pieces, "Mythos" and "Mythoette," using photography, glass and colored lights encased in acrylic, giving the pieces a 3D-type depth.

"The light and colors are from the camera, not

Photoshop or computer graphics," explained Edwards.

The sculpture garden came into being in 2013 with the completion of the Civic Center, which includes City Hall, the public library and a 17-acre

park. The new phase of sculptures unveiled during the art show is the ninth since the program's inception and brought the total on display to 20.

Susan Hoffman is a contributor to the Daily Pilot.

ACCUSED

Continued from page A1

parole, the Orange County district attorney's office announced Friday.

The charges against the three men include a special circumstance allegation of murder during the commission of a robbery, along with a sentencing enhancement of killing a person over age 65.

All three suspects were charged with attempted second-degree robbery. McCrary, who prosecutors said has prior convictions for residential burglary in 2018, criminal threats in 2020 and robbery in 2023, was also charged with a felony count of evading while driving recklessly, prosecutors said.

Darnell was additionally charged with attempted murder and given sentencing enhancements for his alleged personal use and discharge of a firearm.

The charges filed stem from a robbery and killing that occurred Tuesday outside the Newport Beach retail center, leaving 68-year-old Patricia McKay dead in the parking lot.

Police and prosecutors maintain Darnell and Cunningham, both wearing masks, approached McKay and her husband as they



Susan Hoffman

A TENT WAS set up near Bloomingdale's at Fashion Island on Tuesday as Newport Beach police investigated a fatal attempted robbery. Three suspects have been charged.

were walking outside the Barnes & Noble store at around 3:30 p.m..

One of the suspects put a gun to the head of McKay's 69-year-old husband and demanded his watch as they forced him to the ground, according to prosecutors. When they were unable to get the watch, the men allegedly turned their attention to McKay, who was holding multiple shopping bags.

Cunningham allegedly dragged McKay into the street in front of a getaway car being driven by McCrary. Prosecutors said McKay's husband jumped in front of the vehicle in an effort to protect his wife, but McCrary, with Darnell

back in the vehicle, accelerated and forced the husband out of the way, then ran over McKay, trapping her under the vehicle and dragging her 65 feet.

Still on foot at the time, Cunningham began running toward the moving vehicle while being chased by a good Samaritan. Darnell allegedly fired several shots from inside the car to deter the pursuer, although no one was struck by the gunfire, as Cunningham got into the vehicle, and the trio drove away.

The suspects led authorities on a pursuit along northbound lanes of the 405 Freeway. During the chase, the driver pulled over in the Cypress area,

and Cunningham jumped out of the car but was later apprehended.

The other two suspects continued the pursuit into South Gate, where they were both eventually detained by police and arrested.

McKay was pronounced dead at the scene, police reported Tuesday. Her husband, whose identity has not been released to the public, was not seriously

injured during the robbery.

In a release issued by prosecutors Friday, Orange County Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer accused state lawmakers for taking a soft stance on retail crime.

"Our entire community extends its deepest sympathies to the loved ones of Patricia McKay and to the entire country of New Zealand as we mourn her senseless death in the commission of a crime

that should have never happened," he said. "Lawlessness and violence will not be tolerated in our society."

All three suspects are scheduled to appear in Orange County Superior Court Monday for an arraignment and bail review hearing, court records indicate.

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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

STABBING

Continued from page A1

"When [officers] arrived, they found several individuals with significant injuries," Carey said Friday. "Three people were transported to an area hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. An additional two individuals, unfortunately, succumbed to their injuries."

The identities of the two victims pronounced dead at the scene were not being released Friday morning, due to an ongoing investigation by Huntington Police Department's Major Crime Unit.

One suspect — Logan Christopher Kelley, 26, of Huntington Beach — was taken into custody and booked on suspicion of

murder and attempted murder at 11:30 p.m., according to HBPD's online adult arrest log.

While Carey confirmed numerous people were present when officers arrived at the location, she would not say whether an Independence Day celebration may have been taking place.

However, numerous Fourth of July festivities were going on in and around Huntington Beach's nearby downtown area, including a fireworks show that had begun just two hours before the reported assault.

"It's a big holiday here for us in Huntington," Carey said. "Between our parade, businesses in Pier Plaza and the fireworks show at 9, the party goes on all day."

Investigators were still processing the scene Friday. Although police did not believe there was any public safety threat related to the incident, the department was not yet ruling out the possibility that other suspects may have been involved, according to Carey.

"That's still something we're looking into as part of the investigation," she said, adding that Major Crimes Unit personnel were "leaving no stone unturned" in their handling of the case.

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N.B. Historical Society's museum opens in temporary home

BY SUSAN HOFFMAN

About 50 people turned out Friday, June 28, to celebrate the Newport Beach Historical Society's newly acquired but temporary location at the Balboa Fun Zone.

"We moved into the Fun Zone for the time being; we're looking for a permanent home," said Bernie Svalstad president of the nonprofit for the past decade.

He explained the first temporary donated museum space had been at the Balboa Branch of the Newport Beach Public Library, home to the museum since 2016. After eight years, however, the museum had to relocate because the peninsula library, built in 1929, is slated to be demolished and reconstructed, along with fire station No. 1.

Balboa Island residents



Susan Hoffman

JOHN VALLEY studies a historical photo with his wife, Karen, during the grand opening of the Newport Beach Historical Society's museum at the Balboa Fun Zone Friday.

John Valley, along with his wife, Karen, grew up in Newport Beach.

"I've lived here since 1948," said John Valley. "There's a lot of history housed here in the pictures and in them a lot of state-

ments that tell a story."

Prominent local historian Bill Grundy, who also grew up in the city, founded the Newport Beach Historical Society in 1967. He had been president for 42 years until 2010 when his son,

Gordon, stepped in following his father's death.

Svalstad said he took over the role as president in late 2014 after Gordon Grundy moved away. At that point, the museum was incorporated as a nonprofit.

"Our membership is growing, including lifetime member Mayor Will O'Neill, and we added 50 new members this month, giving us around 250," he said.

Svalstad, a 50-year resident of Newport Beach, originally became involved in its history during the time when he was chairman of the McFadden Square committee.

"My committee raised the money and put together the history of Newport Beach with an engraved area all around the monument," said Svalstad. After that, he hoped to keep the momentum going in his

search for uncovering local history.

"I wanted to get involved and to find anybody who knew a lot about the specifics and figure out who was preserving [the history]," he said.

The organization hosts lectures throughout the year that feature people and places that have historically contributed to Newport Beach. It also hosts social events.

Peyton Reed, the oldest living Newport Beach lifeguard, dove into the past and evolution of lifeguarding in Newport Beach peppered with personal stories during a museum event in February.

In May, a celebratory dinner was held at the Balboa Pavilion Grand Ballroom themed, "Balboa Ferry Dinner: Over 100 Years of Back and Forth." For that event, keynote speaker Seymour

Beek talked about the 100 years of journeys of the Balboa ferry.

One of last Friday's grand opening attendees, Ken Carpenter, a Balboa Island resident who recently joined the board of NBHS, said he joined the museum because "I love Newport Beach history and I need to find a place for my collections. I was born in Corona del Mar and I've been here my whole life and I can't escape.

"The small temporary location — I think this is a perfect location," he continued. "We're looking for a long-term large facility so that we can display the entire collection of Newport history, which encompasses Corona del Mar, Balboa, Balboa Island and all of Newport."

Susan Hoffman is a contributor to the Daily Pilot.

Laguna Beach debuts patriotic drone show

BY ANDREW TURNER

The cameras and cell-phones came out in bulk, as thousands endeavored to capture the opening moments of a new Independence Day celebration in Laguna Beach.

An aerial spectacular of 300 drones lit up the night sky over Monument Point, whipping through a series of thematic formations.

The creative designs included patriotic imagery, including a likeness of the American flag and nods to Team USA in the upcoming Summer Olympics in Paris. At one point, the words "City of Laguna Beach" were spelled out in red, white and blue.

Drones also worked their way into depictions of more local icons, such as the Laguna Beach trolleys, the Main Beach lifeguard tower, and even an artist and their canvas. Coastal activities such as sailing and surfing, as well as marine life like jellyfish and sharks, also played heavily into the drone show, which



A GROUP of drones take the shape of a Star Wars jet fighter as part of the Fourth of July drone show in Laguna Beach.

did not quite reach the 15-minute mark.

Those looking to set the show to music were directed to a QR code to simulcast patriotic music from the Voice of Laguna or local radio station KXFM 104.7.

Onlookers took in the show from across the city, with images surfacing on social media from the coastline to residential properties in the cliffs. Main Beach, which had

been packed in the late afternoon, had its benches filled along the boardwalk as showtime approached.

The crowd grew denser still, as people ascended the stairs, eyeing lines of sight along the coast and among the palm trees in Heisler Park. Fireworks from neighboring communities to the north could be seen in the background.

Laguna Beach made the call to replace its traditional fireworks with a drone



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

DRONES FORM a peace sign as part of the Fourth of July drone show over Main Beach Park in Laguna Beach as smoke lingers in the background from fireworks at Emerald Bay.

show in May. The City Council directed staff to pursue the technology-driven entertainment option on a one-year trial basis.

The city spent approximately \$75,000 to put on the drone show, according to the staff report when the item came before the council. A continuation of the fireworks display would have cost about \$42,000.

Proponents of that move

considered the environmental impact, looking at benefits with respect to fire danger and impacts on wildlife, including those related to noise.

A sampling of the public after the show resulted in mixed reviews, as some longed for the pyrotechnics. Whether the preference was for drones or fireworks, Laguna Beach saw its fair share of foot traffic. Downtown bars and

restaurants had ample guests to serve, and the local art galleries were also getting a significant number of walk-ins.

That turned into vehicular traffic on the way out of town, which remained bumper to bumper more than two hours after the drones had touched back down.

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BOATERS

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"We just bought a house on Emerald Avenue, and it's the first time ever seeing the parade," said Michna. "It's incredible, the best way to celebrate the Fourth of July."

"It's just nice to see everyone come together and celebrate this beautiful country," Goncalves said.

In addition to the Old Glory Parade, Post 291 hosted a pancake breakfast in the morning, followed by \$5 lunches in the afternoon and evening that offered a choice of tacos, a hamburger or a hot dog.

It was all part of a three-day celebration of



Susan Hoffman

NEWPORT BEACH Mayor Will O'Neill climbed aboard the American Legion yacht charter boat, Valor, during the Old Glory Fourth of July boat parade.

the organization's 100th anniversary in Newport Harbor, which included a black-tie gala Friday night and another pancake

breakfast and lunch Saturday.

Susan Hoffman is a contributor to the Daily Pilot.

PARADE

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several grand marshals. The teen grand marshal was Huntington Beach sports star Fifi Garcia, while the musical grand marshal was Kyle Schuesler.

Jeff Deffenbaugh was the surfing grand marshal, while Robyne Wood of Robyne's Nest was the community grand marshal.

Thursday's festivities also included the Surf City Run 5K before the parade. Live entertainment followed throughout the afternoon before the city hosted fireworks over the ocean at 9 p.m.

More than 500,000 people were expected to visit Surf City over the course of



James Carbone

WORLD WAR II veteran Darrel Walter, left, and Desert Storm veteran Vince Romao, right, take part in Huntington Beach's 120th annual Fourth of July parade on Thursday.

the day for the celebration.

The party continued in Huntington Beach on Friday night, with a block party featuring music from

Redneck Rodeo and the Ramsey Brothers Band.

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CAREGIVER

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Heroes: Emerging from the Shadows."

Ann Nacino said her husband was at first fine following his active duty, working as a mechanical engineer, but he experienced an episode a few years after the family moved to Huntington Beach.

"A few years ago, another incident happened that reopened the wound," she said. "It's been hard to close the wound. We've made a lot of progress in these last few years. It's not the same. Going to Disneyland is not as easy as, 'Hey, let's get in the car and go to Disneyland.' We have to plan for things."

Her search for resources led her to the Veterans Affairs office in Long Beach, which connected her to the Elizabeth Dole Foundation.

Nacino, a social worker who got her master's from Cal State Fullerton this year, said she eventually

realized that she was a caregiver to her husband, not just a spouse, when he had to be hospitalized with severe post-traumatic stress. She also considers their children — Josh is 24, Jonah is 23 and Katie is 19 — caregivers as well as hidden heroes.

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs estimates that nearly 5.5 million caregivers are assisting veterans with daily-life activities and medical tasks, 70% of those being a spouse or partner. But the Nacino family is Filipino American, and she said there's a stigma around mental health concerns in that community.

"I didn't see it as being a caregiver, I was just his wife, doing what I was supposed to do," she said. "That's the biggest thing with caregivers, that they don't identify as caregivers. Self-identification is a big thing with the foundation."

On the trip to the East Coast, fellows will have opportunities to share their experiences with elected officials, and they are also

able to engage with stakeholders and allies in the business, entertainment, faith and nonprofit communities.

"Social work involves advocacy, and now I'm a position to advocate on a larger scale," Nacino said. "To have been selected is definitely an honor. I saw it as an opportunity. At first, I definitely had to get my husband's buy-in. I said, 'If I do this, I'm going to be telling our story. I became a caregiver because of you, and how you're living life right now.' He was very supportive of it."

The foundation is pushing for the passage of H.R. 8371, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, which includes several bipartisan and bicameral proposals to reform and improve the delivery of healthcare, benefits and services at the VA for veterans, their families and their survivors.

Nacino, 48, has a two-year term as a fellow. She's one of seven from California, but the only one



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

HUNTINGTON BEACH'S Ann Nacino shows pictures of herself and her husband, Ray, and another of Ray and her father-in-law, Oscar, both U.S. Army veterans.

from Orange County.

"The diversity of this year's class enriches our mission as we continue to support the hidden heroes caring for those who serve," said Steve Schwab, chief executive of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, in a statement. "These fellows will strengthen our national network of caregivers from all backgrounds and contribute to

solving the systemic issues that continue to affect the lives of caregivers, veterans and their families."

Nacino said Ray is currently unemployed, but he does things to manage his symptoms like taking care of the plants at home or dealing with home improvements. This past school year, he also liked to drive Katie back up to school at Cal State

Northridge on Monday mornings during her freshman year.

Those trips cause Ann to worry a bit because she knows how quickly Ray's mind can wander if he hears or sees something that's a trigger for his PTSD. She checks in with him often via text message.

For the Fourth of July, she said the family now stays far away from the big parade on Main Street, choosing to watch a movie at home — loudly — to try to drown out firework noises.

Friday was actually the Nacinos' wedding anniversary, and it's clear how much Ann loves her husband.

"We still have those episodes where he feels like he's less than," she said. "As I've told the kids, he's different, yes, but he's not any less of a daddy. He's not any less of a husband."

"He's different, but not less than."

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