

# Daily Pilot

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Courtesy of the Bureau of Cannabis Control

**THE HOLY FIRE** dispensary in Costa Mesa was shut down by police and state agents from the Bureau of Cannabis Control on Tuesday.

## Costa Mesa council passes city ordinance for retail cannabis

Hours before the discussion, the Police Department assists in a raid on the dispensary Holy Fire.

BY SARA CARDINE

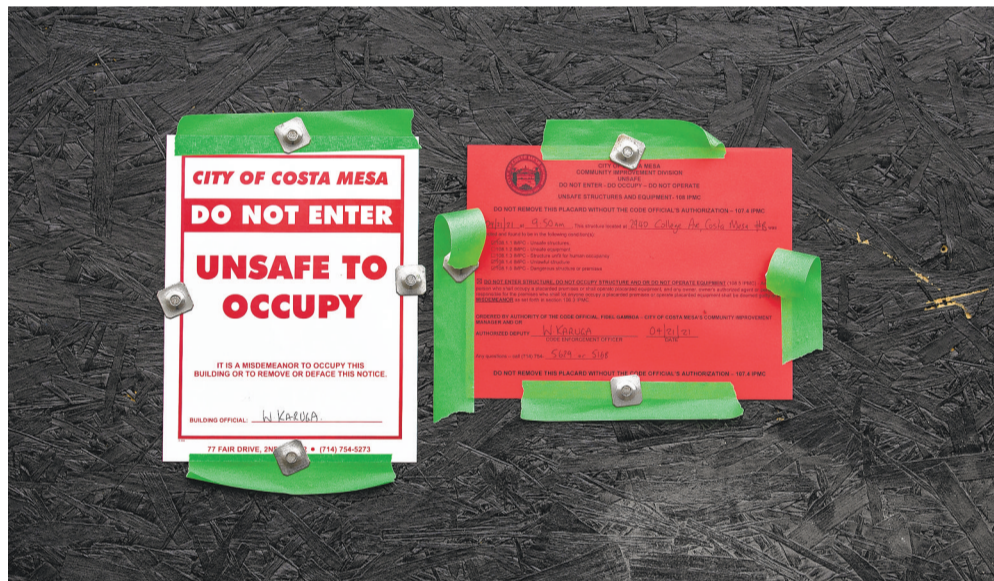
On 4/20 — a date known to marijuana enthusiasts nationwide — the Costa Mesa City Council passed an ordinance regulating retail cannabis sales and delivery in commercial areas, a move they say will help curtail illegal dispensaries run amok.

Officials have long described an influx of illicit operators, selling wares in nondescript storefronts to unsuspecting or indiscriminating clients, and the immensity of city resources it takes to shut them down.

“In Costa Mesa, you have an unquestionable demand for cannabis. [And] the demand is being filled by illegal operators, or trap shops,” Mayor John Stephens said Tuesday.

“They’re selling unregulated products to our consumers. One way you can get rid of il-

See **Cannabis**, page A2



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**AN ILLEGAL DISPENSARY** at 2940 College Ave. in Costa Mesa was raided Tuesday by the Bureau of Cannabis Control with assistance from the Costa Mesa Police Department.

## Laguna hikes fines for drinking in public and littering

BY ANDREW TURNER

Laguna Beach will increase the fines associated with drinking in public and littering to bring them into alignment with the fine schedule associated with other violations of its municipal code.

The Laguna Beach City Council unanimously approved the ordinance, which will make a first-time offense for the two violations \$100. A second offense within a period of a year will now be \$200, and a third within that time frame will cost those caught in the act \$500.

Previously, the penalties applied to alcohol consumption in public were \$30 for a first of-

fense, \$60 for the second and a misdemeanor for any successive occurrences. For littering, the fines started at \$25 for first-timers, \$50 for a second offense and \$100 for further violations.

Laguna Beach Police Chief Robert Thompson said the item was brought forward with the intent to aid the cleanup of the town by means of deterring nuisance behaviors that were “impacting the quality of life in the community,” while also eliminating inconsistencies in the fine schedule for violations of the municipal code.

“What we found was some

See **Fines**, page A4



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**A SEAGULL** picks at trash in a parking lot in Laguna Beach on Wednesday.

## South Coast Plaza exhibition offers ways to dress up dwellings

BY SARA CARDINE

The recent pandemic has forced many to find creative ways to transform their homes into a combination office, classroom and entertainment destination — for those, and others, South Coast Plaza’s “At Home in the Garden” is sure to inspire.

Now through Sunday, visitors to the Costa Mesa shopping complex can enjoy a free exhibition that highlights new trends in outdoor living and gardens.

The event is designed to stand in for the site’s annual Southern California Spring and Garden Show, which featured seminars, garden vignettes and activities for young gardeners.

This year, four of the center’s home décor stores — CB2, Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Pottery Barn and West Elm —

VISITORS VIEW

“Stay-Cation Retreat,” a design collaboration between CB2 and Camille Beehler Landscape Design.



have collaborated with Southern California landscape designers to create indoor gardens and al fresco spaces filled with ideas for taking the home experience to new levels.

On Friday afternoon, visitors strolled past home and garden exhibits on display at South Coast Plaza’s Crate and Barrel/

Macy’s Home store wing, taking mental notes on items and ideas that might work at their own homesteads.

A centerpiece of the exhibition is a two-story, Amazon rainforest-inspired floral sculpture handcrafted by designers at Fiesta

See **Garden**, page A6



Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

**A TWO-STORY** Amazon rainforest inspired display designed and decorated with plants and flowers by the award-winning Fiesta Parade Floats, who create floats for Pasadena’s annual Rose Parade during the “Home in the Garden” show at South Coast Plaza on Friday.

## Newport looks at housing future

At a study session on Tuesday, the City Council will consider how to account for an additional 4,845 units.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

No one’s sure what adding 4,845 housing units will look like in Newport Beach, but the City Council is getting a look at what that future may be at a study session this Tuesday.

City staff is expected to present the initial draft of the housing element update, a comprehensive document that details housing plans and policies in the general plan.

Jurisdictions are expected to update their housing element every five to eight years by the state. The next such update is required to be adopted by mid-October.

A report prepared for Tuesday’s study session states that subsequent to adoption later this year, the update will apply for the next eight-year planning cycle, which will end in October 2029.

The draft accounts for the city’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment numbers, which quantify the need for housing and are mandated by state law as part of

See **Housing**, page A4

## BOYS’ BASKETBALL Mercado guiding Mustangs’ program

BY MATT SZABO

The Costa Mesa High School boys’ basketball team earned its first win of the season on April 7.

The Mustangs blew out Anaheim 72-28 at home. Come the next day at practice, first-year coach Jesse Mercado made his players do sprints.

“That was one of the biggest defining moments,” Mustangs senior forward Blake Wolf said. “It wasn’t like, ‘We won yesterday, let’s take it easy this practice.’ He told us, because we won yesterday, let’s do even more sprints. We were in so much better shape than them, and we want to keep that up.”

“I realized, OK, this is how you maintain that level of play.”

It’s that high level that Mercado, who came from being an assistant boys’ basketball coach for two years at JSerra, seeks on a daily basis.

The 44-year-old Irvine resident, who took over after Mike

See **Mercado**, page A6



Courtesy of the city of Newport Beach

**A PATCH OF** *Caulerpa prolifera* was found in Newport Harbor by a diver. The invasive algae species is native to subtropical and tropical locales, according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. It isn't harmful to humans, but could potentially affect other native species.

# Take photos, but do not disturb: invasive algae discovered in Newport Harbor

BY LILLY NGUYEN

An invasive algae species was discovered in Newport Harbor and state and local officials are asking that the public don't interact with it to avoid potentially spreading its reach any farther.

The species, scientifically known as *Caulerpa prolifera*, is native to Florida and other subtropical and tropical locales and isn't harmful to humans, but could potentially affect other native species.

The algae is known to grow quickly and can "choke out" native seaweeds, which can impact the ecosystem of Newport Bay.

The algae is capable of recolonizing through fragmentation.

"Even small little pieces are viable and can float off

and become small plants elsewhere. The species prefers sandy habitats. So, it will break off, float away and land somewhere else, plant its roots and sprout another little group of plants," said Becky Ota, marine habitat conservation program manager.

"That's why it's important that people don't disturb it. If they see it, that's great. Take a picture. Note down where it was, but don't try to pull it up," Ota said.

Members of the public who see the algae are encouraged to reach out to [AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov) with the location, description and a photo if possible and discouraged from collecting specimens.

A statement released by the city said that a diver discovered the patch at the Entrance Channel area of

Newport Harbor. Ota said the diver subsequently reported it to the Orange County Department of Agriculture, which in turn reported it to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife after positive identification on April 15.

John Pope, a city spokesman for Newport Beach, said the city is working with federal, state and local officials to determine the extent to which the species has impacted Newport Bay and are working with said agencies on developing an eradication plan.

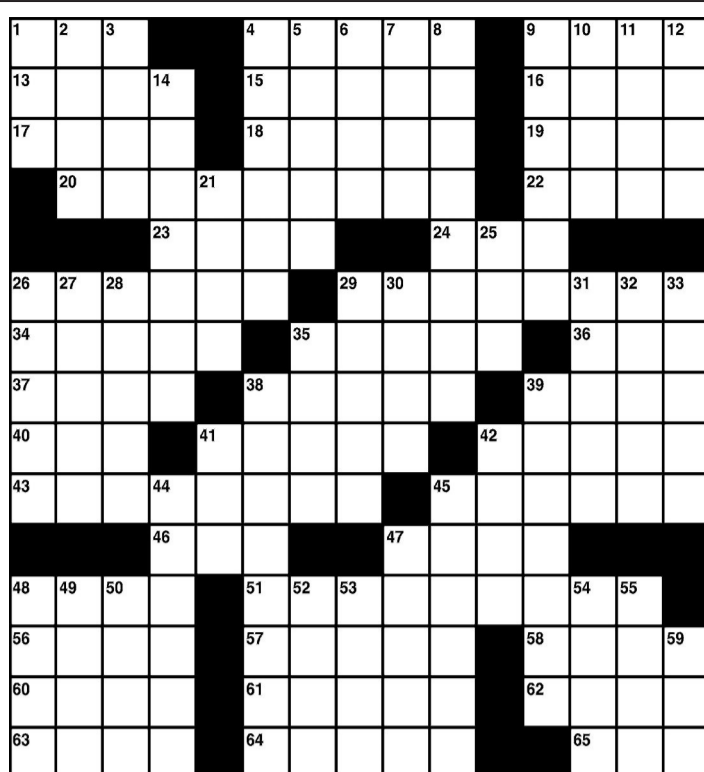
At this time, Ota said there are no expected closures of Newport Harbor while officials are investigating.

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## THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

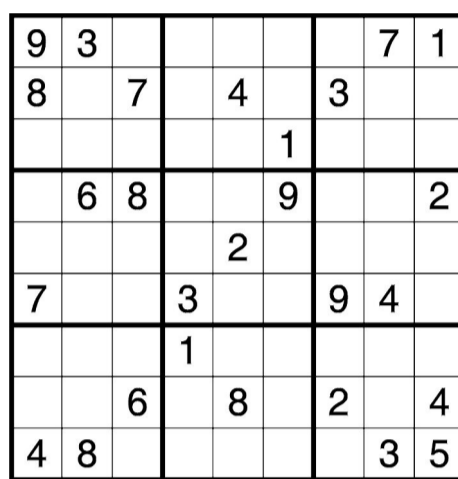
- ACROSS**  
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 17 Civil War Gen. Robert \_  
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 23 Beach castle material  
 24 Corn unit  
 26 Cuttings of fresh thyme  
 29 Thought about  
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 35 Made a solemn promise  
 36 Bullfight shout  
 37 " \_ around the rosy"  
 38 \_ beans; Crock-Pot favorite  
 39 Oliver Twist, for one  
 40 Appear onstage  
 41 Quarries  
 42 Craft class stickum  
 43 Bugged  
 45 Fall follower  
 46 "I've \_ it!"; cry of frustration  
 47 Slight coloring  
 48 Facts & figures  
 51 Sense of \_; feeling of acceptance  
 56 Apple sampler  
 57 Oak tree dropping  
 58 "A friend in \_ is"  
 60 Superior or Tahoe  
 61 " \_ Were the Days"  
 62 Backyard access  
 63 Peepers  
 64 " \_ thy father and thy mother"  
 65 Uncooked



## 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](http://sudoku.org.uk).



For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A4.

## DOWN

- 1 TV's "Murder, \_ Wrote"  
 2 Needs a doctor  
 3 Genealogist's diagram  
 4 Gracie & Tim  
 5 \_ not; refused to  
 6 \_ and aft  
 7 Does drugs  
 8 Subsided  
 9 Diamond figure  
 10 Authentic  
 11 Nerve; boldness  
 12 Trees subject to disease  
 14 \_ up; becoming stressed

- 21 Cooking herb  
 25 Do sums  
 26 Leftover bit  
 27 Monetary value  
 28 Makes a scene  
 29 \_ fun at; ridiculed  
 30 Signs an IOU  
 31 Weenie \_; campfire meal  
 32 Prestigious group  
 33 Postpone  
 35 Wind direction indicator  
 38 Backyard basin  
 39 Craving  
 41 "Give \_ break!"  
 42 Bounce off a cell phone tower  
 44 Second-longest UK river  
 45 Champion  
 47 Upper body  
 48 Evans or Robertson  
 49 " \_ in the Life"; Beatles song  
 50 \_ into account; consider  
 52 Repeated sound  
 53 Crazy as a \_  
 54 Nigh  
 55 " \_ grip!"; cry to the hysterical  
 59 Grass blade moisture

Tribune Media Services

## COMMENTARY | DR. JANET JACOBSON

# HERE'S HOW TO TALK TO FAMILY OR FRIENDS WHO ARE UNSURE ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINES

Millions of Americans each day are now being vaccinated against COVID-19. These safe, highly effective vaccines are the key to ending a pandemic that has devastated Orange County for more than a year. Unfortunately, some people are unsure about getting vaccinated for a variety of complex reasons. The good news is that you are the best person to talk to vaccine-hesitant family members or friends about why they should get their shots. Planned Parenthood of

**DEONNE CULLEN**, a nurse from Hoag Medical Group, administers a Pfizer vaccine shot at the Oasis Senior Center.



Don Leach

Orange & San Bernardino Counties is proud to be a part of the solution to end this deadly pandemic and

looks forward to offering the COVID-19 vaccine to our community. Based on our medical team's experi-

ence talking with thousands of patients about the COVID-19 vaccines, here are some tips from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services we have found helpful for handling those conversations:  
**Listen to their concerns with empathy.** These vaccines, while remarkably effective, are still very new. It's natural for people to have questions about them. The sheer amount of information — and misinformation — about COVID-19 vaccines out there can be overwhelming for anyone. That's why it's so important

to listen without judgment when a family member or friend expresses fear about getting vaccinated and identify the root of their apprehension.  
 Acknowledge their emotions so they know they have been heard. For example, you can say something like, "It sounds like you're stressed both at work and at home, and concerns about the vaccine are another source of stress. That's really tough."  
**Ask open-ended questions to explore those concerns.** Open-ended questions are meant to get

more than a "yes" or "no" response. Asking open-ended questions can help you understand what a person is worried about, where they learned any troubling information and what they have done to get answers to their questions. For example, you can ask, "How did watching that news report make you feel? What did you do next?"  
 As difficult as it may be when you are passionate about making sure everyone is vaccinated, do not be judgmental. Respectfully

See **Vaccines**, page A6

## CANNABIS

Continued from page A1

legal dispensaries is to bring a legal market in," he continued.

Hours before the council's discussion, Costa Mesa police officers assisted as agents from the state's Bureau of Cannabis Control raided and shuttered the Holy Fire, a dispensary on the city's radar for operating without permission.

BCC spokesman Alex Traverso confirmed Tuesday officers moved quickly on the property, located at 2940 College Ave., during the early morning bust. More than \$400,000 of product was seized.

"We move in and basically take everything out of the shop — product, shelves, monitors, ATMs ... everything," he said of the process in an email. "Then we board up the door. The key is to make it as tough to reopen as possible."

A lone security officer on Thursday was still guarding the boarded-up premises where, days earlier, employees were ringing up marijuana flowers, edibles and vape cartridges.

The city maintains a list of bad actors, with updates on whether an illegal dispensary is being actively in-

vestigated, is a case with the city attorney's office or has been successfully closed.

This week's raid makes the Holy Fire the 15th shuttered pot shop to date in Costa Mesa. Fourteen more sites continue to operate illegally, while four are actively being pursued for closure.

An ordinance will allow city officials to implement Measure Q, passed by 65% of voters in November, and regulate legal cannabis dispensaries and delivery businesses by setting parameters on how, where and when they can operate.

Initial estimates showed tax revenues generated by new businesses could bring in \$3 million annually.

Under the new law, store owners would seek a conditional use permit and undergo review by the city Planning Commission. No new business is permitted on a property where an illegal business has operated until one year has passed and the owner has fully compensated the city for any expenses related to that illicit operation.

Retail storefronts must maintain a 1,000-foot distance from K-12 schools, playgrounds, child daycare centers and homeless shelters and stay 600 feet away

from youth centers where children recreate.

Planning commissioners and members of a city ad hoc committee, which included Stephens and fellow council members Manuel Chavez and Loren Gameros, have been hashing out details and definitions in a series of meetings and talks with cannabis industry experts.

The ordinance incorporates commissioners' revisions to a draft of the law, but also includes several last-minute recommendations made by the ad hoc committee and adopted Tuesday in a motion made by Stephens.

As such, a 500-foot distance buffer between shops recommended by the Planning Commission was removed. A stipulation prohibiting felons from owning or working in dispensaries for seven years following conviction was revised to exempt felonies reduced to misdemeanors under California's Proposition 64.

The committee also defined the perimeter of a playground as being 30 feet from the physical play equipment, as opposed to a park's property line. No provision was made to buffer private playgrounds from retail cannabis business.

"What are we trying to



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**ROBBIE BURKE**, with MPP Security and Bodyguards, stands outside of a dispensary in Costa Mesa that was raided Tuesday morning by the Bureau of Cannabis Control with assistance from the Costa Mesa Police Department.

do, protect only public playgrounds?" asked Costa Mesa resident and Santa Ana cannabis retailer Rob Taft in a public comment. "It defies logic, if we're trying to protect children, to exclude specifically and especially a private playground."

The city will levy a 7% tax on all cannabis goods, on top of a 15% state excise tax and a 7.75% sales tax. From that, 1% will be spent on implementing a citywide arts master plan and a first-time homebuyer program for residents.

Industry experts sug-

gested a high taxation rate would cause businesses to go to cities like Santa Ana and Long Beach, where adult use is taxed 6% and medical patients pay 5%. Kandice Hawes, executive director of the O.C. chapter of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) said too high a rate could boost black market sales.

"If you want to get rid of the illicit operators, 7% is only going to drive customers back to those markets," she said.

In their own comments, council members Don

Harper and Arlis Reynolds, who respectively represent council districts 1 and 5, said they could not support the ordinance as presented.

"If I had my druthers, I probably wouldn't have Costa Mesa have cannabis. And if I did, I'd put it in the industrial zones," Harper said, indicating tax revenue as the main motivating factor behind the city's support of Measure Q.

"I don't think that's a reason why we should do cannabis, but we are," he added.

Reynolds said the process was too rushed, failed to answer looming questions and stood to further disadvantage neighborhoods near commercial areas where residents already suffer from historic inequities, like a lack of park space.

"It's the sort of inequity I don't think we've addressed here, and it makes me uncomfortable," Reynolds said, also pointing out a lack of communication with the city's non-cannabis businesses. "We should do a better job and take the time to do better outreach."

The council favored the ordinance with a 5-2 vote, with Harper and Reynolds opposed.

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## JEN'S STORY

“ I’D NEVER HEARD OF ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SURGERY. BUT MY HOAG DOCTORS HAVE PERFORMED IT MORE THAN 15,000 TIMES.”



## Orange County's leader in the fight against cancer.

In her sixteenth week of pregnancy, Jennifer's gynecologic oncologists at Hoag performed precise, robotic-assisted surgery to remove a cancerous tumor on her ovary. Hoag has the largest GYN cancer program in Orange County, and is the number-one robotic-assisted surgery program in the western United States.

**That rare combination saved two lives – Jennifer, and her son.**



**hoag**

Hoag Family  
Cancer Institute

[hoag.org/conquer](http://hoag.org/conquer)

**A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE**

# What do you know of the tiny word 'of'?



**Dawn O'Brien Washer**

November 25, 1932 - April 9, 2021

On April 9th, 2021 Dawn O'Brien Washer died peacefully at home surrounded by her loving family. Dawn was born on November 25, 1932 in Waco, Texas to Sibyl McClellan and James A. O'Brien. They divorced when Dawn was a baby and was brought up by her mother and loving grandparents. She graduated from Waco High School and attended Baylor University where she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta, elected a Baylor beauty for three years, and homecoming Princess her senior year. When working at Yellowstone Park at Old Faithful between her junior and senior she met her future husband, Robert Washer. She came out to teach school in Garden Grove and they were married in June 26, 1954. Bob was a pastor at the Garden Grove Methodist Church. They had four boys, their first son David, followed by Drew, their third son, Greg was born on his dad's birthday, followed by their fourth son John.

In 1968, after 20 years of dedicated service, Bob retired from the ministry and moved the family to Corona Del Mar so he could be more actively involved with his sons. Dawn began teaching at the O'Neil Elementary School in Mission Viejo and received her masters degree in American Literature from Chapman University. She then began a doctoral program in International Education at USC where she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study in India. She spent the summer of 1975 in India which she found very enriching. Ultimately, however, Dawn decided to postpone the pursuit of her doctorate degree. She missed her family and, to Dawn, nothing was more important than her family. She also retired from teaching.

As her children grew up, Dawn was able to indulge in her many passions, particularly art. She began playing tennis at the Balboa Bay Club Racquet Club; got involved in the Newport Art Museum (later called Orange County Museum of Art); she became a do- cent at the Bowers Museum; a member of the Adoption Guild; she joined Women of Chapman; she volunteered at the Newport Beach Library Bookstore, and was a dedi- cated member of her book club. Whatever she did, she did with her trademark style, charm and enthusiasm. Every group she joined was better for having her as a member.

She is survived by her husband Robert Washer, her four sons, six grandchildren, two great grandsons, and proceeded in death by her beloved granddaughter, Phoebe.



**Sandra Dorothy Asper**

September 8, 1937 - April 20, 2021

Sandra Dorothy Asper ("Sandab"), 83, of Newport Beach, CA passed away peacefully in her sleep, at home overlooking the bay in Newport, on April 20, 2021. Her course as a unique, independent woman was unknowingly charted when she was born, of all places, at Maine Eye and Ear Hospital in Portland, ME on September 8, 1937. Little did they know at the time that she would become the eyes and ears of liberal politics in Newport Beach thirty-five years later. Her spirit was forged in a childhood in Maine full of moves from apartment to apartment, the love of the extended family of her mother, Hazel MacMinn, and a voracious appetite for books that began when she started reading at the age of four. When Sandab was twelve, Hazel and she joined some relatives in a five-day cross-country adventure to move to Pomona, CA. In the fall of that year, she would start school at Lincoln Elementary, where her principal would be Alf Asper, her future father-in-law. Signs of Sandab's intense and never-faltering belief in equality were exhibited at Lincoln, where she insisted on playing tackle football with the boys after school. This elicited a concerned and somewhat angry call to her mother from Principal Asper. Alf was rebuffed and her football playing continued, starting a 70-year dynamic of Sandab always being right in arguments with Asper men.

Sandab moved on to Pomona High, a school so important to her that she remained close friends with Sandy (Hamer) Bluethman, Sharon (Nicholas) Mellano, Sheila Keller and Pat McCaskill, until her last days. Her years at Pomona High were highlighted by her job at Orange Belt Emporium, parties and dances and laughter with her friends, dates with nearly all of her future husband's friends (but not him) and a sense of adventure rarely seen in 1940's suburbia. After two years at Mt. San Antonio College, she moved on to prestigious LaVerne University, where she graduated in 1960. From that day forward that graduation was one of her proudest moments, for she had overcome near crippling anxiety, agoraphobia and a constant state on the precipice of financial ruin to get there on her own.

After years of off and on dating, Bruce Asper finally came to his senses on July 1, 1961 and married Sandy in Carmel, CA. Sandy had already begun her teaching career and they moved to the Peninsula Point in Newport Beach in 1967. When she got a job teaching at Newport Elementary her place as a beloved fixture in the community was firmly established. Her trailblazing ways continued at Newport EI, where she introduced a nutrition class focused on healthy eating twenty years before the rest of the nation started embracing it. Her legacy in her adopted hometown could be seen if you followed her around town and watched her former students hug her, tell her they missed her and pass on stories about how influential she was in their lives. A student who loved reading because of her one day, another who she shopped for graduation clothes with so he could wear a sport coat to his big day at Ensign Junior High the next. She moved from Newport Elementary to TeWinkle Junior High (where she met lifelong friends/sisters Pam Loepkey and Paula Gibbons) to her last job as an English teacher at Ensign. Along with the students, her legacy is marked by a thirty+ year battle with the school board and an eventual campaign to join it that, unfortunately for the kids of Newport, failed in 2006. Like many of the windmills Sandab tilted, this battle was waged with humor and persistence, the only good allies needed in the face of mind-numbing bureaucracy and near-certain defeat.

In retirement, Sandab continued to be as active while she was teaching, riding her bike twenty miles up to three times a week, supporting teachers in any way she could and battling the forces of evil on social media, a platform she embraced like a teenager. She traveled to New Mexico for democratic candidates, she sent postcards to Georgia voters, she called voters in Texas and rallied against the way immigrant children were treated at the border. Her life was a good-hearted and compassionate fight for the underprivileged, a group she knew all too well growing up poor in Maine and Pomona.

Sandy is survived by her husband, Bruce Asper, Sr., her son Bruce Asper, Jr., her daughters Lara (Asper) Sellers (Scott) and Gabriela (Reyes) Asper (Brian), grandchildren Kristin Sellers, Justin Sellers, Samantha Sellers, Mary Deck, Patrick Deck and Peter Deck. She is also survived by thousands of children she taught and the many lives she touched. A service is scheduled for Thursday, April 29th at Christ Church by the Sea on the Balboa Peninsula with a Celebration of Life following it at Harborside Restaurant in the Pavillion in Newport Beach. Those interested should email sandraaspermemorial@gmail.com for details. In lieu of flowers, send donations to The Young Center at www.theyoungcenter.org

**F**or a tiny word, "of" causes a lot of trouble. It pops up where it doesn't belong in sentences like "I should of known." It baffles even word-savvy users in expressions like "too big of a deal." And it has an uncanny power to promote wordy, inefficient prose.

If you grew up speaking English, you never really had to learn "of." Unlike "photosynthesis" or "gerrymander" or "noun" or any other word that teachers actively teach, "of" is so fundamental to the lan-

guage that we can use it intuitively almost as soon as we start stringing sentences together.

A lot of English speakers probably don't know that "of" is a preposition. Most of us couldn't give a good definition for it. And most of us, if we ever looked it up in a dictionary, would struggle to understand what we were reading. For example, here's the first definition of "of" in Merriam-Webster's: "used as a function word to indicate a point of reckoning: 'north of the lake.'" Here's defini-

tion two: "used as a function word to indicate origin or derivation: 'a man of noble birth.'" "

When you think about how poorly we understand "of," it's amazing we can use it at all. No wonder we stumble sometimes.

"Could of," "should of" and "would of" are common errors, as in "I could of been injured" or "I should of gotten the job." These are understandable mistakes, considering that the correct contractions, "could've," "should've" and "would've" sound identical. But don't

expect a lot of sympathy if you get these wrong. Usage guides use terms like "partly educated" and "semiliterate" to describe this use of "of" in place of "have." And when writers use "of" this way on purpose, it's usually in dialogue to show a character is uneducated. An example from "The Great Gatsby": "If I hadn't met Chester he'd of got me sure."

Terms like "too big of a deal" are harder. Well-educated people use this

See **A Word**, page A6

**MAILBAG**

**Hoping plans for more 'White Lives Matter' rallies go away**

Re: Huntington Beach exhales after 'White Lives Matter' rally fizzles out, it is my hope that the KKK-inspired "White Lives Matter" rally did flop. It's not that all lives don't matter, of course they do. The point is that statistics reveal a systematic disregard for Black lives. For example, the National Academy of Sciences released a report on Aug. 5, 2019, that indicates that Black men are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police than is a non-Hispanic white man.

This is a disturbing and unacceptable condition in a democratic nation where all people are guaranteed equal

protection by law under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**Ben Miles**  
Huntington Beach

We will sorely miss her.

**Chuck and Nancy Remley**  
Balboa Island

**Orange County loses an education advocate**

Our dear friend Sandy Asper, who contributed commentaries to the Daily Pilot, died on Tuesday, April 20. She had escaped the COVID-19 pandemic but couldn't beat cancer for the second time. Sandy's career was as an educator (although she probably would have preferred the title teacher), and after her retirement from the Newport Mesa School District, she became a fierce and tireless advocate for students and teachers.

**Mariners Mile is an indispensable center**

Re: Mariners Mile development heads to Newport Beach City Council, Daily Pilot, April 22, Newport is a community of villages. Its unique character and charm are on display in the villages surrounding Newport Bay: Balboa Peninsula, Lido Marina Village, Mariners Mile, Balboa Island and the Islands of Newport Harbor. Mariners Mile is an indispensable seaside center whose significance

See **Mailbag**, page A6

**CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS**

S	A	T		A	W	F	U	L		U	R	G	E	
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3	6	8	4	1	9	7	5	2
5	9	4	8	2	7	6	1	3
7	2	1	3	5	6	9	4	8
2	5	3	1	9	4	8	6	7
1	7	6	5	8	3	2	9	4
4	8	9	6	7	2	1	3	5

**HOUSING**

Continued from page A1

the process to update the housing element.

In November 2019, the Southern California Assn. of Governments, which represents Orange, Los Angeles and four other Southern California counties, voted to shift more housing in coastal cities as opposed to inland.

That caused Newport Beach's numbers to climb from 2,764 to its current 4,845 — a 75% increase.

About 1,456 of these housing units will be designated for those of extremely low or very low income and 930 for low income. Of the remainder, 1,050 is designated for moderate and 1,409 for above moderate incomes, according to city staff.

While the state does not require cities to build the homes, they do have to at least plan for them on paper through zoning.

The problem then becomes where to zone those homes.

Officials in Newport Beach and other cities like Costa Mesa, Laguna Beach, Huntington Beach and Fountain Valley balked at the new numbers. Every city, including Newport Beach, appealed the numbers last fall and all their appeals were denied by SCAG.

The city of Huntington Beach recently voted to not move forward with the possibility of filing a legal challenge in court to fight the Regional Housing Assessment Numbers on Monday.

How Newport Beach will proceed will depend on direction from the City Council on Tuesday.

No direct action will be taken.

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**FINES**

Continued from page A1

people would go out to the beach to have drinks," Thompson said in a phone interview on Thursday, so the modest fine currently in place has not been a deterrent to the code violation.

"We have anecdotal information that in the off chance that they actually got caught, they would look at it and say, 'Well, \$30 is the cost of admission to a good club, so if I can go drinking all day on the beach, and eventually, I get caught, I pay a \$30 fine. So what? That's no big deal. I'll pay the fine. That's what it costs me to get into the club, and I can enjoy drinking on the beach all day,'" he said.

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## A WORD

Continued from page A4

structure all the time. “I don’t want to be considered too good of a loser,” New York Mayor Ed Koch once said. “How big of a carrier task force?” news anchor Jim Lehrer once asked. “It won’t be that long of a speech” short-stop Pee Wee Reese said in 1984.

In all these cases, the “of” can go. Koch would have done better with “too good a loser.” Lehrer could have asked “how big a carrier task force?” A speech that doesn’t go on forever is “not that long a speech.”

I suspect “much of” adds to the confusion. “Much of” is usually correct. “You don’t want too much of a good thing.” “I haven’t seen much of him lately.” “He’s not much of a

singer.” So when we want to say “too long a” or “how big a,” our experience with “much” makes it seem natural to put “of” in there.

But they’re not the same. In “much of,” the word “much” is a noun. But those flubs with “of” all involve an adjective — big, long, good, etc. Also, “much” has an idiomatic relationship with “of,” as do “most,” “many,” “few” and similar nouns.

Not sure if you need your “of”? Try taking it out. If “not too long a speech” sounds right, that’s because it is. If “I haven’t seen much him lately” sounds wrong, which it is, put “of” back in.

Finally, “of” can be a red flag for wordy, inefficient writing. “By the mid-1980s, many of these politicians were seen as a big part of the problem not only in terms of poor economic performance but also in

terms of political authoritarianism,” noted a 1996 article in the Journal of Asian and African Studies. Garner’s Modern American Usage shows how to revise this sentence, cutting all but one “of” while also cutting the word count: “By the mid-1980s, many of these politicians were seen as having contributed to the problem both through poor economic performance and through political authoritarianism.”

Watch for too many “ofs,” especially in the expression “in terms of.” If you see them, just look for ways to make the sentence better.

**JUNE CASAGRANDE** is the author of “The Joy of Syntax: A Simple Guide to All the Grammar You Know You Should Know.” She can be reached at [JuneTCN@aol.com](mailto:JuneTCN@aol.com).

## MAILBAG

Continued from page A4

must not be undervalued. It presents a unique opportunity to create a “Mariner’s Village” for an active pedestrian retail district to serve adjacent neighborhoods, visitors and existing marine uses.

It offers public views and access to Newport Bay for all to enjoy. The current structure for such a “village” is already present in the existing uses, pattern of streets and alleys and current relationship to neighboring uses.

Will the proposed development at 2510 West Pacific Coast Highway create a precedent? It is impossible to overstate the profound change the project and all proposed high-

density property development projects will have on that stretch of highway. Overall, the plans represent over one-third of Mariners Mile and will forever determine its destiny.

The industrial box design and density of the 2510 project is out of character with Newport-style development and Newport Bay marine design.

This proposed project would take away protected views, fail to address safety concerns as demonstrated by the number of serious accidents in the area and endanger schoolchildren.

Mariners Mile is at a crossroads: Will the City Council sustain the character and charm of the neighborhood, or will our community’s foundational core values be eroded by high-density development that is

## HOW TO GET PUBLISHED

Send an email to [erik.haugli@latimes.com](mailto:erik.haugli@latimes.com) and include your full name, hometown and phone number (for verification purposes) with your submission. All letters should be kept to 350 words or less. The Daily Pilot reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity, accuracy and length.

out of harmony with the surrounding villages on Newport Bay?

**Patrick Gormley**  
Former President,  
Bayshores Community  
Assn.

## VACCINES

Continued from page A2

ask open-ended questions that help you understand their fears and avoid saying things like, “That’s silly to think that,” or “why would you be worried about that?”

**Once you understand their concern, ask their permission to share information with them.**

Once you feel you understand where they are coming from, even if you do not agree, ask if you can provide some information. Tell them where you get information you

trust and be careful not to push information on them. You can find answers to common questions they may have from reputable sources, including the CDC, O.C. Health Care Agency or other trusted sources such as the person’s doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Sometimes, simply sharing quick, accurate answers to common concerns with your friends or family members can go a long way toward moving someone from worry to confidence to empowerment.

If you don’t know the answers to their questions, offer to help them look for

information. Remember that the overwhelming data regarding the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines may not be enough to change someone’s mind about getting vaccinated right away. It may take a while for the idea to grow so be patient and kind.

The most important thing you can be when talking to someone who is vaccine-hesitant is non-judgmental and supportive.

**DR. JANET JACOBSON** serves as the medical director for Planned Parenthood of Orange & San Bernardino Counties.

## GARDEN

Continued from page A1

Floats, the masterminds behind some of the most breathtaking and award-winning floats of the annual Rose Parade in Pasadena.

With the 2021 Rose Parade having fallen victim to the coronavirus pandemic earlier this year, “At Home in the Garden” may be the only opportunity fans will have to see the extraordinary artistry that goes into creating the behemoth floral displays.

“At Home in the Garden” takes place Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., 3333



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

**VISITORS VIEW** a two-story display by Fiesta Parade Floats Friday during South Coast Plaza’s “Home in the Garden.”

Bear St., in Costa Mesa. Admission and parking are free.

For more information, call (800) 782-8888 or visit

[southcoastplaza.com/athomeinthegarden2021](http://southcoastplaza.com/athomeinthegarden2021).

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## MERCADO

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Ofer resigned following last year, has high hopes for the Mustangs. On Thursday night, Costa Mesa routed defending league champion and crosstown rival Estancia 93-60 at home in Mercado’s first Battle for the Bell game.

The win improved the Mustangs, seeking their second league title in three years, to 5-6 and 2-0 in Orange Coast League play.

That overall record is somewhat deceiving, as Costa Mesa played — and lost — against powerhouses like Villa Park and Trinity League opponents JSerra and Santa Margarita in the preseason.

“We’re right where I thought we would be, where I wanted to be,” Mercado said. “My whole madness of upping our schedule has really paid off. It’s taught my team to compete at a higher level, and hopefully to get some of the fear out of bigger and better teams and programs.”

Wolf and fellow senior forward Gio Quero are team co-captains for Costa Mesa, while sophomore point guard Christian Dasca also plays a key role. He’s the younger brother of Costa Mesa alumnus Nico Dasca, now at Vanguard University.

Mercado is excited to finally be in charge. He said he was also an assistant coach at programs like Irvine, Fairmont Prep, Villa



Photos by Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**COSTA MESA HIGH** basketball coach Jesse Mercado oversees his team’s practice on Friday.



**MERCADO** grew up in Santa Barbara and played basketball at Bishop Diego High School.

Park and Saddleback Valley Christian before he was hired at Costa Mesa in

February.

“I was obviously ecstatic to be able to run my own program,” said Mercado, who grew up in Santa Barbara and played basketball at Bishop Diego High before going to UC Santa Barbara.

“I was also grateful at the same time. I looked at a couple of other jobs in the past, turned down a few jobs. I wanted the right situation where I could come in and make an impact, not just on the court but in the kids’ lives as well. Basketball is just a vehicle I get to use to help mentor and develop.

“It was a big change, because I came from the Trinity League to a [CIF

Southern Section] Division 5AA [team]. It was definitely a big change, but at the same time, I was able to bring that experience in preparation for this season for [Costa Mesa].”

It seems to be working for the Mustangs, who only have three league titles on their banner in the gym — 2001, 2006 and 2019.

On Friday, after a 30-plus point win over a rival, the Mustangs again started practice with sprints.

“It’s honestly after every game,” Quero said with just the hint of a smile. “It never stops.”

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