



Courtesy of the LOVE Coalition

THE LOVE OUR Vulnerable and Elderly Coalition has distributed food and basic necessities to Asian American seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Extending a helping hand

Orange County nonprofits have responded to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Asian American seniors and business owners.

BY AGNES CONSTANCE

This story was produced with support from the Asian American Journalists Assn. and AARP, a non-partisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, June Bai's weeks were filled with a diverse range of activities she looked forward to doing.

Bai, 69, enjoyed the freedom she had to attend dance and tai chi classes and evenings at the symphony.

That all came to an end when the country began shutting down in March.

"Because of the pandemic, all those social activities were canceled, so I couldn't engage with people," she said through an interpreter, Eileen Ni, director of community wellness at the Santa Ana-based nonprofit Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center (AASCSC). "I lost my joy. I could only stay at home and take care of my father. That's the only thing I could do."

Like many people across the country, Bai has struggled to adjust to the new reality brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

Multiple nonprofit organizations providing direct services to Asian Americans, who account for roughly 20% of Orange County's population, said seniors like Bai are among the most vulnerable within the population. Leaders within those groups say they've seen a rise in mental health issues including isolation,

stress, depression and anxiety among seniors throughout the last nine months.

Jennifer Wang, chief operating officer of AASCSC, said some seniors it serves learned about the coronavirus in January through loved ones in Asia. With that information, some opted to begin quarantining at that time and have been doing so since then.

"And they are a very high-risk population," Wang said. "They know that their age and physical condition is not in their favor."

It has been challenging for seniors who, prior to the pandemic, led active lives by taking the bus. Lorraine Tuala, program manager at the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance, said even if seniors want to go out, they know they're more vulnerable to severe consequences of the virus.

Mary Anne Foo, founder and executive director of the community alliance, said the pandemic has increased isolation for Asian American seniors who were already homebound because having visitors is risky.

"We've seen lots of anxiety, depression and people needing resources in general," Tuala said.

Cypress resident Kyung Sook Kwon, 75, lives with her daughter and two grandsons, which has kept her from feeling isolated.

She said the biggest challenge for her has been staying inside for so long. Prior to the pandemic, she would go grocery shopping, exercise outside and meet with friends.

She does her best to stay indoors now because she worries



Courtesy of AASCSC

A COMMUNITY volunteer delivers gifts to a senior father as part of an effort by the Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center to help seniors feel less isolated during the pandemic.

about getting the virus. But it has been a challenge because she often feels cooped up, she said.

For some Cambodian seniors, the stay-at-home orders have triggered trauma they experienced under the rule of the Khmer Rouge regime, under which more than 2 million people

died.

"A lot of times, our community members don't say it, but when they tell stories, it's triggering," said Amina Sen-Matthews, health and mental health program director at Santa Ana-based non-

See **Helping**, page R5

School board member under pressure

Petition seeks resignation of a Placentia-Yorba Linda trustee who was in Washington, D.C., the day of the U.S. Capitol siege.

BY BEN BRAZIL

More than 6,600 people have signed an online petition demanding the resignation of a recently elected Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified board member who was present at a rally that led to the siege of the U.S. Capitol.

Leandra Blades has been lambasted in the past week since she and a group of friends attended a Trump rally in Washington, D.C., that turned into a violent attack. Blades denied her involvement in the siege in a Facebook post that has since been deleted.

She said she was present at the rally, but left to meet with friends and get lunch after she heard of the violence unfolding within the Capitol building.

"At no time did I incite, condone or encourage any violence or rioting," she wrote.

"At no time did I go inside the Capitol. There have been many people on social media making these false allegations. These are people who have attacked me in the past for my political views and others who I have never met.

"What they are saying is completely false. The history inside the Capitol is immense, as well as the beauty inside, which should be respected by all who enter. As a retired police officer I would never want to make fellow law enforcement officers job harder than it is."

Blades addressed the issue last week on a Youtube interview with Andy Falco, who describes himself as a CBD expert, author and speaker.

She said she was in D.C. for a "girls' trip," but also planned on seeing Trump speak.

"I haven't had a girls' trip in years, in years," Blades said. "I can't remember the last time I had a girls' trip. So to go with these two other girls, I mean it was like, it was seriously like having a slumber party..."

Blades did not respond to messages from TimesOC seeking comment on Tuesday.

Her comments were not good enough for many supporters of the petition.

"A person who has power to oversee what our children learn should not align herself with an extremist group that espouses the overturning of a democratic election," one supporter wrote in the comment section of the petition.

"No person that actively par-

See **Petition**, page R2

Literary Arts Festival spotlights local and visiting artists of color

BY VERA CASTANEDA

When author Sarah Rafael García's LibroMobile began taking up space in a Santa Ana back alley off 4th and Spurgeon streets, the purpose was to cultivate diversity through books. The past year has been about how to take up space online to survive.

LibroMobile's Literary Arts Festival is going virtual on Saturday from noon to 8 p.m. The free one-day event will present a mix of live readings, workshops and music.

When curating the festival lineup García and Marilyn Montaño, the bookstore's social media and event coordinator, focused on local and visiting artists who have supported the bookstore, Santa Ana or who have elevated the voices of Black and indigenous people of color.

Viewers can expect book, art vendor and business recommendations, drag queen storytime, a Vietnamese American Arts & Letters Assn. collaboration and a performance from the band Apollo Bebop.

Some of the featured poets and writers include Tamara Hattis, Donato Martinez, Sheila J. Sadr, Gabriel San Román (who is also a TimesOC contributor), Luis Humberto Navejas and Ernesto Cisneros.

David Lopez, a queer Latino writer and librarian for O.C. Public Library, will be awarded the Modesta Avila Award.

The original iteration of LibroMobile, which still exists, started as a repurposed garden cart traveling through the area — in the same vein as a street-food-vending cart. A year later, García moved into a 200-square-foot bookstore and launched a festival.

"Until 2018 I had not presented even in my local library as a writer or an author, even though my first book came out in 2008," García said. "Experiencing that brings on a lot of trauma because you are so proud to come from this community. We go back to what inspired us to be who we are, and it's usually our childhood hometowns, our culture, relevant role models we had growing up that encour-



SARAH RAFAEL GARCIA

is founder and curator of LibroMobile, a literary project in Santa Ana featuring bookmobile exhibits, creative workshops and live readings.

Kevin Chang
Staff Photographer

aged us to be the artists or writers that we are — yet the city doesn't take pride in this."

Organizers said the motivation behind the festival was to not only build a platform creating visibility for local writers and artists but to also invest in Santa Ana monetarily. García made it a point to pay

festival performers as much as LibroMobile could in a modest stipend. Staff members such as book advisors and web content managers, who are either artists or local youth, are paid from book sales and grant funding.

The bookstore didn't open to the public throughout the co-

ronavirus pandemic. Instead, all efforts went toward going virtual.

"That was really hard for me because I'm 46 years old and I went to undergrad before the internet existed. I'm not someone who is savvy on Instagram, I didn't even

See **Festival**, page R2

Irvine settles lawsuit filed against former mayor Shea

BY BEN BRAZIL

The city of Irvine has settled a 1st Amendment lawsuit that alleged former Irvine Mayor Christina Shea blocked a resident on Facebook from posting after he posted comments on her personal page in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Irvine resident Lamar West claimed that Shea violated his rights by blocking his ability to engage in open discussion during a critical period of debate in the country regarding police brutality and racism.

The city settled for nearly \$40,000. Irvine also spent more than \$80,000 in legal fees.

"This is a huge step in the right direction for the people!" West said Monday in an emailed statement. "Public officials need to be held accountable for their actions especially when they affect our constitutional rights."

"I'd like to urge all the young, black, people of color, residents of Irvine and other cities to continue fighting injustices wherever they may exist. Let's continue making our cities safe and inclusive for the current and future generations to come."

As the lawsuit has progressed since July, Shea has been dismissive of West's claims against her. Shea, who was running to keep her mayoral seat, once contended that the lawsuit was a "political maneuver" by her opponents.

On Monday, Shea echoed similar sentiments.

"I did the right thing," Shea said. "I defended my right to protect my friends and my family from their aggression and their hostility, and he didn't win the case, he won nothing. He didn't win his 1st Amendment defense, he didn't win anything. He just wanted to get this attorney paid off, obviously. That's why that was settled."

Shea disagreed with the decision to settle the case and said it set a bad precedent for the city.

dent for the city.

"What we're doing is that we're allowing individuals in our city to believe that if they want to just sue for whatever reason, some frivolous point of view, that we are just going to settle and everybody is going to feel comfortable to come to the city," Shea said.

Baum, Hedlund, Aristei and Goldman, the firm representing West, withdrew a motion over the summer for a preliminary injunction calling for Shea to unblock him and others who posted similar sentiments in support of the movement.

That was done in response to Shea making her disputed Facebook profile completely private and accessible to only her friends.

The city of Irvine posted an online comment about the settlement on Dec. 9, the day after Farrah Khan was sworn in as the new mayor.

While the city of Irvine's comment on the settlement pointed out that the case settled without an admission of liability, it was a strong rebuke of Shea's actions.

"While arguments can be made that the City could have successfully defended the lawsuit at trial, there can be no question that this whole situation could have been avoided had former Mayor Shea not blocked the users and deleted the posts," the post reads.

"The City of Irvine holds itself to high standards. It encourages robust discussion of important public issues, and it disapproves of actions that silence the voices of those with opposing points of view. Putting aside the question of what is 'legal,' the City believes that former Mayor Shea's actions did not meet the City's standards and expectations."

Shea said the new City Council decided the fate of the lawsuit. She would have chosen differently.

"If I had not lost the election, I would have pursued this case to the end," Shea said.



Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

TWO STUDENTS from Beckman High School in Irvine organized a Black Lives Matter protest at the Irvine Civic Center on June 13.

Shea first came under fire in early June for deleting and blocking comments supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement on her Facebook page. At the time, she contended that the page was for personal use, and that she had a separate Facebook page for public dialogue. Public officials are legally allowed to hold private social media accounts.

However, Shea posted similar statements on both pages during the Black Lives Matter protests in June, and the complaint says that Shea has used her profile "since its inception ... to disseminate information regarding mayoral and city council activities ... all with greater frequency than her [official] page."

Shea's comments in June — made amid nationwide protests that were sparked after the death of George Floyd — were strongly in support of her police department and critical of protesters. They provoked

heated discussion on her page.

"We have been named one of the Safest Cities in America for 15 years in a row and I will not agree to reduce our public safety funding especially after seeing the violence we have endured as a nation this past week. If you are coming into Irvine to promote an agenda, and protest for lesser public safety protection, best you turn around and find another city to compromise," Shea wrote on her personal Facebook page on June 3, according to the lawsuit.

Many responded critically to Shea's post, including West, a Black man.

"Like other educated people have mentioned, it's OK for you to support the movement and not defund the police but you don't want to do either. I can hear the racist ancestors of yours in this post, and it's sickening. Enjoy your position while it [lasts]," West wrote, according to the complaint.

West was blocked soon after the post.

Shea received criticism from the Thurgood Marshall Bar Assn., Orange County's only Black bar association, the Knight First Amendment Institute and the ACLU of Southern California for her actions on Facebook.

"When government officials use social media clearly in their governmental capacities, then if they are going to allow comments, they can't discriminate on the basis of the content of those comments," Peter Eliasberg, chief counsel and 1st Amendment attorney with the ACLU of Southern California, said in June prior to the lawsuit being filed. "Government officials can act as private citizens and use social media as private citizens, in those cases they are free to choose whether they want to delete comments or allow them or pick or choose among them."

"There is quite a bit of official content on both of [Shea's] pages, and we do have serious concerns about Mayor Shea's blocking comments on one of her Facebook sites."

Michele Goodwin, Chancellor's Professor of Law at UCI Law, agreed that the question of legality is a complicated one if politicians post on both their personal and official accounts.

"If her Facebook account is her personal [one] then she can do what she wants to on that account," Goodwin said in June. "But what we have seen in recent years is politicians blurring those lines, using those platforms to express their official views."

Goodwin said even if Shea's actions are legal, she doesn't agree with them.

"It's not always what is legal that happens to be what is right," Goodwin said.

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FESTIVAL

Continued from page R1

use [IG] stories before the pandemic," García said.

She held weekly Instagram TV sessions and is holding the festival through the same platform this year.

In mid-2020, García hired Xochitl Vallez as a web content manager to help the bookstore transition to online selling.

Vallez first met García in 2009 when she was 13 years old through Barrio Writers, a free creative college-level writing program for teens. Vallez's single mother wanted her and her sister Anatalia Vallez (who published a book last year) to have a place to go during the summer, and she found the program advertised in a flier through Libreria Martinez, a Santa Ana bookstore that closed in 2012.

Vallez was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis a year prior to participating in Barrio Writers. She said her diagnosis changed the trajectory of her life. She had trouble getting to class and having the energy to participate. She ended up finishing high school completely online. Now that she's taking a variety of courses through community colleges, she wonders how her studies could translate to a job in the near future.

"A lot of disabled folks have been asking for years to be able to do remote work," Vallez said. "For me personally, my body doesn't just go whenever I ask it to. It doesn't work that way. A lot of places denied that this [remote way of working] was productive. Apparently it's doable when abled people have to go online."

The current work that she does through LibroMobile allows her to work remotely with flexible hours. Vallez has been key in managing the online catalog of books for sale and website production. She's also brainstorming how to incorporate more tech for accessibility.

IF YOU GO

What: LibroMobile's 3rd Literary Arts Festival
When: Saturday from noon to 8 p.m.
Where: Instagram
Cost: Free
Info: libromobile.com/literary-arts-festival

Among the bookstore's newest online programs are book reviews from contributing writers and a podcast set to launch next month, which will be available with audio transcripts.

"We didn't realize we were ignoring a whole other population of readers and book lovers when we weren't virtual," García said. "That has been a huge lesson learned and it's something that we said no matter what we're going to continue."

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PETITION

Continued from page R1

ticipates in overthrowing our democratic process should have any participation in choices that affect these children's educational environment," another commenter wrote. "Resign Now!"

The Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District posted an online statement last week.

"... Board members may make public statements and participate in public discourse on matters of civic or community interest and utilize their right to freely express their personal views," the statement reads.

"Board members also have a responsibility to identify personal viewpoints as such and not as the viewpoint of the Board and the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District."

tribut. "To the extent any public statements were made by or about any individual Board member concerning the events that took place on Jan. 6 in Washington, D.C., we want to be clear that those statements were not viewpoints shared by the Board or the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District."

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UCI developing vaccine targeting all coronaviruses

BY BEN BRAZIL

As Orange County expands its COVID-19 vaccine distribution, UC Irvine researchers are developing a vaccine that could prevent other coronavirus outbreaks in the future.

The vaccine, which will be designed to target known and unknown strains of the coronavirus, is envisioned as a long-term answer to the virus. It could be all the more crucial as new strains

have emerged in the United Kingdom and South Africa.

“Our vaccine is not only targeting COVID-19 — it’s also targeting the viruses that caused previous outbreaks,” UC Irvine professor Lbachir BenMohamed said.

“Don’t forget that we had several outbreaks in the last 20 years. It just happened that the outbreak that happened in 2019 is more dangerous because the virus transmitted faster. But we did have other other co-

ronavirus outbreaks back in 2003, in 2008 and 2015. But they were contained. They were contained very quickly before they transmitted worldwide.”

BenMohamed said the vaccine will also target forms of the viruses carried by bats and pangolins. These viruses could spread to human populations in the future.

“There is no guarantee that there will be no other COVIDs in the future,” Ben-

Mohamed said.

The researchers have been working on the vaccine since January 2020. Months later, the team received a \$3.7-million National Institutes of Health grant.

The vaccines currently being distributed that were produced by Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca all target the spike protein of the virus, which is a protein expressed on the surface of the virus.

But, the UC Irvine vaccine

targets several other proteins in addition to the spike protein. Each of these proteins provoke a unique immune response.

BenMohamed said they are currently in the pre-clinical phase of the research and are testing forms of the vaccine on animal models. He hopes to move onto the first phase of clinical trials by June.

The researchers have to work their way through three phases of testing be-

fore the vaccine can be approved and distributed.

Meanwhile, Orange County is ramping up its vaccine distribution by opening “super” sites. Disneyland will be one of five vaccination centers.

The county also announced this week that residents 65 and older are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

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UCI extends East Asian Collection’s 30th anniversary celebration

BY VERA CASTANEDA

UC Irvine’s East Asian Collection celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2020 and has extended its exhibition programming honoring the anniversary through November 2021.

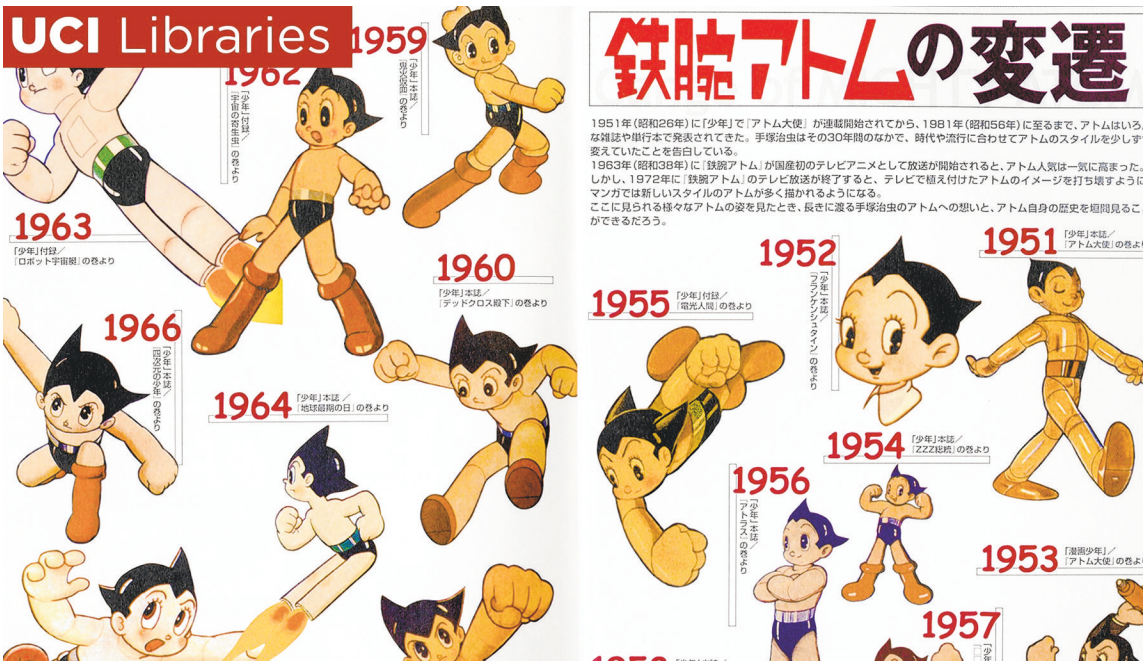
A preview inside the largest collection of items in Orange County related to China, Japan and Korea are showcased in the virtual exhibit “From I-Ching to Manga: UCI’s East Asian Collection Celebrating 30 Years.”

The collection was established in 1990 to serve on-campus research and teaching. Ying Zhang, exhibit curator and research librarian for Asian Studies, said East Asian studies were expanding in the U.S. at the time, and many students were coming from China.

In 2017, the Los Angeles Times described the campus as “located in what used to be a largely white Republican community, home now to so many Asians that people joke that UCI stands for ‘University of Chinese Immigrants.’”

Zhang’s predecessor William Wong was the first Asian studies librarian hired to create the collection and he put an emphasis on poems, novels and short stories. At the start, the library housed 8,000 volumes of Chinese books, and the collection has grown to include more than 120,000 volumes in multiple languages.

Zhang said the manga stories from Shonen, a popular Japanese magazine, are significant since they include issues from 1959 to 1995 and are believed to be a rare complete collection in the U.S. Readers can track cultural and



Courtesy of UC Irvine Libraries

ASTRO BOY was a robot character created by Osamu Tezuka, who was influenced by Walt Disney and D.C. comics.

economic changes throughout generations in the manga collection.

Zhang and John Sisson, research librarian for biological sciences, co-hosted an online discussion Thursday about how anime and manga call the attention of both students and the surrounding communities to the collection.

“More students are really interested in this recent scholarship, trying to understand what’s been going on in the last 10 years or 20 years,” Sisson said. “A 20-year-old manga is like the Dark Ages for them, and the fact that we have these collections going back to the 1950s allows people to go in

depth.”

“Astro Boy,” originally known in Japan as “Tetsuwan Atomu” or “Mighty Atom,” is a manga series written by Osamu Tezuka in the 1950s and ‘60s that was adapted to run as a mostly black-and-white animated TV series. It’s credited as the first anime and was adapted to the U.S. for NBC in 1963. The Astro Boy series was also remade in 1980 and 2003.

“In Japan, Astro Boy was for children in the ‘50s and then became the nighttime television hit in the early ‘60s,” Sisson said. “Forty percent of the households [children and adults] in Japan were watching Astro Boy in the evenings.”

Astro Boy, the main character, is the robot invention of a scientist who created him in 2003 after the death of his own son.

The manga follows Astro Boy as he fights crime and saves both humans and robots. It covered heavy topics of discrimination, slavery and wariness of technology.

One episode saw Astro Boy going to Vietnam to stop the bombing of villagers.

The exhibit was set to be on view in UCI’s Langson Library but it closed adhering to stay-at-home restrictions in the county during the coronavirus pandemic. The virtual exhibit is available online and free events are open for

IF YOU WATCH

Working with Magical Symbols in Ancient Chinese Divination

When: Feb. 8 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Where: Virtual

Cost: Free

Info: news.lib.uci.edu/library-events
South Korea’s Webtooniverse and the Digital Comic Revolution

When: March 9 from 5 to 6 p.m.

Where: Virtual

Cost: Free

Info: news.lib.uci.edu/library-events

Virtual Manga Drawing Event

When: April 14 from 5 to 6 p.m.

Where: Virtual

Cost: Free

Info: news.lib.uci.edu/library-events

registration throughout the next couple of months.

On Feb. 8, Hyong Rhew, Reed College professor, is scheduled to discuss the importance of “I-Ching” (“The Book of Changes”) and a new translation. On March 9, Brian Yecies will discuss the book “South Korea’s Webtooniverse and the Digital Comic,” which he co-wrote with Ae-Gyung Shim. Lastly, a how-to manga drawing event is set for April 14.

The collection has an item wish list. Zhang said gathering priority items is hampered by the pandemic, and the library is looking for e-resources and e-books from Korea and Japan.

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Photographer who captured Disneyland's early evolution dies

BY PRISCELLA VEGA

It was 1976 and Kim Petersen found herself on the fringe as several photographers prepared to shoot Disneyland's bicentennial-themed parade. It was the 16-year-old high school senior's first media assignment, and she was excited.

Petersen stood out in the crowd with her basic camera gear, compared with other photographers' fancy equipment. She believes that's how Renie Bardeau, Disneyland's chief photographer, noticed her.

Before the parade began, Bardeau walked over to her, introduced himself and moved her to stand between two other men who had most likely been photographers longer than she'd been alive. Bardeau placed her at a better vantage point, perfect for a long shot of the parade, Petersen recalled.

"I never forgot this simple courtesy extended to a measly little high schooler," Petersen said.

Bardeau was a revered photographer credited with documenting Disneyland's every nook and cranny, archiving the amusement park's evolution for nearly four decades beginning in 1959.

He was a mentor to many and a Disneyland celebrity to die-hard Disney fans, some of whom own an autographed copy of his famed "Footsteps," a candid black-and-white photo of Walt Disney walking in front of Sleeping Beauty Castle in 1964.

Bardeau died Jan. 4 of kidney failure at his retirement home in Glendale, Ariz., having contracted COVID-19, according to his daughter Debbie Bardeau. He was 86.

"He left a photographic history that will endure," she said. "He loved his Disney family and leaves behind an amazing legacy."

Bardeau started his photography career when he was 12. The native Arizonan earned a Boy Scout merit badge for his work and later took photos for his high school yearbook and campus newspaper.

He joined the Navy after high school and became an aviation photographer aboard the aircraft carrier Midway during the close

"He left a photographic history that will endure. He loved his Disney family and leaves behind an amazing legacy."

— Debbie Bardeau
Daughter of Renie

of the Korean War.

He later enrolled in college, intending to pursue a career in advertising. To earn money between semesters, he took a photography summer job at Disneyland because the now-defunct Los Angeles Herald Examiner — his preferred destination — didn't have internships available.

That 1959 part-time summer gig marked the beginning of his legacy.

Bardeau's first assignment was covering the opening of Tomorrowland, which included getting a photo of the ribbon-cutting at the monorail with then-Vice President Richard Nixon, his family and Walt Disney.

In 1964, Bardeau graduated from college and Disneyland offered him a full-time position, which he accepted. He moved with his family from Tucson to Anaheim, minutes away from the park. He became chief photographer in 1968.

He went on to photograph foreign dignitaries such as Emperor Hirohito of Japan; actors such as Elizabeth Taylor; big band musicians such as Buddy Rich and members of the Glenn Miller Orchestra; and Disney himself.

His most memorable photo is likely a shot of Disney on a fire-truck with Mickey Mouse in front of Sleeping Beauty Castle. That photo was shot on a Rolleiflex, which yielded only 12 pictures per roll. He took 11 pictures of Disney at different angles and thanked him for his time.

"[Disney] asks me if I was sure, and I told him I was. He then told me that at the studio we treat film like paper clips. You shoot, shoot, shoot all the film you need because if it's not in the can, you will never have it. So he asked me



Debbie Bardeau

RENIE BARDEAU, former chief photographer for Disneyland, poses with the fab five Mickey Mouse, Minnie, Goofy, Donald and Pluto. Bardeau became chief photographer of the amusement park in Anaheim in 1968.

to shoot one more. ... So, I shot one more, and he said, 'That's fine, thank you, Renie,' and he walked away," Bardeau told The Times in 1987.

He didn't remember if the 12th frame was the shot selected, but the picture was used for years. He described it as "trademark" photo.

"I think the one thing about my dad's photographs is he was always able to capture emotion and story," his daughter Debbie said. "You can look at a photo and see what he was trying to portray. It didn't take a lot of explanation. I think that was just a gift he had."

A year after he retired in 1998, Bardeau received the highest honor given to Disneyland employees.

His name was immortalized on an upper-story Main Street window — above a camera shop. The marker reads "Kingdom Photo Services. Magic Eye to the World. Renie Bardeau. Photographer-Archivist."

In a statement, the Disneyland Resort said, "We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of

Renie Bardeau, who will long be remembered for some of the most iconic Disneyland photography ever published."

Among colleagues, Bardeau was known for his gregarious personality and off-color humor. He always wore a suit and regularly wore a Disney-themed tie.

He constantly roamed the park, carrying his camera with his signature Mickey Mouse strap around his neck.

Despite his rising fame, he was a mentor for photographers and employees across departments.

"His personality shined. Everybody liked him. He never had a bad word for anyone," former photographer colleague Gary Moore said.

Moore said Bardeau was the first to welcome him to the team on his first day of work in 1959. The two quickly hit it off and spent a majority of the day lollygagging at the backstage cafeteria.

They regularly teamed up to shoot and were sent to Florida to document preparations before the grand opening of Walt Disney

World.

"He never acted superior. He was there to cooperate and make it the best photo and make it exactly what Walt wanted," former colleague Peggy Matthews Rose said.

She met Bardeau in the late 1960s when he took her photo as Peter Pan. They later worked together behind the scenes for the Disneyland Resort Line, an internal magazine.

He taught her how to set up photos, what to look out for and, eventually, helped her choose her first camera.

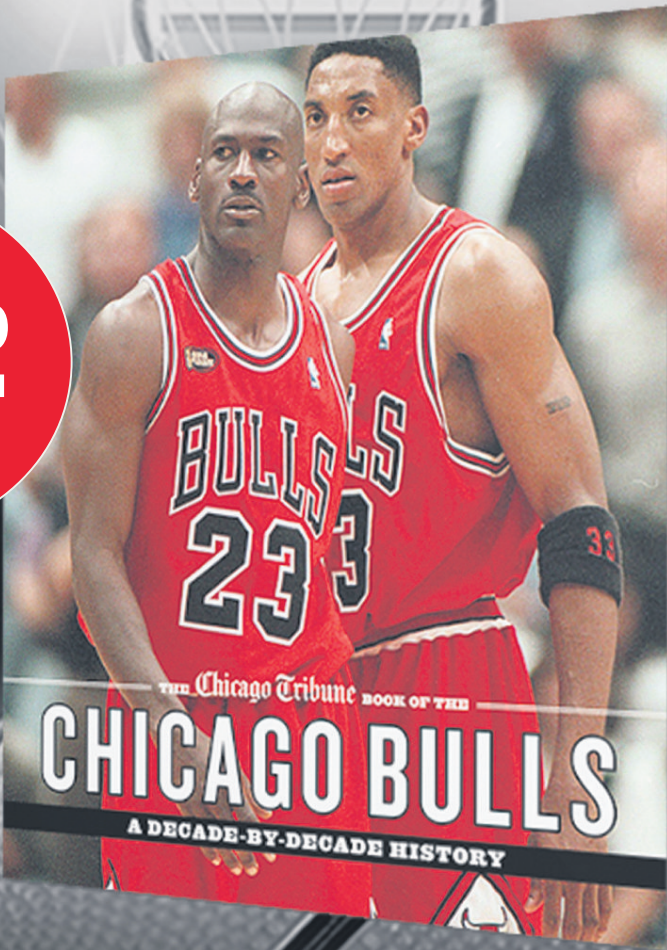
In the late 1970s, she said Bardeau suffered a stroke that affected his speech, but he kept plugging along and fully recovered.

He embodied "sticktoitvity," she said, a phrase Disney coined to describe perseverance.

Bardeau is survived by his daughter, son, stepson, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

PRISCELLA VEGA writes for the Los Angeles Times.

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HELPING

Continued from page R1

profit the Cambodian Family. "During the Khmer Rouge, everything went on lockdown too and everything was in chaos. They attribute the same thing with lockdown."

To quell community members' concerns and attend to their needs, the nonprofit Wang leads, AACSC, encouraged seniors to reach out 24/7.

"They were really scared," she said. "They're also cognizant of anti-Asian resentment out there, and they weren't sure if they'd be able to protect themselves from the virus or physical attacks or any psychological attacks."

Santa Ana resident Jia Ye, 74, said through Ni, the director of community wellness at AACSC who served as an interpreter, that she hasn't been plagued by any mental health issues throughout the pandemic and maintains a social life through video calls. But she shared one instance of discrimination she experienced earlier this year: she was yelled at while she walked on the street while wearing a mask.

Several nonprofit groups serving the Asian American community at the beginning of the pandemic banded together to serve seniors by establishing the Love Our Elderly and Vulnerable Coalition, also known as the LOVE Coalition. Foo, whose organization is part of the coalition, said it has reached out to at least about 6,000 seniors on multiple occasions through phone calls and socially distanced visits.

On Mother's Day, AACSC staff delivered flowers and cards in native languages to seniors. On Father's Day, they delivered gifts to senior fathers. And on the Dragon Boat Festival holiday, the organization prepared steamed rice dumplings for seniors, Wang said.

Organizations in the coalition have also provided oximeters, PPE, disinfectants and other items seniors have requested, Foo added.

Another way groups have been helping seniors



Courtesy of AACSC

SANTA ANA-BASED nonprofit Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center delivered flowers and cards in native languages to seniors on Mother's Day in 2020 as a way to help combat isolation seniors have experienced during the pandemic.

through isolation is by facilitating virtual activities through Zoom. The Cambodian Family has held yoga, exercises, English and citizenship classes to provide seniors a place to socialize, Sen-Matthews said. Last month, it also held a lunch gathering through Zoom where participants brought their favorite dishes.

"We heard from older adults that they miss coming to the agency. Especially for the ones who don't have any kids, we are their family," Sen-Matthews said. She added that one of their clients shared she felt abandoned when staff at the Cambodian Family began working remotely and disclosed depression and suicide ideation. The agency responded by assigning a case manager to call the client every day to mitigate feelings of isolation and also referred her to a therapist.

Katie Tran, grants and program manager of Hope Community Services, a

nonprofit in Santa Ana that's part of the LOVE Coalition, said the majority of people it serves are monolingual seniors, many of whom don't drive. In the earlier months of the pandemic, one of the rising needs for seniors that nonprofits serving Asian Americans saw was food that catered to the community.

The coalition has served more than 3,000 Asian American seniors with ethnic food they weren't able to find at mainstream food banks, including basmati rice, soy sauce, ramen and seaweed, Train said. Groups also delivered hot meals to seniors.

"I think there's this assumption that seniors and elders are valued in Asian Pacific Islander communities," Wang said. "But if that were the case, our organizations wouldn't exist."

IMPACT ON BUSINESS OWNERS Business owners in Or-

ange County's Asian American community have also struggled with the shutdowns that have resulted from the pandemic.

Foo said OCAPICA has seen increased rates of depression and suicide ideation and attempts among Asian American business owners. Some have reported hate incidents, including spray painting on brick-and-mortar locations and broken windows.

The community alliance's mental health program has helped clients enduring the crisis, Foo said, by identifying the source of stress for clients during the intake process. From there, the organization can either offer direct assistance or make referrals to existing resources.

It has also responded to the stress and confusion business owners have experienced, in part due to the lack of in-language resources, by helping business owners figure out how to

apply for unemployment and small business loans.

Much of its work in helping business owners involves assisting them in navigating available resources, Foo said.

Christie Nguyen, co-owner of Studio 18 Nail Bar which opened in Tustin in 2017, said her salon saw its profits grow every month since it was established. She and her brother, who co-owns the business, were considering opening a second location. But they had to close down for six months beginning in March, leading them to put that plan on hold.

"It's taken a huge emotional toll and mental toll, not knowing when you'll be able to reopen, if something you worked hard to build over all these decades is going to survive this or not," she said. "That's something that really haunts us every day."

Nguyen said sales at the nail salon have declined 75%. The business also only received a small amount of rent assistance, putting Nguyen and her brother severely behind on rent payments.

The daughter of Vietnamese refugees who sought the American dream and a mother to three young children, Nguyen has worked to maintain a positive attitude in front of her family.

"It's been really hard," she said. "A lot of times I find myself trying to protect my parents from the reality of it because there's no point in all of us stressing about it."

For some Asian American business owners in Orange County, including Nguyen, caring for other community members in need has served as a crucial coping mechanism during these unprecedented times.

She got involved in an advocacy group called Nailing it for America, which she said distributed hundreds of thousands of PPEs and thousands of meals to those in need. It served as a much needed distraction, she said.

"I think without that, it would've been really difficult because I would've had to constantly think about the pandemic, about when

are we going to reopen again.

"You can sit home and wait to reopen or go out there and make a difference to help others move forward from it," she said. She added that although it was also exhausting to be so heavily involved, it helped her emotional and mental health.

Viet Pham, owner of the Recess Room restaurant in Fountain Valley, also poured time and attention into serving his community two days after his business had to shut down in March. While sales declined 75% in the first month, he started up a weekly food drive for Vietnamese seniors, a group he said he feels is underserved.

Despite the widespread worry brought on by the pandemic, Pham focused his attention on the silver lining in his situation, including the restaurant's existing customers, rather than on what was lacking.

"For me that's just a lost cause," he said. "Thinking about negativity doesn't help me as an individual."

BETTER SERVICES ARE NEEDED FOR ASIAN AMERICANS

Leaders from some nonprofit groups, including Ellen Ahn, executive director of Korean Community Services in Buena Park, say that the coronavirus pandemic has revealed the lack of services designed to serve Asian Americans.

While the pandemic has been difficult for everybody, among Asian Americans, it has been especially stressful for those who are monolingual, have recently immigrated to the United States, are low income and uninsured, she said.

"COVID-19 has exposed that the infrastructure, whether it's the public infrastructure or private nonprofit infrastructure, just is still under developed to respond to a county that has rapidly shifting demographics," she said. "I think there's going to be a lot of introspection and dissection in where we went wrong with COVID-19 in this county."

AGNES CONSTANTE is a contributor to TimesOC.

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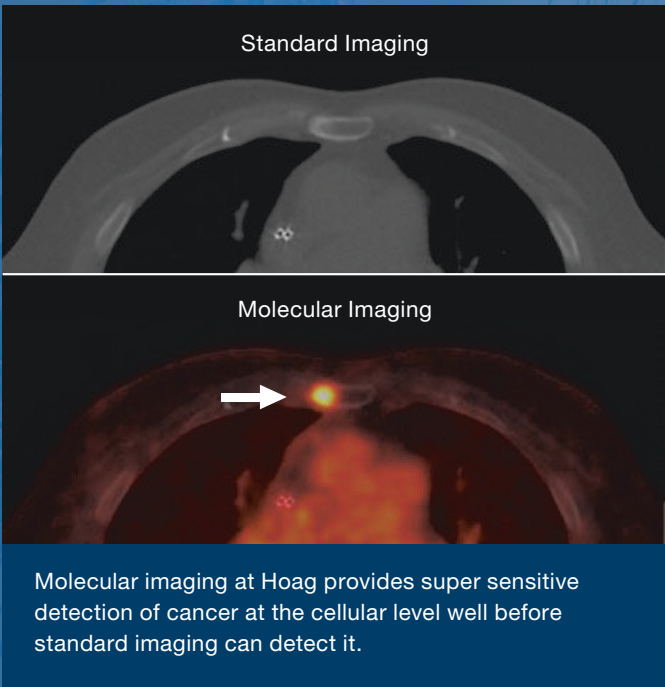
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