

Daily Pilot & Times OC

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2024 /// Serving the coastal cities of Orange County and beyond /// dailypilot.com



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

GREG KILLINGSWORTH of Paradise Found, also known as the Snoopy boat, shoots a gas flame from deck as he prepares for the his "South Florida in the '80s"-themed boat for the 2024 Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade.

Flamingos, fiery palm trees to light up annual boat parade

BY ERIC LICAS

Flames spat out of a pair of modified space heaters set up on the deck of the Paradise Found as owner Greg Killingsworth continued prepping the 42-foot yacht for the 116th Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade, which runs from Dec. 18 through Dec. 22. The pyrotechnic test-run at the Newport Dunes Marina snared the attention of a group of children a few yards away at a nearby park, bringing their soccer practice to a halt Thursday afternoon.

"FI-RE! FI-RE! FI-RE!" they chanted, two syllables at a time, between blasts of heat and light.

That sort of reaction is one of Killingsworth's favorite things about taking part in the holiday tradition. The cheers and laughter of families watching on land can be heard from dozens of yards away, over the sounds of music and dancing by crew members and guests aboard brightly lit boats creeping along the parade route, according to Shaun Crossman, the captain of

See *Parade*, page A9



SHAUN CROSSMAN at the helm of the Last Hurrah, which this year is a tribute to Newport Beach first responders.

See *Audit*, page A3

Supes order audit of county contracts

After debating the scope of an external audit, a majority of O.C. Board of Supervisors votes to green-light the effort.

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

The Orange County Board of Supervisors voted to green-light an external audit of select county contracts following former Supervisor Andrew Do's conviction on bribery charges in October.

Supervisors resumed discussion on the size and scope of a potential independent investigation during Tuesday's meeting after an initial debate at the Nov. 19 board meeting mulled over the latest transparency effort.

"These are efforts made to make sure that we not only take an internal view of what we're doing but also an external view," Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento said. "You can't legislate good conduct, but you can certainly create checks and balances and better guardrails."

In his guilty plea, Do admitted to steering more than \$10 million in federal pandemic relief funds through contracts with a non-profit connected to his daughter, Rhiannon, for personal gain. He admitted to receiving more than \$550,000 in bribes diverted from assistance meant to provide meals for elderly and needy residents during the pandemic.

A federal prosecutor dubbed Do a "Robin Hood in reverse."

In response, Sarmiento, who has championed the need for an external audit, came back before his colleagues with a retooled

TRAVEL OCC

director Katherine Collette, left, coordinates with staff before the agency's grand opening at Orange Coast College on Tuesday.

James Carbone



A travel agency run by students

BY SARA CARDINE

Looking for a deal on a trip to Bali? Or maybe you're thinking of backpacking through Europe for the summer?

If so, you may want to make a pit stop at Travel OCC — a new full-service travel agency at Orange Coast College, where students, led by faculty, are poised to

Travel OCC lets the public find deals on trips, tours, while giving travel and tourism students internship hours that are hard to come by these days.

seek out the best rates and book world-class itineraries, all while gaining internship hours.

Located on the third floor of the Costa Mesa campus' College Center, the small but mighty enter-

prise launched Tuesday with a grand-opening ribbon-cutting ceremony, though bookings are anticipated to begin in earnest

See *Travel*, page A7

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

LITTLE SURF CO. INSTITUTE TAKES SCHOOL TO THE SHORE IN HUNTINGTON BEACH
PAGE A2

A HAUNTED CAR WASH TAKES A CREEPY CHRISTMAS TURN
PAGE A6

Museum decks its walls with Disney artist's Christmas card designs

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

A Christmas tree lights up the Burra Family community room at the Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University in Orange, a festive touch added to a special exhibition.

"Merry and Bright: Christmas Card Designs by Ralph Hulett," features the mid-century modern Christmas card art of the California scene painter and Disney artist. Hulett designed a series of greeting cards for the Designers Showcase Co. in the 1950s, and his hand-painted art

fills the walls with holiday cheer.

"What drew me to these first of all, was the mid-century modern pizzazz of them. That era of art has come back in a big way," said Hilbert Museum director, Mary Platt, who also curated the exhibition. "Now you can get a whole Christmas tree that is midcentury with the little bubble lights and everything."

Hulett studied at the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles, later known as CalArts, an institution that became a

See *Designs*, page A6



Sarah Mosqueda

A CHRISTMAS TREE lights up the community room at the Hilbert Museum where Ralph Hulett's Christmas card artwork is on display.

a Surf City favorite since 1961

5 POINTS PLAZA

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SHOPS



DINING



SERVICES

H.B. school takes its classroom to the shore

BY MATT SZABO

It was an overcast morning in Huntington Beach on Thursday.

High tide also was not ideal for the Little Surf Co. Surf & Science Academy, which had its young groms catching waves just north of Goldenwest Street and Tower 22.

Still, there were moments of wonder.

"Look at these dolphins!" Jason Graney exclaimed, looking into the water not too far off shore. "Dude, there were three dolphins!"

The end of the nearly two-hour surf session turned into a dolphin watch party, as staff and students watched the animals play in the water.

"They're so active today," Graney said.

The spot where the kiddos surf is just up the beach from where Jason and his wife Kayla had their first date, 19 years ago.

The water and sand have been a constant in their lives, and that was part of their decision to form the Little Surf Co. Institute in 2019.

"We wanted to create something unique for our family that we could do together, that would resonate with the community at large," Kayla Graney said.

She was a college professor for nearly a decade before the school was formed, while Jason worked at a gym in south Orange County.

"We created our logo first and we printed it on a coffee mug, put it in our foyer," Kayla Graney said. "For about two years, we looked at it and were like, 'One day we're going to do



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

INSTRUCTOR CADEN LEACH of the Little Surf Co. Institute holds onto the board as a youngster tries to stand up during a surf session at Goldenwest Street in Huntington Beach on Thursday.

something with that.' His mom had a double transplant and almost died, and we had this epiphany during that time that we needed to spend more time as a family. We were just burning the candle at both ends, opposite schedules, we weren't really seeing each other."

Now the family, which lives in Fountain Valley and has grown to include two boys in kindergarten and third grade, spends most mornings at the beach along with their students.

Kayla calls Little Surf Co. Institute a boutique com-



A YOUNG GROM piles sand during a Little Surf Co. Institute surf session at Goldenwest St. in Huntington Beach on Thursday.

prehensive hybrid home-schooling program. It serves close to 150 kids from TK age through sixth grade and will be expanding into junior high programming next year.

Some of the children surf in the morning with the Graney's and surf instructors. Some do yoga on the beach with Alison Zimmer, a math teacher at the school who also teaches business classes, while other morning enrichment courses include dance, music and Spanish classes.

The school has been contracted with Huntington Beach for six years to use the beach space from Tower 18 north. Little Surf Co. has a shipping container at the beach for storage, and the Huntington Beach Fire Department Marine Safety Division is on speed dial if there are any issues.

"Depending on the swell, the conditions, the time of year, we're able to move them and chase the sandbar a little bit as well," said Jason Graney, a Fountain Valley native. "It's pretty cool."

When the beach session is done, Jason carpools the students via a large van to the school space itself, which is located on the campus of Community Bible Church in Huntington Beach.

"Literally, sand will be pouring out of their shoes," Little Surf Co. kindergarten teacher Georgina Genawey said with a smile. "We have vacuums for that."

Zimmer, who owns a yoga studio in town, is the homeroom teacher for the

See **School**, page A3



Now open

Cancer care reimagined

UCI Health



Sarah Mosqueda

DR. POOJA BHALLA, chief executive officer of Illumination Foundation cut the ribbon at the nation's first Children and Families Recuperative Care Center in Santa Ana.

Foundation, CalOptima partner to open care center for unhoused children

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

The Illumination Foundation's Children and Families Recuperative Care Center in Santa Ana has only been open for six weeks, but the facility is already at capacity.

"We are full and we have another family on the way today," Dr. Pooja Bhalla, chief executive officer of Illumination Foundation said at an official ribbon-cutting for the care center on Thursday morning, Dec. 5.

The Orange County-based Illumination Foundation is a nonprofit determined to disrupt the cycle of homelessness by offering multiple services and resources to the unhoused in the areas of housing and healthcare. The foundation began offering medical respite beds in 2009 for homeless people who were in need of a safe place to rest and recover after being discharged from the emergency room or a hospital stay. The service has since

grown to operate seven re-educative care centers with more than 500 beds in Los Angeles, Orange County and Riverside County.

The new Children and Families Recuperative Care Center in Santa Ana extends that service by providing a place for unhoused children and their families with a place to stay while in recovery.

"Here we are able to have families stay in the

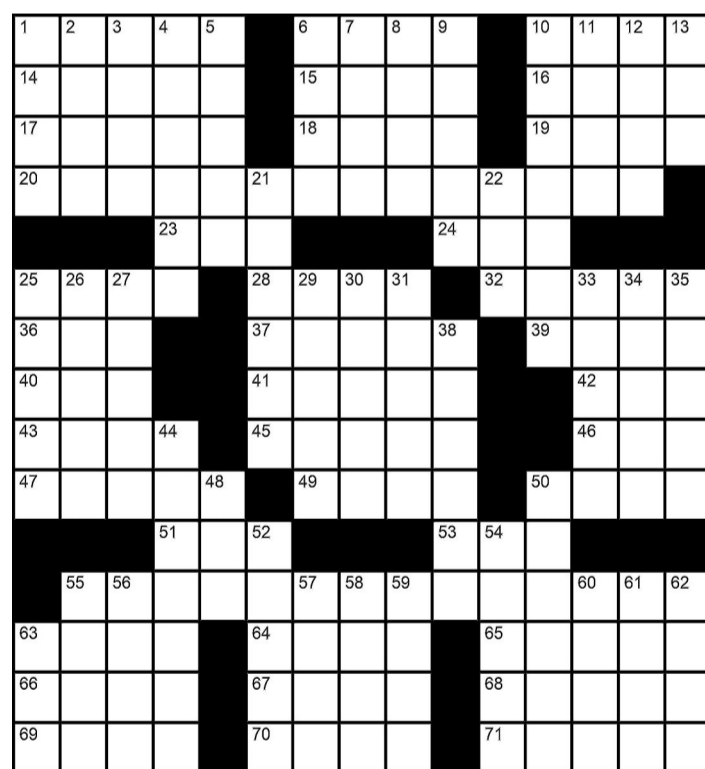
See **Center**, page A3

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Stella Zawistowski

ACROSS

- 1 Neighborhoods
- 6 Flows backward
- 10 Not barefoot
- 14 Gem from an oyster
- 15 Tons: 2 wds.
- 16 Theater award
- 17 Green pasta sauce
- 18 Italy's capital
- 19 Part to play
- 20 Disney animated release of 1959: 2 wds.
- 23 Hi_ graphics
- 24 Jar top
- 25 Hectic
- 28 Actor Brody
- 32 Train station
- 36 Air quality agency: Abbr.
- 37 Hay bundles
- 39 Prom vehicle
- 40 Silent speech system: Abbr.
- 41 Musical set in Argentina
- 42 Pig enclosure
- 43 Exam
- 45 Defame in print
- 46 Omelet ingredient
- 47 Celebrities
- 49 Apple virtual assistant
- 50 Upper undergarments
- 51 What's in a beach ball
- 53 By way of
- 55 "Not now!": 5



For answers to the crossword, see page A7.

- 7 wds.
- 8 Perform badly onstage
- 9 "Stainless" alloy
- 10 German dessert
- 11 Owl's sound
- 12 "I can _ hope"
- 13 Fabric coloring
- 21 Author Allende
- 22 Assistance
- 25 Defeats
- 26 Angry or sad
- 27 Tortilla chip dip
- 29 Oscar winner
- 30 Defendant's story
- 31 Just over 39 inches
- 33 Musician who might wear a kilt
- 34 Last Greek letter
- 35 Salad utensil
- 38 Spit
- 44 One who betrays
- 48 Girl in the family, for short
- 50 Part of a war
- 52 Become mature
- 54 "According to me...": 2 wds.
- 55 Melody
- 56 Lie low
- 57 Keep for later
- 58 High cards in poker
- 59 Misshapen
- 60 "Bearded" flower
- 61 Create
- 62 Looks over
- 63 Hero sandwich, for short

Tribune Media Services

La Habra passes on rental inspections program

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

More than half a century after first considering an inspection program for rental housing, the La Habra City Council declined to fund and staff the policy once more.

During Monday's council meeting, council members debated the merits and timing of a three-year pilot program that would hire a code enforcement officer to routinely inspect rental units for substandard and unsafe living conditions.

La Habra Mayor Daren Nigsarian spoke strongly of the program as one that addressed a key public safety issue in the community.

"My concern still lies first and foremost with the health and welfare of the people that live in the city and the people who are renters," he said. "There's a huge constituency of renters in this city, and they're living in squalid conditions sometimes, and they simply feel that they cannot report them."

But Nigsarian found himself in the minority.

"I don't want to make bigger government here and add an almost \$100,000 position at this time," said Councilman James Gomez.

He suggested the city do community outreach in densely populated neighborhoods, like Montwood-Burwood, without having to approve an additional staff hire.

Chip Ahlswede, vice president of external affairs for the Apartment Assn. of Orange County, offered to help La Habra with any public outreach at the council meeting while offering his take on rental in-



James Carbone

APARTMENT BUILDINGS along Burwood Street in La Habra, where a rental inspections pilot program failed to pass.

spection programs.

"What we've seen with different programs [is that] some work, some don't," he told council members. "There are ways you can do it more efficiently. 'The goal is to get quality housing for everybody. It's not to overburden the property owners [and] not to put more costs on housing from the tenants, which is what this ultimately does.'"

According to a staff report, La Habra considered a rental housing inspection program back in 1973. It has been a mainstay of the city's stated goals and objectives since 2005 but without ever having been

approved.

In considering the three-year pilot program this time around, Susan Kim, La Habra's community and economic development director, noted inspections could average 40 units per week.

Currently, code enforcement officers inspect about eight to 12 rental units per day in response to tenant complaints.

"A proactive inspection program protects underserved tenants that may not be aware that they have a right to safe and habitable housing," Kim told council members.

Anaheim enacted a simi-

lar program a decade ago. Santa Ana adopted an inspection policy in 1992 that is funded by a small fee imposed on property owners.

Kim noted that council members could lessen the inspection workload by exempting properties that are less than 20 years old. She also suggested that a \$50 per unit assessment fee would cover costs associated with the pilot program.

Cesar Covarrubias, executive director of the Kennedy Commission, told TimesOC that rental inspection programs can be beneficial to tenants if designed in a proactive way

that helps protects them.

"If a program is designed to address the conditions, it could be a systematic way of putting out information to landlords," he said. "That way it's comprehensive, not to one unit but to the whole complex. That protects tenants a bit more from being singled out as the ones that called the city."

Councilwoman Rose Espinoza, who has served on La Habra City Council since 2000, recounted helping a tenant who called her office years ago to complain about substandard conditions.

"I had never seen an apartment like that," she

said. "They had to put some kind of tape around the counters and along the refrigerator so these bugs would not get into their refrigerator. It just broke my heart to see them live in that condition."

Espinoza helped set up a meeting with the Fair Housing Council of Orange County and residents of that particular complex but noted not much came from it.

She recalled the hesitation tenants had in speaking out for fear of retaliation from landlords but did not support the inspection program out of concerns for adequate staffing.

"I don't think that our staff is able to handle that," Espinoza said. "They have too much work already on their hands."

Nigsarian pushed back against the notion where it concerned the pilot program.

"We're not placing any greater burden on community development," he said. "We're going to hire somebody for that three-year period to assume those duties. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. If it does work, then we continue the program, no longer as a pilot."

After the debate, council members voted unanimously to remove the rental housing inspection program from its goals and objectives for the next fiscal year.

The vote also removed it from future policy updates to the city's General Plan document.

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SCHOOL

Continued from page A2

older fifth- and sixth-grade students. She also teaches business entrepreneurship and public speaking.

"They come to school in such a good mood," Zimmer said. "We get three weeks off for Christmas break, and it's actually sad for them."

December indeed means that Little Surf Co. is getting into the holiday spirit. Santa and Mrs. Claus joined the students at the beach on Tuesday, and they

are preparing for a holiday performance next week.

A monthly assembly was held Thursday. Zimmer's student of the month was Finn Ramelot, a fifth-grader who also is one of the best surfers at the school.

He participates in the Little Surf Co. morning Surf & Science Academy four days a week, the science portion including ocean education or marine biology topics that are sprinkled in.

Finn and his classmates also have afternoon play time at the park next to the

Main Street Library, a short walk from Community Bible Church.

"I've always been around homeschool, so [being at school] is a little bit different to me, but it's fun," Finn said. "I like being around the kids. It's great."

Anita Munson, whose daughter, Maren, is a third-grader at the school, feels the same way. She enjoys the flexibility that Little Surf Co. provides.

Maren surfs five days a week and attends school on Mondays and Fridays, taking extracurricular classes like speech and

creative writing. Her core curriculum is done at home on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

"It's really been a dream childhood that we can give her, we think," Anita Munson said. "We're from Chicago, so we grew up in the snow. To grow up coming to the beach every day, my husband and I think that's pretty fantastic."

As for the school curriculum, Little Surf Co. operations director Emily LeMonnier said that it is all

See **School**, page A10



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

A GIRL LEAPS off her board as instructor Deakan Leach holds the board during a Little Surf Co. Institute surf session at Goldenwest St. in Huntington Beach on Thursday.

AUDIT

Continued from page A1

proposal to have external auditors scrutinize county contracts inked between January 2019 and August 2024.

The audit originally sought to cover all county contracts within the prescribed time period but was changed to focus on the County Executive Office, Health Care Agency, O.C. Community Resources and Social Services Agency contracts, particularly those funded by federal pandemic relief funds, the county's general fund and the state's Mental Health Services Act.

Board Chairman Donald Wagner, who voted against the audit, questioned the timeline.

"What's the relevance to the January 2019 start

date?" he asked. "Supervisor Do, in his plea agreement, gives a 2020 date. I'm just curious where this one comes from?"

Michelle Aguirre, the county's interim chief executive, noted that the starting point was her idea to net COVID-related contracts while giving external auditors the ability to scrutinize agreements made a year before the pandemic.

Sarmiento also backed the broad timeline.

"There are some contracts that are not COVID-related that came out of Supervisor Do's office that could be suspect and worth looking into," he said. "We tried to narrow it to those COVID dollars and to make sure that we captured those that may have been ramping up in advance."

Supervisor Katrina Foley asked how many potential contracts could fall under a

forensic audit, given the direction. Aggie Alonso, the county's internal audit director, estimated that it could number in the hundreds, if not thousands.

His department's first step would be taking an inventory of relevant contracts for a future forensic audit.

Alonso advocated for any outside investigation to take a phased approach where contracts thought to run the highest risk for potential irregularities or fraud would be assessed first before being audited, instead of casting a wide net from the onset.

Sarmiento disagreed with Alonso's suggestion and claimed that if supervisors did not act, legislators in Sacramento could step in with a state audit of county contracts.

After the board meeting, Assemblyman Avelino Va-

lencia signaled support for such an effort, citing a need to "go further" than the external audit ordered by supervisors.

"Transparency and accountability are the bedrock of good governance," Valencia told TimesOC. "I am committed to restoring the public's trust in their government and will consider requesting a comprehensive state audit of all contracts handled by the Orange County Board of Supervisors."

When serving on Anaheim City Council in 2022, Valencia supported an independent investigation that scrutinized city contracts going back 10 years in the wake of former Mayor Harry Sidhu's indictment and conviction on political corruption charges.

Anaheim paid \$1.5 million for the outside probe. The cost of the county's

external audit is still to be determined. With forensic audits known to be expensive, estimates ranged between \$1 million and \$2 million at the meeting, but firms would provide their own forecasts when submitting bids.

Supervisors also don't have a firm timetable in place for when an independent report would be publicly brought back before the board, but they agreed the effort needs to proceed in a timely manner.

"I would hope that it could be a reasonable period of time because otherwise it's not going to do us any good," Foley said.

"I don't think it should be out there indefinitely," Sarmiento added.

On Tuesday, supervisors also approved an updated ethics policy that leverages censure or referral for crim-

inal prosecution against any county staff or elected officials found in violation.

Contractors could also face contract terminations.

"What we're trying to do is put in one simple place, a strong statement of where we stand and what our duties are and what our consequences may be if we don't follow that," said Supervisor Doug Chaffee, who spearheaded the effort.

In September, supervisors also directed Alonso's department to carry out a risk assessment of American Rescue Plan Act funded contracts.

Recommendations based on a sample of more than 2,000 contracts is due before the board later this month.

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CENTER

Continued from page A2

same room as their child who has medical issues with the goal of getting them into stable housing," said Bhalla.

The center is the Illumination Foundation's newest model of recuperative care and the first of its kind in the nation. The Illumination Foundation partnered with CalOptima Health, an independent health system organized by the county of Orange that provides health insurance to low-income residents, among other services.

CalOptima Health awarded the Illumination Foundation a \$3.5-million community grant that aided in establishing the Children and Families Recuperative Care Center as a nonprofit. The funding is



Sarah Mosqueda

ILLUMINATION FOUNDATION'S Children and Families Recuperative Care Center in Santa Ana is the first of its kind in the nation. It serves up to six families.

part of a \$25-million community grant program CalOptima Health has administered for transitional housing the organization received under California's

Housing and Homelessness Incentive Program.

Additionally, CalOptima Health's adjusted reimbursement rate will allow the center's programs to be

sustainable long term.

"The most innovative thing that is happening out of this the reimbursement structure that has never been done before," said Bhalla.

The new center is made up of two homes that can serve up to six families. On Dec. 5, five families were staying at the facility with one more on the way.

At the Children and Families Recuperative Care Center, each family has its own room along with access to common areas like a living room, kitchen and laundry facilities, making the space feel like a home.

"We also have medical staff here 24/7, and we have a case manager that works with families, getting them connected with resources to help them back on their feet," said Angelica Rios, associate director of family programs

at the center.

Rios said the holistic services help ensure the family is stable enough to provide the necessary care to their sick child.

"I like to think of my team as a wraparound service because we want to make sure they are successful once they transition out of our program," said Rios.

Orange County medical facilities can use the Illumination Foundation referral line to connect with the center. One mother currently at the Recuperative Care Center has an 8-year-old son who was experiencing seizures. Children's Hospital of Orange County referred the family to the Illumination Foundation's Santa Ana Navigation Center. Now the child is on medication after being diagnosed with epilepsy. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Net-

work's Facts of Trauma and Homeless Children, this situation is common, with unhoused kids being twice as likely as those who are housed to need medical attention.

Bhalla hopes the Children and Families Recuperative Care Center will be the first step in getting sick children experiencing homelessness the care they need once they are discharged from a medical care facility.

"For unhoused families living in Orange County with sick children, they need a place finish that antibiotic or treat that infection but they shouldn't be living in a car," Bhalla said. "As I mentioned, we are already full today so we need more places like this."

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forum

COLUMN | PATRICE APODACA

Let's call a truce this holiday season

In late 1914, the Great War was raging, and British and German troops on the Western Front were locked in a miserable battle of inches. Soldiers shivered in the mud of claustrophobic trenches. They were hungry, terrified, sleep-deprived, and drenched to the bone. Hope no longer existed.

But then, suddenly, almost miraculously, it did.

On Christmas Eve British soldiers heard a sound emanating from the German side, one that was strikingly different from the nightmarish cacophony of battlefield slaughter. It was singing. Their enemies were singing Christmas carols.

The British soldiers began singing carols as well. That was the beginning of the famous Christmas Truce in the "No Man's Land" that separated the warring armies. Fighting forces met in the middle, and on the blood-soaked soil — ground that was laced with barbed wire, spent shells and bodies of fallen comrades — they shook hands, sang, drank, played football and wished each other well.

The impromptu truce spread along the front, and for a brief moment in time the hate vanished.

This remarkable story has been retold countless times in the decades since, and it undoubtedly has been overly romanticized. Many military leaders at the time disapproved, seeing the comity as a sign of weakness. And the good cheer didn't last; there were no other widespread truces during the remaining four years of what would become the deadliest conflict the world had ever seen—

until it was surpassed on that grim score by World War II just a few decades later.

Even so, the fleeting expression of goodwill in the most hellish of circumstances as relevant today as it ever was.

Lately it often feels as if hatred and division are once again consuming us. Neighbors look upon each other with contempt. Family members no longer speak because of differing beliefs and lifestyles. Name-calling is normalized.

Conspiracy theories take root, driving the ruptures in our society ever wider. Some of us refer to fellow citizens as "enemies," viewing them only in black-and-white terms of good vs. evil. Authorities have reported a steady increase in hate crimes and incidents. Public figures regularly receive threats.

It's not hard to see why. It's easier to hate than to love, to indulge in resentment instead of finding common ground, to point fingers rather than seek realistic solutions together.

The mutual animosity is running so high, particularly in the aftermath of the election, that some mental health professionals are leaning heavily on the idea that, in the interest of mental health, it might be better for some people to skip certain gatherings of family and friends altogether.

Admittedly, it seems a bit ridiculous to compare the trench warfare of World War I Europe with our current political and cultural battles. Nonetheless, it's instructive. If soldiers facing death at the hands of an intransigent enemy can put aside their differences, if only for a day or two,



Rui Vieira | Associated Press

A SCULPTURE on display outside the reception of the Britannia Stadium in Stoke on Trent, England, commemorates the anniversary of the 1914 Christmas Truce during World War I.

surely we can find common ground over mashed potatoes and gravy.

If this reads like a Pollyanna-ish wish for this holiday season, so be it. We can go back to cursing at each other tomorrow. But if this is not the time to appeal to our better natures, tell me when is?

As I wander my local shopping haunts — Fashion Island, South Coast Plaza, Roger's Gardens, and browse charming Christmas boutiques with unique gifts by local artisans — I always indulge in a hearty dose of people-watching. This year, as I look around me, I wonder:

Behind the happy facades are there reservoirs of

animosity? Do the smiling faces mask bitterness and cynicism? Are we really so suspicious of each other that we see nefarious schemes in mere attempts at compassion?

Surely we all want essentially the same things — respect, safety, opportunity. We disagree on how to achieve those goals, but we need to reclaim the will to meet in the middle, to acknowledge our common humanity even as we fight for our divergent causes.

It occurs to me that we could also learn another lesson from history.

As hostilities mounted in the run-up to World War II, France sought to avoid the previous war's experience

with trench warfare. A line of fortifications, bunkers, minefields and weapon installations were built to deter, or at least significantly slow, an invasion by Nazi Germany.

The French miscalculated. The line was outflanked by the Germans, who swept through Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, and then quickly and easily invaded France. What became known as the Maginot Line is regarded as such a massive failure that it is now a commonly used metaphor for a strategy that gives a false sense of security.

It's possible that many among us are now in danger of erecting their own

Maginot Lines, as they seek to fortify themselves against the villains, real or imagined, in their midst. And maybe we're all too angry to turn back from that course.

But if history teaches us anything, let it be that holding on to hate is a sure path to destruction, and that erecting walls — metaphorical or otherwise — won't solve our problems. This Christmas let's try to remember that.

PATRICE APODACA is a former Los Angeles Times staff writer and is coauthor of "A Boy Named Courage: A Surgeon's Memoir of Apartheid." She lives in Newport Beach.

A WORD, PLEASE | JUNE CASAGRANDE

Take this quiz before you invite the Mancinis for wassail

Every year as the holiday season approaches, this column offers tips on how to avoid the most common grammar mistakes on Christmas cards, emails and other holiday greetings. This year, instead of telling you how the rules work, let's make it a quiz. See how many of the following questions you can get right.

1. We're spending the holidays with the (a. Smiths, b. Smith's, c. Smiths').

2. We're going to Joe (a. Smiths, b. Smith's, c. Smiths') house.

3. We're going to the (a. Smiths, b. Smith's, c. Smiths') house.

4. Merry Christmas from the (a. Williamses, b. Williams', c. Williams's, d. Williams's').

5. We're going to the (a. Williamses, b. Williams', c. Williamses', d. Williams's) house.

6. We're spending Christmas with the (a. Chavez, b. Chavez's, c. Chavezes).

7. We've been invited to the (a. Chavez', b. Chavez's, c. Chavezes') house.

8. I'm looking forward to spending time with all the (a. Mancinis, b. Mancinises, c. Mancini's).

9. The (a. Berrys, b. Berries, c. Berry's) are coming for dinner.

10. Wishing you (a. Happy, b. happy) holidays, a (a. Merry, b. merry) Christmas and a wonderful (a. new year, b. New Year.)

Answers:

1. a. "We're spending the holidays with the Smiths." The rule here: Never use



Spencer Grant

WEARING AN electric-lit Christmas hat, Kenneth Lopez of the Thurston Middle School Symphonic Band plays his trumpet as the band performs Christmas carols.

an apostrophe to form a plural of a name. Just as one cat plus another cat make two cats, one Smith plus another Smith make two Smiths.

2. b. "We're going to Joe Smith's house." In this case, there's just one Smith, so it's not plural. But we are talking about something he possesses, the house. So just as you would write about a single dog's tail, you'd write about a single Smith's house.

3. c. "We're going to the Smiths' house." This name is both plural and possessive. The rule here is to use just an apostrophe after the plural S: the Smiths' house.

4. a. "Merry Christmas from the Williamses." When you want to make a plural out of a name that ends with S, do as you do for words like "boss," "dress" and "bias": just add es to the singular. So just as you'd write bosses, dresses and biases, turn the singular Williams into the plural Williamses.

5. c. "We're going to the

Williamses' house." Plural possessives that end in S pose some of the biggest pitfalls for writing holiday greeting cards. Take it one step at a time: first, make the name plural, then add the possessive apostrophe after the plural S: the Williamses' house. If it helps, think of all the bosses' bonuses, all the dresses' hems, or all the biases' consequences.

6. c. "We're spending Christmas with the Chavezes." Names that end in Z, X, sh and ch form their plural the same way as generic words: add es. Don't get flummoxed. You already know that one blintz plus another blintz equals two blintzes. Proper names are no different. One Chavez, two Chavezes. One Nash, two Nashes.

7. c. "We've been invited to the Chavezes' house." Hopefully, this is getting easier by now. Just make Chavez plural then add the apostrophe to make it possessive. The same holds

See **Word**, page A8

MAILBAG



James Carbone

PAT BURNS, the new mayor of Huntington Beach, flashes the "shakra" with supporters as they pose for pictures at the Huntington Beach City Council meeting Dec. 3.

Readers respond to H.B.'s new 7-0 leadership

I was hoping that once the election was over, the MAGA conservative City Council majority and City Atty. Michael Gates could get past the partisanship and do what's best for all the citizens of Huntington Beach.

It doesn't appear that's going to happen anytime soon, based on last night's meeting where the minority three (Dan Kalmick, Natalie Moser and Rhonda Bolton) completed their term and the so-called HB3 (Chad Williams, Butch Twining and Don Kennedy) were sworn in. Much posturing, gloating and loud cheering was in evidence (Painted red: Huntington Beach seats all-MAGA City Council, Daily Pilot Dec. 4). Many in the chamber were wearing red "Make Huntington Beach Great Again 7-0" hats.

On the agenda was the mayor's presentation of gifts to the three outgoing council members, we assumed to recognize their public service for the past

several years. Sadly, then-Mayor Gracey Van Der Mark finished her one-year position by cutting off Dan Kalmick five minutes into his farewell speech with an abrupt "time's up" and "let's move on" and gave Natalie Moser a one-minute warning. In an additional note of disrespect and downright pettiness, she gifted each of the three with a large framed poster collage of Trump with bloodied ear and raised fist, "Trump Won," a Trump boat parade, and other partisan images, wrapped in a Daily Pilot newspaper with an article and photo of Van Der Mark on the front.

So much for class and honoring the dignity of her official office. What a pathetic embarrassment. Let's hope and pray that the new mayor, Pat Burns, can do better.

Michele Burgess
Huntington Beach

I attended the transitional Huntington Beach City Council meeting and

spoke in public comments. My welcoming to the new City Council members came with a warning and a dire prediction. My prediction that Surf City would continue to see division and civic strife if it clung to its grievance-filled agenda that offered no solution to our problems, address for our needs, or building for a brighter future unless wider and more constructive interaction with the greater community was attempted and achieved. It unfortunately had fallen on deaf ears by the end of the meeting.

The concluding remarks of all were unapologetic partisan, and any possibility of a nonsectarian stance firmly kicked to the curb. When the nine reindeer pulling Santa's special interest group sleigh all donned Trump-style "Make Huntington Beach Great Again" red caps and came out as the "MAGA-nificent Seven" with their enablers, all

See **Mailbag**, page A8



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APPETIZERS

THE BUNGALOW EGG
 Chive smoked salmon scrambled egg topped with caviar. Served with a shot of Grey Goose Vodka 22
COLOSSAL PRAWN COCKTAIL
 Spicy cocktail sauce with fresh horseradish & Tabasco then mixed with diced celery 26
BUTTERNUT SQUASH RAVIOLI
 Sage brown butter, shaved Manchego, pistachios 20
SWEET CHILI CALAMARI
 Tender calamari fried golden brown, sweet chili, bean sprouts, daikon sprouts, peanuts, carrots, Japanese dressing 20
GRILLED ARTICHOKE
 Quarters of grilled artichoke, garlic olive oil marinade, ginger aioli 19

SOUPS & SALADS

CORN CHOWDER
 Fresh corn, Applewood smoked bacon 14
MEATBALL SOUP
 Pork & beef meatballs, beef stock, sautéed spinach, penne pasta 14
HOLIDAY SALAD
 Cut romaine, Belgian endive, chives, watercress, Canadian coral bay shrimp, hard-boiled egg, tomato, ciabatta croutons, tossed in an olive oil, tarragon apple cider vinaigrette & a touch of Dijon mustard 22
DUNGENESS CRAB & BAY SHRIMP LOUIE
 Julienne iceberg lettuce, sliced egg, asparagus spears, roasted red pepper, 1000 Island dressing 30
LIME-MARINATED CHICKEN SALAD
 Mixed greens, lime marinated grilled chicken, avocado, chopped grilled vegetables, tarragon vinaigrette 23
BUNGALOW COBB SALAD
 Diced chicken, bacon, hard-boiled egg, avocado, tomato, scallions, bleu cheese, red wine vinaigrette 22
SEARED AHI SALAD
 Seared rare, field greens, sweet peppers, Portobello mushrooms, toasted sesame seeds, wasabi-ginger vinaigrette 30

SANDWICHES

STEAK SANDWICH
 Six ounce sliced filet mignon, onion strings, French baguette, French fries 33
BEEF DIP SANDWICH
 Sliced thin, au jus, Swiss cheese, caramelized onions on a French roll. Served with creamy horseradish & French fries 25
FILET MIGNON BURGER
 Ground filet mignon, cheddar cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, caramelized onions, 1000 Island dressing & French fries 23

HOLIDAY FARE

TRADITIONAL ROAST GOOSE WITH LINGONBERRY SAUCE
 Celery root mashed potatoes, warm gala apple compote & sweet sour red cabbage 44
DI BELLA PASTA
 Penne pasta, marinara sauce, meatballs 27
PEPPERED MEDALLIONS OF FILET
 Two medallions of pan-seared & pepper crusted filet mignon, topped with Diane sauce, seasonal vegetables 37
MISO-MARINATED CHILEAN SEA BASS
 Soy glaze, coconut rice, stir fried vegetables, mushrooms, lemongrass ginger beurre blanc 39
BLACKENED KING SALMON
 Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, avocado relish, honey jalapeño beurre blanc 33
CALIFORNIA CHICKEN BREAST
 Pan-seared chicken breast, oven roasted tomatoes, avocado, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes 33

Split plate charge of five dollars for all entrées. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase your risk of food-borne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions. We have the right to refuse service to anyone. No more than two forms of payment per table, please. 20% Gratuity will be added to parties of eight or more. A 3% processing fee will be added to all credit card transactions. For guests that choose to pay with cash, the 3% fee will be waived.

Haunted car wash takes a creepy turn this season

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

You better watch out. You better not cry.

The “Haunted Holidays” carwash is coming to serve up suds and scares for Christmastime.

A spin-off from the Haunted Carwash, a creative drive-through Halloween fright fest that originally began as the “Tunnel of Terror” during the pandemic, Haunted Holidays is the latest event to mingle the seasons in offering one final chill before the year’s end.

“We love both Halloween and Christmas,” said Veronica Young, who co-founded the Haunted Carwash with Long Vo. “We’re going to merge the two and try something new this year, which we’re hoping everyone is going to enjoy just as much as the Haunted Carwash.”

Haunted Holidays stands poised to take over Big Wave Carwash in Anaheim for one weekend only on Dec. 13 and Dec. 14.

That’s when drivers will line up for themed thrills beginning with a festive toy store that soon descends into a scary blizzard before entering the dreaded tunnel.

A gang of creepy elves and truly abominable snowmen deliver jump scares all along the way.

“Being our first year doing this, we’re still curating the experience,” Young said. “It’s going to be merry and bright and scary and fright!”

The emphasis on themes came from this past Halloween when the Haunted Carwash’s Lakewood location revolved around a cemetery story line, which fans reacted to positively.

“It was like our first year all over again,” Young said.

Young found similar affirmation when she promoted Haunted Holidays in public for the first time at last month’s holiday-mashing Creep it Real Festive event at the Heritage Museum of Orange County in Santa Ana. Fans who stopped by her booth to take photos with eerie elves and enter a raffle for free tickets were excited at another chance to take the ticket — and the ride.

“We had lots of families that were very excited to see us coming back again and that they won’t have to wait a whole year,” Young said.

She also recounted how one kid told their parent, “We can still go! We didn’t miss it!”

Haunted Holidays does, indeed, promise frights for

“We love both Halloween and Christmas. We’re going to merge the two and try something new this year, which we’re hoping everyone is going to enjoy just as much as the Haunted Carwash.”

— Veronica Young
Co-founder
of the Haunted Carwash

the whole family.

Like past Haunted Carwash events, the experience will have some scare immunity, if preferred — and as long as guests remember how to exercise it.

To tone down the interactions with scare actors, just keep car doors locked and the windows rolled up.

“A lot of families enjoy coming to our event because when they have little ones, they still feel safe,” Young said. “The kids still get to experience some of that spooky holiday fun.”

For the full Haunted Holidays ride, unlock those car doors and keep windows rolled down. The frosty fiends wandering around the car wash will take that as an open invitation to get a little more up close and personal.

There’s also going to be a special station on the radio dial for guests to tune into for creepy holiday music.

“We probably won’t be playing Jingle Bells on there,” Young said with a laugh.

She hopes the event later this month proves to be so successful that it comes back bigger and better every year.

“The Haunted Carwash has turned into a tradition for a lot of people and families,” Young said. “We’re going to try Haunted Holidays out for one weekend and see how it goes.”

At the end of all the terror and screams, not only will guests have survived the holidays — but their cars will be shiny and clean. Be sure to tip your abominable snowman!

For more information, visit thehauntedcarwash.com.

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File Photo

SCARE ACTORS will be getting ready with their holiday best for a new creepy Christmas carwash in Anaheim.

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DESIGNS

Continued from page A1

pipeline of sorts to Disney Studios.

“Disney saw his talent and plucked him right out as a student, and he started working on the very first Disney full-length animated feature, ‘Snow White,’ in 1937,” said Platt. “He worked on every Disney feature while Walt was alive, everything up through ‘The Jungle Book’ in 1967, and I believe his last one was ‘Robin Hood.’”

Hulett wasn’t an animator or a character artist; his specialty lay in scenery and backgrounds. Mark Hilbert and his wife, Janet, the founders of the Hilbert Museum, collect Disney animation art and keep some beautiful background pieces in their collection. However, it can be hard to properly credit their creators.

“Those artists at Disney worked collaboratively, and they wouldn’t sign their name, so it is hard nowadays to easily identify a Ralph Hulett background,”

said Platt.

Many artists during the Great Depression went to work for the movie industry, but at heart Hulett was a fine art watercolorist. As a member of the American Watercolor Society and California Water Color Society he painted California scenes that documented the changing landscape and also did oil paintings of historic parts of Los Angeles, particularly Bunker Hill. Guests can find more of his work within the permanent collection of California life at the Hilbert. Hulett also found additional streams of revenue doing commercial work, like greeting card designs.

Like most modern Christmas traditions, Christmas cards can be traced back to Queen Victoria and the practice has evolved from the elaborate Victorian-style greetings to the simple post card to Hallmark Cards, founded in 1913. By the 1950s, the art associated with holiday cards was no longer limited to religious imagery, and humorous, cartoon

IF YOU GO

“Merry and Bright: Christmas Card Designs by Ralph Hulett” is on view at the Hilbert Museum of California Art at 167 N. Atchison St. in Orange through Jan. 11. To be notified about tickets for Mary Platt’s art talk, join the Hilbert Museum mailing list by visiting hilbertmuseum.org.

illustrations became popular.

“Card companies were hiring many of the great illustrators of the day to do their cards,” said Platt.

Hulett’s cards feature whimsical visuals, a reindeer with a string of lights and a banner that reads “Noel” strung between its enormous antlers, or a Santa Claus riding a roller coaster with his eight reindeer in the train cars behind him.

“Even though he wasn’t a character designer, I think he well could have been,” said Platt, pointing out his paintings of cherubic children bundled up for the winter. Other paintings feature the graceful silhouette of two ice skaters or the warm smile of jolly St. Nick.

There are also examples that showcase Hulett’s skill with scenery in landscape paintings like “Footprints in the Snow” where the viewer can trace the tracks of two alert deer through the snow-covered forest as they come upon a warmly lit cabin in the woods.

Siamese cats were also a popular subject for Hulett. The breed was en vogue in the ‘50s and ‘60s, and the slinky cats with trademark blue eyes can be seen batting Christmas tree ornaments or cuddling under the mistletoe in his work. Hulett’s family owned Siamese cats as well, which afforded him many opportunities to study their movements and personalities.

While Hulett did create backgrounds for “Lady and



“FOOTPRINTS IN the Snow” showcases artist Ralph Hulett’s skill for painting scenery, as he did for Walt Disney Studios.

Sarah Mosqueda

the Tramp” he didn’t contribute to the twin cat characters, Si and Am in the movie. Regarded as problematic today because of their association with racial stereotypes of Asians, Si and Am were developed by Ward Kimball and Milt Kahl and animated by Bob Carlson, Bill Justice and John Sibley.

Hulett’s cats are a little less mischievous; a Siamese kitten, for example, peeks out of a red stocking in a piece titled “Cat in Stocking” from Platt’s own private collection.

“I am a cat person, and I grew up with Siamese cats, they have a very particular personality and they are very talkative,” said Platt.

On Dec. 12 at 6 p.m. Platt will give an art talk at the museum about the exhibition, sharing more about Hulett’s history.

Besides having a personal connection to the art work, Platt said the exhibition is well-suited for the Hilbert Museum, which tends to focus on what has become widely known as narrative art. Paintings with people in them (or the case of Hulett, cats and other characters) encourage a story line.

“That is what we are at heart; we are a storytelling museum,” Platt said.

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OWNER, OPERATOR and sommelier Rick Guzman samples a Vigna Del Parraco wine at Pizzeria Irene in Old Towne Orange.



Don Leach Staff Photographer

Sommelier turns up the heat at wine bar, pizza shop

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Sommelier and restaurateur Rick Guzman has been planning his own business since 2015. The Orange native envisioned opening a little wine bar and retail shop where he could help people fall in love with lesser known vinos.

"I have been buying wine since then to get a place going so I would have cool, fun, old vintages once I opened," said Guzman.

In September, Guzman opened Pizzeria Irene at 123 N. Olive St. in Old Towne Orange, and while he showcases an extensive wine list, people are lining up for his pies too. He grew up eating Mexican food at home with his family, but he associates pizza with celebrating with friends, and he decided to try his hand at making it.

Guzman learned pizza-making under Josh Mason, an expert pizza-maker who

worked with legends such as James Beard award-winning Chris Bianco. Guzman recalls when he first stepped into the kitchen with Mason, he had an emotional moment lighting the big wood-burning oven.

"The very first time I turned on the oven I almost started crying because I felt like a 4-year-old in my grandmother's kitchen," said Guzman. "In Mexico, my grandfather built her a wood-burning oven, and that is what she would cook with every single day. She would start her fire every morning."

He had found the second piece to his restaurant concept.

A research trip to Italy sold him on Acunto Neapolitan pizza ovens, built by the Acunto family, which has four generations of pizza makers, although now it mainly focuses on

See *Heat*, page A10

UCI Health

Dr. David I. Lee is a nationally recognized fellowship-trained urologist who specializes in prostate cancer surgery.



A HOT wood-fired margarita pizza from Pizzeria Irene, in Old Towne Orange.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

A	R	E	A	S	E	B	B	S	S	H	O	D
P	E	A	R	L	A	L	O	T	T	O	N	Y
P	E	S	T	O	R	O	M	E	R	O	L	E
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B	E	E	R		N	E	S	T		Y	E	S

TRAVEL

Continued from page A1

next semester.

Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, Travel OCC is open to students, staff and faculty as well as members of the public. Students at the center can plan and book domestic and international flight tickets, hotels, cruises, car rentals or group travel experiences and vacation packages.

Hospitality, Travel & Tourism director Tina DeShano said while some of the program's courses have hands-on learning opportunities — such as an on-site flight attendant simulation lab or internships at area hotels — there wasn't much for students seeking their travel agent certification.

"You can go in and volunteer at a travel agency, but it's very hard to do. And so many of those people have become home based, but we can't send students into someone's home," DeShano said Tuesday. "This is something that will benefit students that we were really just having a hard time finding outside the campus."

Giving students real-world training making travel arrangements through the same software used by major airline companies, Travel OCC allows students to



James Carbone

complete the 210 required internship hours needed to earn their Travel & Tourism and certificates and degrees.

Any revenue earned goes straight back into the program or toward providing scholarships for students.

The on-campus travel agency also provides opportunities for those who volunteer there to earn up to 50 hours of lab credit toward their travel-related college coursework.

That's a big plus for Jenny Nguyen, a student travel adviser in the hospitality program who hopes to someday apply what she's learning to work with her father, a hotelier in her native Vietnam.

"Before Travel OCC we had to go apply at hotels, like the Marriott and Hyatt, on our own, to get internships," the 23-year-old said. "This is helpful for international students also, because sometimes they can't work because they don't have a work visa, and for people

who have packed work schedules and lives."

Tuesday's grand opening drew a contingent of officials from the city and the Costa Mesa Chamber of Commerce, who praised the program for the real-world work experience it will provide students, while potentially inspiring their own wanderlust in the process.

Mayor John Stephens, offering remarks for the occasion, explained that while Costa Mesa

may be the best city of its size in the world, it's vital for young people to broaden their horizons by visiting other nations and experiencing different cultures.

"The great part of the focus on travel is to expand the world of the students, to make them understand we are not the center of the world," said Stephens who, himself, studied in Denmark as an undergraduate at the advice of a professor.

"Thank you for doing this, and thank you for having students be part of having a travel mentality and understanding the world is bigger than what we have in Costa Mesa."

Katherine Collette, an adjunct professor and director of Travel OCC, agreed with Stephens' estimation of the city's virtues.

"I couldn't agree more — Costa Mesa is absolutely amazing," she said. "However, those other places are great, and we can get you there."

Travel OCC is open to the public Tuesdays through Thursdays, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or by appointment in the College Center of OCC in Costa Mesa. For more, visit travelocc.com, call (714) 432-5821 or email info@travelocc.com.

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MAILBAG

Continued from page A4

pretense of serving the entire citizenry was eliminated and democracy debased in our hometown.

As I said in my remarks that while "to the victors may go the spoils" may apply here, it is a profoundly selfish, anti-democratic and reckless sentiment and one that does not serve the citizenry being represented. Added to this debasement is the adversarial and pugnaciously partisan stance our local government is now taking towards Sacramento and the greater powers that be.

Now that there are no guardrails on the dais, we will see if the MAGA sweep of offices in Huntington Beach leads its officials to descend to mischief and malfeasance. This is uncharted territory for our city. Let's hope it doesn't lose its way.

Tim Geddes
Huntington Beach

Notorious huckster, hustler and conman PT Barnum is often associated with the quote, "There's a sucker born every minute." While there's no evidence that Barnum actually coined this phrase, who-

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Send an email to 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 and address local issues and events. The Daily Pilot reserves the right to edit all accepted submissions for clarity, accuracy and length

ever did clearly had unknowingly described much of the Huntington Beach electorate.

The results of our last elections demonstrate that memories are far too short. Rather than voting to ensure there would adults in the room to check the current City Council majority's reckless, rash and recalcitrant impulses, H.B. voters decided instead to send them blindly ideological fellow travelers.

It's almost like everyone simply chose to forget this City Council majority's action over the past two years. The disregard for community norms and traditions, the politically motivated manipulation of the city charter, and the almost comedic lack of public accountability and transparency (may the Brown Act RIP) apparently weren't enough to cause voters to pause and consider the consequences. And then there was the

overt cronyism and political patronage. Why wasn't a secretive multimillion-dollar multiyear giveaway to a political ally not a bright red flag of warning? Given that this majority's first action was to abandon all local limits on political campaign donations, perhaps we shouldn't be surprised.

So fellow H.B. locals, here we are. We've elected a cabal of partisans who up to now have prioritized power over service, special-interests over community, and endless culture-wars to constructive achievement. However, "buyer beware." With failure comes the inevitable assessment of blame, and H.B. voters just eliminated this cabal's favorite scapegoats. It will be interesting to see where the blame will fall next. God knows it certainly won't be at City Hall.

Steve Shepherd
Huntington Beach

WORD

Continued from page A4

true for the Nashes' house.

8. a. "I'm looking forward to spending time with all the Mancinis. Names like Mancini that end in vowels can fool you because the I

at the end of Mancini is pronounced "ee," but when we add an S, it seems to change the vowel sound to create an "iss" pronunciation. Ignore your ear here. Just add S to names ending in vowels: the Chos, the Sununus, the Riccis.

9. a. "The Berrys are

coming for dinner." Proper nouns never change their spelling. So the Berrys may enjoy berries, but unlike the fruit, they don't have an irregular plural.

10. b., b. and tossup. "Wishing you happy holidays, a merry Christmas and a wonderful new year/New Year." Neither "happy" nor "merry" is a proper noun, so it's lowercase. "New Year" is a proper noun when you mean the holiday and lowercase when you mean a year that is new.

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JUNE CASAGRANDE is the author of "The Joy of Syntax: A Simple Guide to All the Grammar You Know You Should Know." Reach her at JuneTCN@aol.com.

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FEB 1 Danish String Quartet

FEB 11 Kodo: Warabe

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All dates, times, artists, programs, and prices are subject to change.

CONCERTS AT



PARADE

Continued from page A1

the Last Hurrah.

A pair of great places to take in the event are at the Balboa Bay Club north of Lido Isle on Pacific Coast Highway and the Balboa Fun Zone on the peninsula, said Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade Committee Co-Chair Chris Delfs. Both locations offer scenic views of the festivities on the water and will also be the site of drone shows lighting up the sky each night of the celebration.

Marina Park “is also a prime spot to watch the parade all five nights, as long as you get there early,” Delfs said.

Attendees are invited to a viewing at the park on opening night, Dec. 18. The event features goods from over 35 local artisans, food vendors, live music and activities for children. It runs from 4 to 8 p.m., with a fireworks show scheduled at 6:15.

Parade officials also suggested bringing or renting a boat to watch from a designated vantage point on the water. Revelers can also book a reservation at a restaurant or resort with a view of the harbor.

The holiday celebration helps bring in over \$10 million in revenue for local businesses each year, Delfs said.

Roughly 100 boats are signed up to be in the 2024 parade. They range in size from small duffies and skiffs all the way up to 100-foot yachts, Delfs said.

The 86-foot Last Hurrah will be one of the largest vessels on the route and is a returning entry to the event. This year it's decorated with a tribute to police, firefighters, paramedics and lifeguards accented by strategically placed and synchronized LEDs. Those simulate the reflection of waves, rotating helicopter blades and flashing sirens. The display also includes a tribute to Ben Carlson, a Newport Beach lifeguard who died



SHAUN CROSSMAN stands on his boat, the Last Hurrah, with a cutout of lifeguard Ben Carlson, for the 2024 Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade, which runs from Dec. 18 through Dec. 22 this year.

Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer



LOVEY, a Huskie, walks on Paradise Found as his owner Greg Killingsworth prepares his boat for the parade.

while rescuing a swimmer caught in 6- to 8-foot waves 10 years ago.

Entries compete for a variety of awards and will be judged on a wide range of criteria. One is how well they convey this year's

theme: “Christmas Across the Decades.”

Killingsworth leaned hard into an '80s-inspired display aboard Paradise Found, also known locally as the Snoopy Boat because of the inflatable



KILLINGSWORTH prepares his famous Snoopy boat, Paradise Found, for his “South Florida in the '80s” theme.

Charles Schulz-drawn beagle that has been incorporated into its decorations since he began participating 14 years ago. A pair of fire-spitting palm trees will be synchronized to “Conga” by Gloria Estefan.

A total of 42 plastic flamingos line the hull.

“It’s a nonstop dance machine,” Killingsworth said of the Paradise Found. “And we bring that party all the way around the harbor.”

“It’s a nonstop dance machine. And we bring that party all the way around the harbor.”

– **Greg Killingsworth**
owner of Paradise Found

His boat will also feature several portraits of “Miami Vice” actors Don Johnson and Phillip Michael Thomas hanging in pink frames. Killingsworth was considering loading a Ferrari Daytona Spider from his collection onto a barge and towing it behind his yacht, but he said he thought better of it.

Paradise Found is one of the most decorated entries in the parade’s history, and each year Killingsworth spends months planning for it. He gets a little bit of help from friends to move around heavier items, but managed to set up most of his display by himself in about a month.

Meanwhile Delfs, co-chair Jack Suddarth along with about 100 volunteers have been brainstorming and prepping for the parade since January. They’ve also worked closely with the Newport Beach Harbor, police and Orange County Sheriff’s departments and numerous other community groups to ensure this year’s festivities are both memorable and safe for the thousands of residents and visitors who attend. And numerous vessels will coordinate to make sure wayward sailors don’t stray into the route

“It takes a lot for our marshals to make sure everyone is safe,” Delfs said. “We’re on the water at night, and it’s also five nights as opposed to just one. So it’s the dedication from the entire community ... We have more partners and assets on the water than we’ve ever had before.”

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Don Leach | Staff Photographer

MARIA KHO walks through the tunnel of lights with her little baby during the 2022 Nights of 1,000 Lights event at the Sherman Library & Gardens. This year's event starts Dec. 5 with a members-only viewing and on Dec. 6 to general public.



A GNOMES decoration welcomes guests during the Nights of 1,000 Lights at the Sherman Library & Gardens.



GUESTS WALK through the 3D Trouble in Paradise installation at the Sherman Library and Gardens in 2022.

Night of 1,000 Lights to mark its 10th year

BY ERIC LICAS

One of Corona Del Mar's most iconic holiday celebrations has returned to the Sherman Library and Gardens in December for its 10th

anniversary. Night of 1,000 Lights kicked off with a member-exclusive evening on Dec. 5 and has dates open to the general public scheduled through Dec. 22. The event recasts the gardens as a an

LED-illuminated wonderland packed with family and photo-friendly attractions. The popular tunnel of light running down the central path of the facility returns, along with other

favorites like a neon, black-light-lit display in the conservatory that's best enjoyed with a pair of 3D glasses. The "boogie bonanza" in the tea garden is serving a "Crystal Disco Christmas vibe," repre-

sentatives for the venue said in a news release. Families can warm up over s'mores at the fire pit, and Santa will be on hand to greet kids in his adobe cottage. Admission is \$30 for

members and \$50 for non-members. Kids age 3 and under get in for free. Additional information is available at thesherman.org.
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SCHOOL

Continued from page A3

aligned with state standards. The academy, which runs from September through May, partners with 10 different charter schools.

Little Surf Co. offers small class sizes of 15 to 20 students, and students wear uniforms on campus. Some of the surf instructors also help out as teacher's aides.

"We want to provide them with a unique learning space," said LeMonnier, who started with the school as a surf instructor five years ago. "They learn with their hands, they learn by doing. A lot of it is project based. Our whole thing is we don't want them to be sitting in a classroom for eight hours when they don't need to be, and they can be learning in more hands-on ways."

Little Surf Co. also has a summer camp with more than 60 kids, Kayla Graney



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

KAYLA AND JASON Graney started the Little Surf Co. Institute in 2019. The institute is a learning enrichment center that focuses on a variety of enrichment programs, including the Surf & Science Academy, LSC Learning Center and Little Ocean Explorers TK.

said. In her office on campus is a big board, which has future plans for the

school. It's definitely a labor of love for the Graney's, who

call the academy their "Little House on the Prairie" school. Their motto



MAREN MUNSON, 8, is one of the stoked participants in the Little Surf Co. Institute in Huntington Beach.

for the school is "Join the movement, let's ride the wave."

Being at the beach every morning isn't something they take for granted, but they also feel like it really benefits their students.

"Getting them into a classroom at 8 o'clock, there have been so many studies done that they're

just not ready, mentally, to be in that head space yet," Kayla Graney said. "Getting them out here, getting them grounded, they get all of their wiggles out."

For more information on the institute, visit littlesurfcoinstitute.com.

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Daily Pilot

A Times Community News publication.

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The Daily Pilot, established in 1907, is published Thursday through Sunday by Times Community News, a division of the Los Angeles Times. Subscriptions are available only by subscribing to The Times, Orange County.

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HEAT

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oven manufacturing. Lined with handmade clay bricks and a proprietary mixture of Neapolitan sand and volcanic rock, the oven can crank to up 900 degrees Fahrenheit.

"With a lot of other ovens you have to be very careful with that because you can start burning the bottom of the pizza," said Guzman. "With these it is no problem whatsoever."

He named the concept Pizzeria Irene for his grandmother and invested in his own custom-made Acunto oven. The blue-and-white behemoth is covered in custom Venetian tile, and above the oven's molten hot opening is the name "Irene" in cobalt blue letters.

"Every single time I turn on that oven, I can't help but think of her," said Guzman.



SOMMELIER AND

owner-operator Rick Guzman stands with three of his wood-fired Neapolitan-inspired pizzas including a margarita, bianca and a calabrese, from left, at his new Pizzeria Irene in Old Towne Orange.

Don Leach
Staff
Photographer

man. Guzman uses the oven to fire his pizzas made with a high-hydration pizza dough, roasting garlic and baking bread for the charcuterie boards. He eventually plans to use it for roasting vegetables too.

"There are no gas lines in the whole building, everything is coming out of this oven," said Guzman.

The food menu is tight, featuring a few classic Neapolitan-inspired pies, along with some anti-pasta options. The charcuterie board is piled with items like brie, prosciutto and house-made wine, poached pears and pickled veggies. The Caesar salad is bright with fresh lemon zest and a healthy dusting of Parmesan.

mesan. Pizzas are crisp but still have a satisfying chew.

The wine hasn't taken a back seat to the food. Guzman said it is still a focus for him, leaning heavily on Italian varietals.

"I always say France was my first love with wine, but Italy is where my heart lays," said Guzman. "It is my favorite country for wine."

The menu is filled out with French wine and New World wines from places like California and Oregon. Guzman is also happy to help diners navigate the wine list.

"My first questions are usually what do you normally drink, how long have you been drinking and do you want to try something new or stick to your usual?" said Guzman "Where you are at in your wine journey? That determines everything."

Pizzeria Irene opened just a few months ago but has already developed a strong neighborhood following, with people lining up each night. On Friday and Saturdays the wait has stretched beyond two hours. The restaurant is only open for dinner for now and does not take reservations.

While Guzman said he is pleased with the reception that restaurant has received, he wishes one thing would have turned out differently. He never got to tell his grandmother he planned to name his restaurant for her.

"I did my LLC in March and she passed away Thanksgiving day that same year. I had planned to fly out that December and show her the paper, kind of as a Christmas present," said Guzman.

He smiles when he looks over at the oven with her name on it, though.

"I'm sure she knows," he said.

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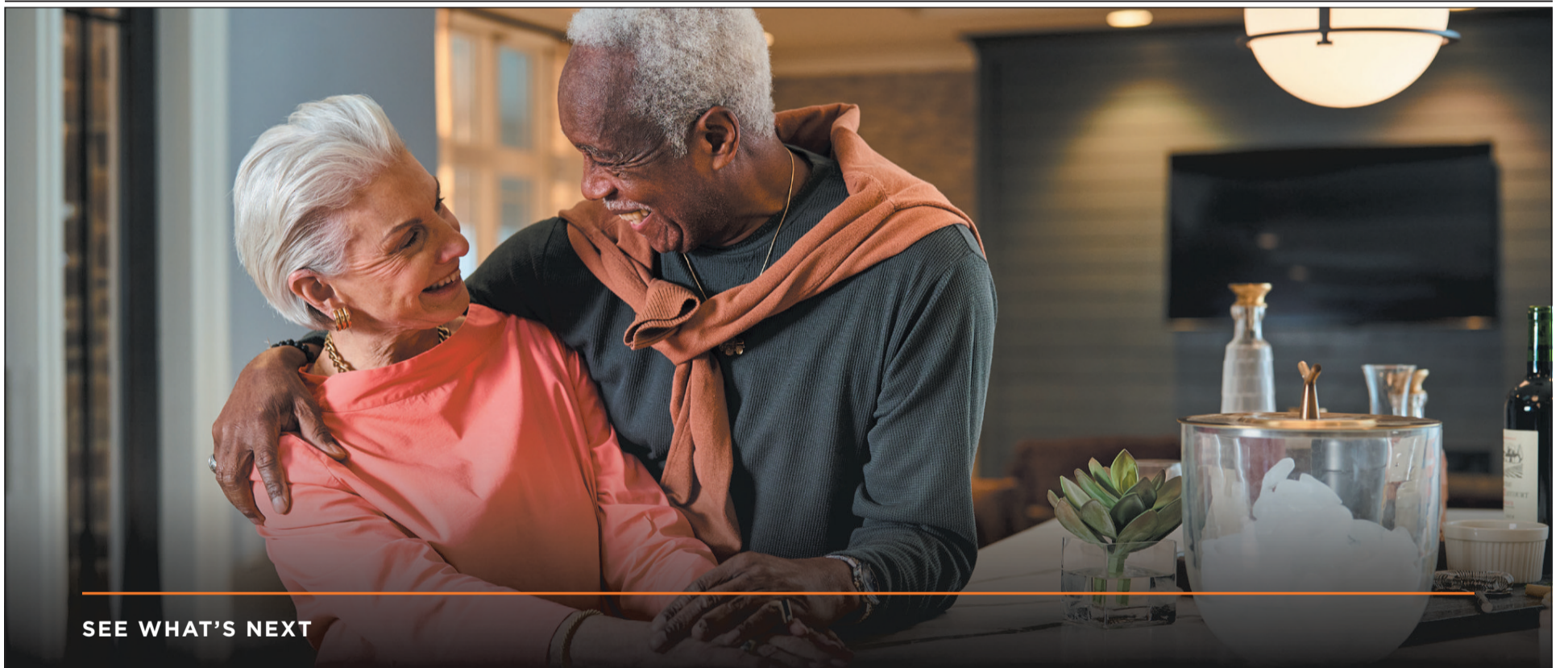


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