

## Dispute clouds switch to district elections

Attorney claims in a lawsuit that Laguna Niguel has failed to pay her for demand letter prompting transition.

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Laguna Niguel avoided a costly legal fight when the city decided to adopt district elections outside of a courtroom.

In November, voters will elect City Council members by newly drawn districts for the first time.

But Michelle Jackson, a Dana Point-based attorney who threatened to sue if the city didn't adopt the reform, is claiming that Laguna Niguel is avoiding one legal bill it shouldn't be — her attorney fees.

In June 2023, Jackson sent the city a demand letter on behalf of an unnamed group claiming that the city's "at-large" election system disenfranchised Latinos in violation of the California Voting Rights Act.

According to 2020 Census data, Latinos comprise about 16% of Laguna Niguel's population, but Jackson claimed that the city had failed to elect a single Latino candidate to City Council in the past 20 years.

"There is a clear disconnect between the significant Latino population in Laguna Niguel and the complete absence of Latinos on the City Council," her letter read.

Laguna Niguel called a special meeting last July after receiving Jackson's letter.

"The stakes of those lawsuits are huge," said City Atty. Scott Smith of district election legal battles. "In every case that's ever been tried, in this regard, the city ends up having to convert their system and has to pay the opposing party [and] their attorney's fees."

He noted that San Clemente, Rancho Santa Margarita and Laguna Hills had received similar demand letters.

See *Dispute*, page A4

### ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**HUNTINGTON BEACH ART CENTER TAKES VISITORS ON A TRIP VIA 'SURF CITY ART'**  
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**LATINO HEALTH ACCESS 'PROMOTORAS' CELEBRATED IN ART AS PANDEMIC HEROINES** PAGE A5

**TWO O.C. PIZZERIAS RANK AMONG '50 BEST' IN THE USA**  
PAGE A9



Marco Cappelletti | Yves Saint Laurent

"YVES SAINT LAURENT: Line and Expression" in Marrakech, Morocco in 2023. The exhibition opened at OCMA on July 3.

## OCMA dresses up to show a fashion icon's influence

'Yves Saint Laurent: Line and Expression' features sketches, photographs and haute couture garments from the influential designer.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

In the world of fashion, we hold certain truths to be self-evident. A little black dress will never go out of style, for instance.

The collection of Yves Saint Laurent black cocktail dresses and evening gowns on display at the Orange County Museum of Art in Costa Mesa are a testament to the frocks' timelessness. The wardrobe is part of OC-

MA's newest exhibition, "Yves Saint Laurent: Line and Expression."

"Everyone knows the little black dress," said Heidi Zuckerman, OCMA's chief executive and director, who wore her own black shift with a cold shoulder detail to a preview of the exhibition on June 27. "These things that we take for granted in contemporary culture, it all starts somewhere and it really

See *Show*, page A4

## After 36 years, former Costa Mesa City Manager Tom Hatch lands his dream job

BY SARA CARDINE

Tom Hatch has done some pretty heavy lifting in his 36-year career, working for eight different municipalities, including a stint as Costa Mesa's city manager from 2011 to 2018, and serving as Orange County's chief human resources officer.

Even after his retirement in 2022, the Costa Mesa resident took on interim city manager roles in Santa Ana and Santa Fe Springs, temporarily helming the vast organizations while they searched for new leaders.

But just last Monday, the lifelong civil servant finally landed in what he describes as his "dream job," a place where the rigors of leadership and service are exercised on an even broader playing field — the kind with 100 yards and two end zones.

Hatch, 58, currently serves as assistant coach of the freshman boys football team at Costa Mesa High School and is overseeing regular summer practice sessions ahead of the 2024-25 season.

Although he grew up in Covina, the new gig feels like a bit of a homecoming, as his two adult daughters, now 31 and 29, graduated on the same Mus-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**A FORMER CITY MANAGER** for Costa Mesa and other area cities, Tom Hatch has landed his dream job as an assistant football coach at Costa Mesa High School.

tangs Field where he and wife Vanessa cheer on student athletes from the sidelines and where he now reports for coaching duties daily.

"I always had a dream of being

a football coach, to try to instill some values of life and develop grit in kids and help them overcome things and prepare them for life," Hatch said Tuesday, recalling his own high school

years on the gridiron and the lifelong friendships he forged with teammates he still calls friends.

See *Hatch*, page A4

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# New Santa Ana park has unique water feature

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

A new pocket park in Santa Ana's Artesia-Pilar neighborhood brings a concrete bike path, mural art and drought tolerant landscaping to the community.

City officials touted the King Street Urban Greening Project during a ribbon-cutting ceremony Monday as the perfect way to kick off National Parks and Recreation Month.

"It's a symbol and a message to residents in historically neglected neighborhoods that they matter," said Santa Ana City Councilman Johnathan Hernandez. "I believe every child and family should have access to a park and green space in their neighborhood. I'm trying to bring that to fruition for our residents."

Hernandez grew up in the Artesia-Pilar neighborhood before being elected to represent it in Ward 5.

But one of the quarter-acre pocket park's most unique features seeps deep into the soil.

Designed to capture 17,000 gallons of water per storm, the project features two bioretention basins that will work to replenish Santa Ana's groundwater supply.

Once a storm passes over the park, the basins and an underground

stormwater infiltration system will capture the saturated rain before it is filtered through the soil into the groundwater basin.

"The basin was created to make the streets more accessible for children and families," Hernandez said. "This neighborhood will no longer have flooding on its streets because we developed the infrastructure needed to capture water."

Previously an unused right-of-way on the corner of King and 10th streets in Santa Ana, the pocket park was funded mostly through a \$1.5-million Caltrans grant that was part of Gov. Gavin Newsom's Clean California initiative.

The project received an additional \$299,000 from the Federal Clean Water Protection Enterprise and another \$300,000 from Santa Ana's District 3 acquisition and development fund.

Though just 10,000 square feet, the park is sorely needed in the city, residents say.

"There was an empty lot that the city closed because people were speeding through that neighborhood," said Ruby Gonzales-Woo, president of the Artesia-Pilar Neighborhood Assn. "Now we have this park with a mural of our history. We can all reflect back on the some of the good things that have



Photos courtesy of the city of Santa Ana

**A MURAL BY** community artist Marina Aguilera is part of King Street's new 10,000-square-foot pocket park.

happened in the neighborhood."

According to the Trust for Public Land's annual ParkScore index, Santa Ana's park system ranked 93 out of the nation's largest 100 cities this year.

The city scored well below average in terms of acreage and amenities in dropping three slots from last year's index.

Hernandez lists Artesia-Pilar's new pocket park as one of four he has fought for in his ward in the past four years, including Ed Caruthers and Friendship parks.

Santa Ana is soliciting ideas to permanently name the King Street Urban Greening Project, which city officials celebrated as a beautification of the Artesia-Pilar neighborhood, both through its gateway and the mural by community artist Marina Aguilera.

"This park gives kids a place to be a kid," Hernandez said. "It gives families a place where they can make memories."

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**CITY OFFICIALS** cut the ribbon on Monday to celebrate the completion of a new pocket park in Santa Ana.



## Coming summer 2024 Cancer care reimagined UCI Health

# Fountain Valley police get drone program off the ground

BY ANDREW TURNER

Fountain Valley has added an eye in the sky to its law enforcement capabilities, as the police department has begun incorporating the use of drones in its police work.

An unmanned aerial system was first introduced to departmental operations for fatal traffic incident reconstruction in January 2022.

The department currently has two qualified pilots for its unmanned aircraft systems in Sgt. Brian Mosher and Officer Anthony Clements.

The City Council accepted donations of \$10,000 from the Fountain Valley Community Foundation and \$4,000 from Hyundai Motor America in May that went toward the purchase of two DJI Mavic 3 Thermal Enterprise UAS drones. Having more than one drone available would ensure operational continuity, city officials said.

Benefits of a drone program include cost effectiveness, enhanced surveillance, and improved officer safety, Mosher told the council. Contrary to traditional aerial surveillance methods such as helicopters, the drones require less fuel and manpower, he said.

The unmanned aircraft systems come equipped with thermal imaging, and they are an asset in search-and-rescue operations. The aerial aids can also assist with the reconstruction of crime scenes.

Asked how close one would have to be to operate the device, Mosher noted that a drone's flight is subject to regulations for operational safety.

"These things can fly 9 miles away, but with FAA restrictions, all our pilots have to be FAA certified," Mosher said. "You have to



Photos by Eric Licas

**A DRONE LIFTS** off under the guidance of Fountain Valley Police Sgt. Brian Mosher and Officer Anthony Clements at Fountain Valley Sports Park on June 18.



**A SCREEN DISPLAYS** the view of a drone piloted by Fountain Valley Police Sgt. Brian Mosher.

be within line of sight as a government agency or a commercial pilot to be flying these. Not only are you flying, you have to have an observer with you, and that observer needs to have line of sight of that drone."

Residential privacy concerns came up before the City Council voted to accept the funds. Mayor

Glenn Grandis asked what protections were in place.

"This drone is used for actual operations," Mosher explained. "It's not to just observe or surveil a random area. We're going to be utilizing this drone in situations, as a suspect ran from a stolen vehicle when we're looking for him. Probably a big one that we'll be utiliz-



**MOSHER** maneuvers a drone through an SUV window.

ing a lot is missing persons that are in the park or last seen in a residential tract. There is transparency with this because each flight will be tracked."

A drone on display inside council chambers then interrupted Mosher's presentation with its communications capabilities, prompting him to turn off the device.

In order to become a drone operator, an officer must complete a four-day course and pass an FAA test. Mosher said the department is looking to train more officers to pilot its drone fleet, while Clements provided insight into the test that awaits those hoping to join the unmanned aircraft systems team.

"The requirements are

similar to a regular pilot, what an airline pilot needs to know," said Clements, who formerly served as the department's traffic investigator and had an interest in using drones to document and reconstruct scenes. "You have to know the charts, the airport runways, the wayward side, the windward side, the different charts, so the test is pretty challenging. ... It's challenging, but it's very rewarding."

Clements added that the department has two interior drones, as well as one each for mapping and training, respectively.

The drones have been put to use on various missions, including traffic collision documentation and in patrol.

"When you get to the scene, you see a [two-dimensional view] in front of you," Clements said. "It's hard to capture the totality of the circumstances. From the drone above, you get to really see the skids, directions of travel from both vehicles, points of rest. It's a very good documenting tool, and it also geolocates different points using other software that we have."

"We were impressed that this program is going to be used to increase the efficiency of what the police do on a daily basis," said Matt Taylor, president of the Fountain Valley Community Foundation. "It's going to increase their safety in doing what they do, and it's also going to help support citizens and the residents of Fountain Valley in our safety, as well."

"When you get something that is going to be efficient and help people do their jobs better, and their job is keeping us safe, that's a pretty awesome win-win."

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Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**DAN FALTZ**, executive director of the Huntington Beach Art Center, stands in front of a mosaic surfboard in the main showroom at the "Surf City ART" exhibit.

# Huntington Beach Art Center takes visitors on a trip via 'Surf City ART'

BY MATT SZABO

Huntington Beach Art Center executive director Dan Faltz is excited about the future of his new place of employment.

Near the entrance to the building, an area that used to be a store is being set up as a new gallery space, which will allow for several more shows a year at the art center.

The first show Faltz has shepherded through the center also has helped him learn a lot about Huntington Beach in a short period of time.

"Surf City ART" will run through Aug. 17 and features more than 60 pieces.

Faltz, who started at the center in March, has had a varied career in the art world. Most recently, he was an assistant curator at the Ontario Museum of History & Art.

"I think the through line for me is how art and culture is really essential for



"NEXT GENERATION HB Lifeguards," by Virginia Billes, is on display at the Huntington Beach Art Center.

individual and community health," he said. "It's how we express, it's how we interpret, it's how we celebrate. ... This show has been a great opportunity for me to better get to know Huntington Beach. The different parts of the city, our creative community."

"Surf City ART" features local artist and former Huntington Beach Mayor

Lyn Semeta, as well as local author and surfer Mark Zambrano, as jurists. They pared the selections down from more than 200 entries received. Types of art include sculptures and paintings of oil, acrylic and watercolor.

Faltz and his staff displayed the artwork in different rooms geo-

See *Art*, page A10

## THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

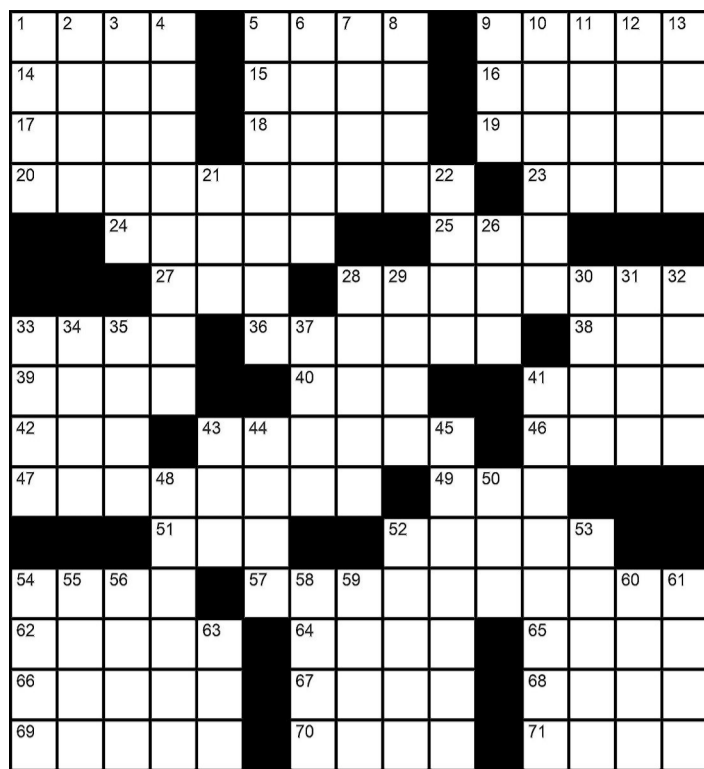
By Stella Zawistowski

### ACROSS

- 1 Actor Pitt
- 5 First responders: 2 wds.
- 9 Confess
- 14 Car or truck
- 15 Playwright Coward
- 16 Pilotless aircraft
- 17 React to a shock
- 18 Medicine amount
- 19 Fourth Greek letter
- 20 Couple's vacation: 3 wds.
- 23 Chemistry unit
- 24 " \_ you go!"
- 25 Workout spot
- 27 \_ and outs
- 28 Emphasized
- 33 Go across
- 36 Cave sounds
- 38 In times of yore
- 39 Showy spring flower
- 40 MSN competitor
- 41 Model Hadid
- 42 Williams of baseball
- 43 Me, \_ and I
- 46 Often: 2 wds.
- 47 Email-sending programs: 2 wds.
- 49 Some records: Abbr.
- 51 Acorn producer
- 52 Aussie marsupial
- 54 Misplaced
- 57 Evening with statuettes: 2 wds.
- 62 Nebraska city
- 64 Actress Loughlin
- 65 Cloudy
- 66 Electrical lines
- 67 Apple tablet
- 68 Assist
- 69 Severely simple
- 70 Facebook's company
- 71 Prefix with -vision

### DOWN

- 1 "The Simpsons"



## SUDOKU

By the Mephram Group

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [sudoku.org.uk](http://sudoku.org.uk).

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

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A5.

- 8 Huge quantity
- 9 Contribute
- 10 Nighttime visions
- 11 Lose feathers
- 12 Keen on
- 13 Pair of oxen, e.g.
- 21 Boggy area
- 22 Storybook

- monster
- 26 "Sure thing!"
- 28 Sneakers, e.g.
- 29 Highway charge
- 30 Travel by boat
- 31 Frozen-waffle brand
- 32 "Stop waiting around!": 2 wds.
- 33 Plops in a chair
- 34 Get ready
- 35 Verdi opera
- 37 Group of actors
- 411944 Ingrid Bergman film
- 43 Wharton degree: Abbr.
- 44 Artist Ono
- 45 Tampa's state
- 48 One honored in May
- 50 Bad review
- 52 24- \_ gold
- 53 Say OK
- 54 Highs and \_
- 55 Leave out
- 56 Singer Bareilles
- 58 Slender
- 59 Manage somehow
- 60 College building
- 61 Sort
- 63 Pose a question

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## DISPUTE

Continued from page A1

Council members heeded Smith's recommendation and passed a resolution stating the city's intent to switch to district elections.

Abiding by the law, Laguna Niguel held two public hearings before drawing up district maps and two hearings afterward. In January, council members finalized the transition with new districts scheduled for election in the fall.

About a week later, Jackson sought attorney fees from Laguna Niguel related to her work in drawing up the demand letter.

In a complaint filed in late May, she claimed the city has refused to pay her. The lawsuit does not specify the amount Jackson seeks, but attorney fees that can be collected under state election law are capped at \$30,000. Jackson's suit pointed to

state election law in saying she's entitled to payment since the city did not move on district election reform until her demand letter.

She claimed that the city's press release issued last summer after signaling the intent to reform its election system attests to that.

"While transitioning to a district-based election system was not an existing goal for the city," read the July 27, 2023, press release, "the city received a letter challenging its current election system and asserting that the city's at-large election system violates the California Voting Rights Act."

The city was served with the suit on June 19.

Laguna Niguel's city manager's office did not respond to a TimesOC request for comment.

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File Photo

**DISTRICT ELECTIONS** are coming to Laguna Niguel City Hall in November. Attorney Michelle Jackson is claiming in a lawsuit that Laguna Niguel has failed to pay her for the demand letter prompting the city's switch to district elections.

## SHOW

Continued from page A1

starts with Yves Saint Laurent."

While the invention of the little black dress is attributed to Coco Chanel, designers like Laurent are responsible for continuing its legacy.

"This kind of meditation on black that happens here changes your perspective based on the length of the sleeve, or whether there is no sleeve, what the materiality is or how fitted or how loose they are. All of these different gestures are such significant gestures that tell all of these different stories," said Zuckerman. "Being able to see them all together is what shows the incredible depth of the designer."

Curated by Olivier Saillard and Gaël Mamine, "Yves Saint Laurent: Line and Expression" opened to the public Wednesday and features a treasure trove of original sketches, photographs, jewelry and haute couture garments ranging from 1963 to 2001 from the iconic couturier, with 46 looks in total. The exhibition is organized by the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris and the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Marrakech, where Zuckerman first saw the show while on vacation in Morocco.

"When I saw it, I thought 'This show has to come to the Orange County Museum of Art,'" Zuckerman said.

The site of the local exhibition is appropriate, considering Yves Saint Laurent was the first luxury brand to come to South Coast Plaza, which lies just across the street. It debuted at the shopping destination in 1982, a bold move that may have inspired other fashion houses to venture into the Orange County market, contributing to making the shopping mecca what it is today.

It is also a fitting example of the thread that connects art to fashion.

"Part of the reason I was specifically interested in this exhibition is because it shows Yves Saint Laurent was an incredible drafts-

man. All of his creations start off as drawings and that is what a lot of sculptors and painters do, as well," Zuckerman said.

The designer's drawings are said to be what inspired Christian Dior to hire him as an assistant in 1955. Saint Laurent's sketches in black ink or pencil are on view in the show in humble spiral notebooks but also framed, some with swatches of fabric samples pinned to their corners. All are works of art.

Mock-up garments of some of the sketches are displayed too, on artfully posed Schläppi mannequins (on loan from the Bowers Museum) no less, highlighting slender silhouettes and elegant lines the late designer became known for.

A collection of the tuxedo-inspired "Le Smoking" creations is also a stand-out, an example of how Saint Laurent gave women clothing inspired by menswear and pushed forward another fashion truth: Women wear trousers. Silk lapels, structured velvet jackets and tailored pants are just some of the ways in which we see Saint Laurent make the tuxedo feminine.

Besides sketches and couture, there are also jewelry and accessories on display. Stone and metal necklaces that resemble unearthed volcanic rocks from the spring-summer 1986 collection sit near earrings of rose-colored glass entwined with wire details from the spring-summer 1988 collection. Walking through the exhibition is like experiencing a fashion magazine in 3D: each look a turn of the page, each page wearable art.

"People look at fashion runway shows and they think that the work is more sculpture or performance than it is wearable. Part of that is how bodies fill clothing, but fashion also emphasizes our individuality," said Zuckerman. "That is one of the things that I think connects fashion with art."

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## HATCH

Continued from page A1

"I always thought about that, but I was busy with my career and coaching my daughters and all kinds of other things."

So a few weeks ago, when Hatch got a call from Costa Mesa High head football coach Gary Gonzalez, asking if he might have any interest in working with the freshman boys' team, he jumped at the chance. When offered a stipend, he declined.

"Gary asked me if I wanted to be paid, and I said no," he recalled. "I want to help bring resources to the program. My wife and I are going to be sponsors and help raise money."

The community needs to support programs like this."

Now, during rigorous training sessions, rising freshmen spend hours on and off the field, performing drills and learning



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**FORMER COSTA MESA** City Manager Tom Hatch on Tuesday works with Costa Mesa High's freshman football team in summer practice.

plays, undergoing weight training and partaking in the hard work and discipline that grows adolescents into capable and confident young adults.

It's a far cry from Hatch's former jobs, where the rigors endured were less physical and, at times, more politically complicated than freshman foot-

ball.

He steered the city of Costa Mesa through a particularly turbulent period, during which City Council members looking to alleviate post-recession financial troubles sought to outsource portions of the city's labor force, particularly within the police department.

**"I always had a dream of being a football coach, to try to instill some values of life and develop grit in kids and help them overcome things and prepare them for life."**

— Tom Hatch

"Every hour felt like a day, and every day felt like a week," he recalled of that time.

Hatch said he's always seen the role of a city manager as a humble servant hired to carry out the wishes of the council majority (at the time Costa Mesa had a five-member panel, not seven as it has today), even when those decisions were somewhat controversial.

"I have a professional ethic. We don't play games — when three votes tell us to do something, that's what you do," he added. "My role was to hold it all together."

Despite the ups and downs of the job, Hatch believes a lot was accom-

plished during his time as city manager, and assistant city manager five years before that, including crafting a vision of Costa Mesa as a place with its own unique "culture of cool" that helped set it apart from neighboring cities.

The city successfully courted the Los Angeles Chargers, which agreed to use Jack Hammett Sports Complex as its practice facility and training camp. The popular resident-created holiday attraction Snoopy House came to City Hall in a tradition that continues to this day and became a haven for entrepreneurs in the retail and restaurant industries.

"It was a challenging time, but it was exhaust-

ing," Hatch said of his tenure with the city, which ended with the preparation of a severance agreement that passed in a 3-2 vote in 2018, when a largely conservative council configuration shifted following Election Day.

"Being a city manager is a grind. You get chewed up and spit out. It's a lot of pressure, and every decision you make, some people may like it and some people may not like it."

Hatch went on in 2019 to become chief human resources officer for Orange County, a position he would work for the next two years during the coronavirus pandemic before

See *Hatch*, page A5

# 'Promotoras' celebrated as pandemic heroines



Cecilia Ortiz Fernandez

**PROMOTORAS POSE** by the brass sculpture at Latino Health Access, a nonprofit group based in Santa Ana, after its June 29 unveiling.

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

A new role awaited Socorro Juarez after she finished a day of outreach for Latino Health Access as a community health worker, or "promotora," during the height of the pandemic.

The Santa Ana-based nonprofit had a vaccine costume that ran small.

Juarez tried it on at the insistence of her co-workers.

"It fit perfectly as if it were made just for me," Juarez laughingly recounted. "Now, I was the vaccine!"

She danced around in the costume at different outreach efforts to inform the Latino community of the importance of getting vaccinated.

For Juarez, the work of a promotora — from hand-



**ALICIA ROJAS** poses with banners that highlight "promotoras" from Latino Health Access.

ing out critical public health information in neighborhoods hit hard by the coronavirus to helping run community testing sites to donning the vaccine costume — hit close to home.

"When I was here looking at the families, I realized that I was looking at my family, that I was assisting my family, that I was taking care of my family," she said. "My sister passed away because of the COVID situation."

Stories like Juarez are the foundation of "Las Poderosas de Latino Health Access (The Powerful Women of Latino Health Access)," a new public art project by Santa Ana artist Alicia Rojas.

The artist's conversations with promotoras — 63 in all, 56 of them women — round out a digital archive of oral histories, shape a forthcoming book of promotora portraits and even inspired a brass

sculpture at Latino Health Access' office in downtown Santa Ana that was publicly unveiled on June 29.

"This project is full of tears, from the beginning to the unveiling," Rojas said. "It's been joyful tears. It's been tears of sharing traumas."

Rojas recalls working on a mobile float to promote vaccination in the nonprofit's basement at a time when the pandemic ravaged through Latino working-class neighborhoods, with positivity rates more than double that of Orange County's average.

Even before the first deadly winter surge in 2020-21, Latinos made up 34% of the county's population but 45% of COVID-19 deaths.

After dancing around one day while helping to build the float, Maricela Reyes, a promotora, asked Rojas for a ride home.

See **Heroines**, page A10



Dr. Maheswari Senthil is a nationally recognized surgical oncologist who specializes in the management of advanced abdominal cancers.

## CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

B	R	A	D		E	M	T	S		A	D	M	I	T
A	U	T	O		N	O	E	L		D	R	O	N	E
R	E	E	L		D	O	S	E		D	E	L	T	A
T	R	I	P		F	O	R	T		W	O		A	T
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I	R	I	S		A	O	L			G	I	G	I	
T	E	D			M	Y	S	E	L	F		A	L	O
S	P	A	M		B	O	T	S		L	P	S		
					O	A	K			K	O	A	L	A
L	O	S	T		O	S	C	A	R	N	I	G	H	T
O	M	A	H	A		L	O	R	I		G	R	A	Y
W	I	R	E	S		I	P	A	D		H	E	L	P
S	T	A	R	K		M	E	T	A		T	E	L	E

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

## HATCH

Continued from page A4

accepting an interim city manager position in the city of Orange.

Although he officially retired there, he accepted similar interim positions in Santa Fe Springs and Santa Ana and today imagines he might continue to work in some manner as a consultant.

But serious thought about any future engagements will have to wait until football season ends, because that's where Hatch's mind and energies are concentrated these days.

"Now, I've got a real job," he quipped.

In an interview Tuesday, Mustangs head coach Gonzalez, who got to know the former Costa Mesa city manager through his wife's friendship with Hatch's daughter, Allison, said he tapped Hatch for the assistant coach position because of

his passion for football and deep ties to the local school community as a parent, PTA member and athletic booster.

"What he brings is good leadership and good morale. He's like a chameleon — he melds well wherever he is, and he's able to adapt," Gonzalez said.

"He just wants to help, and he wants to get a place better than it was when he got there. He's doing great."

Hatch said despite his rewarding and challenging career, and having played and loved football for most of his life, he's excited to still be learning new things on Mustangs Field.

"I'm blessed to be there, and I'm learning, and I'll do anything," he said. "If you need me to pick up trash, I'll pick up trash. It's not about me, it's about how can the program get better to help those kids. That's what I love."

sara.cardine@latimes.com  
Twitter: @SaraCardine



**TOM HATCH** with Costa Mesa High's freshman football team with coach Demetrius Cash and assistant coach Jaycen Cash.

Don Leach | Staff Photographer

forum

MAILBAG



File Photo

MAILBAG CONTRIBUTORS this week are calling for the California Coastal Commission to deny a zoning change that would allow the Magnolia Tank Farm development to move forward. Above, signs held by protesters in the audience at a 2019 Huntington Beach City Council meeting showed strong opposition to the redevelopment process for the project.

# The Coastal Commission should nix rezoning the Magnolia Tank Farm for development

While Huntington Beach has had a significant number of issues lately, one in particular affects all of us who want to protect Orange County's beaches.

The Huntington Beach City Council has asked the California Coastal Commission to change the zoning for the area between the Magnolia Marsh wetlands and the Ascon toxic dump known as the Magnolia Tank Farm. The commission's "yes" vote would allow the development to proceed. The Shopoff Corp. would like

to build a hotel, retail space and 250 moderate-density houses there.

Commissioners will vote on this zoning change on Wednesday, July 10.

It hasn't been that long since the commission denied the Poseidon desalination plant. The reasons why have not changed. Yet commissioners are poised to allow the development of this coastal area. The possibility of flooding, earthquakes, toxic water contamination, disruption of the wildlife and extreme traffic density are some of the reasons this should not

happen.

If you agree that this is a very bad idea please consider speaking by Zoom to let them know. You can find out information at coastal.ca.gov/meetings/request-testimony/wednesday/. You can attend the meeting remotely on July 10 at Huntington Beach City Council Chambers starting at 9 a.m.

Sandra Fazio  
Huntington Beach

Here are some reasons this Magnolia Tank Farm coastal development is a

terrible idea:

- This is a low-lying area subject to flooding, sea level rise and tsunamis. The Ascon Superfund toxic dump will flood into the residential area.
- It will disrupt the wildlife at Magnolia Marsh.
- The south branch of the Newport-Inglewood Fault lies underneath the site.
- The local area cannot handle the increased traffic and parking.
- The Ascon Toxic Waste Dump, a Superfund site, is

See *Mailbag*, page A8

## A WORD, PLEASE JUNE CASAGRANDE

# Hark to this lesson on a familiar phrasal verb

I have a friend who uses "hark back" a lot in conversation. She harks back to past news events. She harks back to old times. She harks back to something I told her last month or last year.

My first reaction is to get annoyed with her. "It should be hearken back," I think, "or wait, should it be just hearken?" Then I start wondering about spellings. Should the first syllable have an e: "hearken"? Or is the shorter "harken" correct?

In the end, I wind up annoyed with myself for being so quick to judge my friend when I, myself, don't know the answer.

Most people use "hark back," "hearken back" and "harken back" to mean "recall" or "refer back to" some previous event. But the original meaning of "hark," "hearken" and "hearken" was not to recall but to hear or to listen carefully. Think: "Hark! The herald angels sing." In fact, you can still use them that way today: Hark my words. Harken my words. Harken my words.

"Hark" is the youngest of the three, dating back to the 14th century, with "hearken" and "harken" going back another two centuries or so.

"Hark" became a hunting call. And it was often used with "away," "on," "forward" or "back." My source, Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Eng-



lish Usage, doesn't give examples. But it's not hard to imagine some hunter in the 1300s whispering, "Hark forward!" to alert his companions to a rustling in the bushes.

"Harken" is older than "hearken," which began as just a variant spelling. But "hearken" quickly became standard, and it still dominates today. In fact, if you type "hearken" into Merriam's online dictionary, you're redirected to "hearken," where you see "harken" listed as a variant spelling — a clear indication that Merriam's considers "hearken" the most standard.

Sometime in the 1800s, people started adding "back" to "hark" for the purpose of giving it what was then a figurative meaning: to recall or refer back to. Soon, "hark back," "hearken back" and "harken back" would become full-fledged phrasal verbs — word combinations that have a different meaning than the root verb they're based on. For more examples of phrasal verbs, think about the difference between "give" and "give up"; "break" and "break in"; "cut" and "cut off." In every case, the word combo means something different from the verb when it stands alone. That's what makes them phrasal verbs.

See *Word*, page A8

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CostaMesaFoundation.org

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# Dumpling concept finds a space to call home

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

When Allan Tea decided to take his frozen dumpling company, Cali Dumpling, from delivery-only to a brick-and-mortar restaurant, the entrepreneur knew he would have some serious competition.

Orange County has many options when it comes to dumplings. There are the rainbow dumpling options at South Coast Plaza, an abundance of both steamed and fried choices in Little Saigon and the recently opened xiao long bao giant at the Downtown Disney District. So Tea and his team imagined a way to set Cali Dumpling a part from the dumpling discord.

"We were trying to find a unique way to do dumplings, so we came up with this concept of only doing crispy potstickers," said Tea. "Then we pair them with all these multicultural sauces that are California-inspired."

The 2,000-square foot fast-casual restaurant in Old Towne Orange uses its pan-fried potstickers as a base for diners to create their own dumpling experience. Guests start by choosing from organic pork, chicken, veggie and shrimp potstickers and then move through the hot line setup, where they can choose from scratch-made sauces to customize their order.

"Let's get sauced," Cali Dumpling's new tagline, encourages diners to experiment with sauces that bring new flavors to dumplings, like tangy tikka made with San Marzano tomatoes, spices and yogurt and finished with pickled onions and cucumbers.

"We happen to think dumplings make for the perfect vehicle for so many flavors and sauces, beyond the traditional way we've all eaten dumplings," Tea said. Cali Dumpling hosted its grand opening Monday.



Photos courtesy of Cali Dumpling

**ALLAN TEA** launched Cali Dumpling in 2020 as a delivery service. The fast-casual restaurant's new tagline is "Let's get sauced."

## FORMER FROZEN dumpling delivery company

Cali Dumpling opened a brick-and-mortar restaurant in Old Towne Orange this month.



The menu features eight different sauces and toppings like enchiladas rojas, hot harissa and sweet szechuan. Pan-fried dumplings can also be ordered plain.

"I really like the the yuzu

butter sauce; it goes really great with the shrimp dumpling," said Tea.

Tea also instructs guests to "ask for a slice of pizza" to try a Cali Dumpling creation that adds Sicilian marinara sauce, also made

from San Marzano tomatoes, to the fried dumplings and then tops them with melty mozzarella, Parmesan and pepperoni.

Tea started Cali Dumpling in 2020 as a side venture, since he was already invested in local businesses like Hello Kitty Grand Cafe in Irvine and Capital Dimsum Seafood. Then the pandemic put his other projects on hold and Cali Dumpling became the focus, delivering frozen handmade dumplings right to customers' doors.

Last summer, the company launched a new line of all-organic frozen dumplings sold in Erewhon and select 99 Ranch locations.

The dumplings are made at Cali Dumpling's production facility, a commercial kitchen in South El Monte that also supplies dumplings to places like Mama Lu's Dumpling House Restaurants and Capital Noodle Bar.

Going from delivery to dine-in has taken some adaptation.

"One of the biggest adjustments has been getting back into those long restaurant hours again," Tea said. "But we love what we do, we are food people so we get the industry, we have all done it before, so it's not surprising it's just getting back into it."

Besides the pan-fried

dumplings, the menu at Cali Dumpling in Orange also includes Asian-inspired sides like wok-fried noodles, Indonesian fried rice, orange sesame salad and tofu bites, plus beer and wine.

The Orange location is considered a pilot store, Tea said, and he hopes they will open more such restaurants in the future.

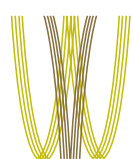
"It is our first store and we are still kind of testing things out, but we are getting a really good response to the menu," said Tea. "We are off to a good start."

sarah.mosqueda  
@latimes.com  
Twitter: @SarahNMos

## Who would've thought – 65 years later you'd still be sharing small plates?



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**CITY OF COSTA MESA  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a public hearing will be held by the Costa Mesa City Council at its regular meeting at City Hall Council Chambers, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California on **Tuesday, July 16, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.**, or as soon as possible thereafter as the matter shall be heard, to consider:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA AMENDING TITLE 13 (PLANNING, ZONING, AND DEVELOPMENT) OF THE COSTA MESA MUNICIPAL CODE TO ESTABLISH AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS**

**AND**

**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING AND ADOPTING FEES RELATED TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN-LIEU FEES FOR THE PROPOSED AFFORDABLE HOUSING ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE NO. 2024-02)**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 606016, data and analysis indicating the estimated fees required to comply with the Affordable Housing Ordinance have been made available on or before May 20, 2024. Copies of the in-lieu fees data and analysis can be obtained during normal business hours at City Hall, 1st Floor, City Clerk's Office, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa and on the City's website at: <https://www.costamesaca.gov/trending/affordable-housing-ordinance>.

**Public Comments:** Members of the public wishing to participate in the meeting may find instructions to participate on the agenda. Members of the public may also submit written comments via email to the City Clerk at [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@costamesaca.gov) and they will be provided to the City Council, made available to the public, and will be part of the meeting record. Any written communications, photos, or other materials for copying and distribution to the City Council that are 10 pages or less, can be e-mailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@costamesaca.gov), submitted to the City Clerk's Office on a flash drive, or mailed to the City Clerk's Office. Kindly submit materials to the City Clerk **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, BUT NO LATER THAN 12:00 p.m.** on the day of the hearing, **July 16, 2024**. All materials, pictures, PowerPoints, and videos submitted for display at a public meeting must be previously reviewed by staff to verify appropriateness for general audiences. No links to YouTube videos or other streaming services will be accepted, a direct video file will need to be emailed to staff prior to each meeting in order to minimize complications and to play the video without delay. The video must be one of the following formats, .mp4, .mov or .wmv. Only one file may be included per speaker for public comments. Please note that materials submitted by the public that are deemed appropriate for general audiences will not be redacted in any way and will be posted online as submitted, including any personal contact information. For further assistance, contact the City Clerk's Office at (714) 754-5225. The City Council agenda and related documents may also be viewed on the City's website at <http://costamesaca.gov>. 72 hours prior to the public hearing date. **IF THE AFOREMENTIONED ACTION IS CHALLENGED IN COURT**, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in the notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Council at, or prior to, the public hearing. Brenda Green, City Clerk, City of Costa Mesa  
Published June 30 and July 7, 2024

**BSC 225351  
NOTICE OF PETITION  
TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:  
GREGGORY SCOTT WOLF  
30-2024-01407167-PR-LA-CMC**

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of: **GREGGORY SCOTT WOLF**.

**A PETITION FOR PROBATE** has been filed by **CHARLES J. WOLF** in the Superior Court of California, County of **ORANGE**.

**THE PETITION FOR PROBATE** requests that **CHARLES J. WOLF** be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

**THE PETITION** requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

**A HEARING** on the petition will be held on **September 11, 2024 at 1:30 P.M. in Dept. CM08** located at 3390 HARBOR BLVD. COSTA MESA, CA 92626

**The court is providing the convenience to appear for hearing by video using the court's designated video platform. This is a no cost service to the public. Go to the Court's website at The Superior Court of California - County of Orange ([courtscs.org](https://www.courtscs.org)) to appear remotely for Probate hearings and for remote hearing instructions. If you have difficulty connecting or are unable to connect to your remote hearing, call 657-622-8278 for assistance. If you prefer to appear in-person, you can appear in the department on the day/time set for your hearing.**

**IF YOU OBJECT** to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

**IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR** or contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

**YOU MAY EXAMINE** the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner:  
ROBERT E. PEARSON  
ROBERT E. PEARSON APLC  
17782 E. 17TH ST., WEST BLDG., SUITE 109  
TUSTIN, CA 92780

Published in the NEWPORT HARBOR NEWS PRESS combined with the DAILY PILOT on 6/28, 7/4, and 7/7/2024

**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH**

**NOTICE INVITING BIDS**

Sealed bids shall be submitted electronically via PlanetBids to office of the City Clerk, 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660 Before 10:00 AM on the 25th day of July, 2024, at which time such bids shall be opened and read for

**SAN MIGUEL PARK ACCESSIBLE PARK IMPROVEMENTS**

**Contract No. 9371-1**

Federally Assisted Project  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

\$763,480  
Engineer's Estimate



Approved by  
James M. Houlihan  
Deputy PWD/City Engineer

Prospective bidders may obtain Bid Documents, Project Specifications and Plans via PlanetBids: <http://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=22078>

Contractor License Classification(s) required for this project: "A" with all playground installation work to be performed by a Contractor with a "D-34" License and "D-12" shall be required of any Contractor performing rubber surfacing.

For further information, call Kyle Aube, Project Manager at (949) 644-3296

**NOTICE:**

No contractor or subcontractor may be listed on a bid proposal for a public works project (submitted on or after March 1, 2015) unless registered with the Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Labor Code section 1725.5 [with limited exceptions from this requirement for bid purposes only under Labor Code section 1771.1(a)].

No contractor or subcontractor may be awarded a contract for public work on a public works project (awarded on or after April 1, 2015) unless registered with the Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Labor Code section 1725.5.

This project is subject to compliance monitoring and enforcement by the Department of Industrial Relations.

This is a HUD Section 3 construction contract. Contracts of \$100,000 or more shall be required to address the Section 3 employment, training and subcontracting opportunity regulations set forth by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at 24 CFR Part 135 by 1) demonstrating that the firm is a Section 3 Business, or 2) submitting a written commitment (Economic Opportunity Plan) to hire Section 3 Residents or to subcontract with Section 3 businesses, or 3) certifying that no new hires are necessary to complete the contracted work and that no subcontracts will be awarded.

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## MAIBAG

*Continued from page A6*

adjacent to the property. It is important to protect local residents, wildlife and the ecosystem from the adverse impacts of this project. The California Coastal Commission needs to take into consideration the vulnerabilities of this site in terms of climate change and sea level rise as well as the long-term potential risks to people who have invested in their livelihoods here.

**K. Jenkins**  
Huntington Beach

### Firsthand experience dodging e-bikes

Although no recent articles regarding the influx and potential problems with a massive number of e-bikes permeating the O.C. coastal area have appeared in the Daily Pilot, previous articles have concerned this topic, and I'd like to share a very recent experience with those silent, quick-moving two-wheel devices.

My son called me early Sunday morning and asked if I wanted to go biking with him and his two daughters. I said sure, why not, even though I've not been on a bike in about 12 years, but I hear it's not unlike riding a bike. Ryan picked me up at my condo development, and we drove down to Newport pier, found a parking space after almost 30 minutes looking for one, then walked to one of the many bike-rental places in that area. Ryan got a two-seater for him and Annie, who is 6, a single bike for me and a single for Scarlett, who is 9. As we pedaled south on the boardwalk towards our goal of the Wedge, we were

## HOW TO GET PUBLISHED

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

going at a pretty good pace and were passing those who were walking like they were standing still. The e-bike riders, however, were riding on the same boardwalk and passing us like we were standing still.

An 8-mile speed limit is printed on the cement of the boardwalk, but those on e-bikes were probably doing about 15 or 20 miles an hour, barely missing those walking and going slow on the pedal bikes. There were some very close calls, and I could easily see where the problem lies, which is how those riders perceive themselves as above the law with nary a care in their selfish bones for other people and slower riders. If something isn't done very soon, there is definitely going to be trouble in paradise with unfortunate people being hit by those speedsters and winding up in hospitals. If no one enforces what is turning into a real problem of reckless riders, it will not be stopped. I don't know, but has anyone considered actually policing the areas where these speed riders ride with authorization to stop and ticket these law breakers? Hey, it's something to ponder.

**Bill Spitalnick**  
Newport Beach

### Impressed by State Sen. Min's accomplishments

While all eyes and ears have been focused on the

national scene, especially after last week's presidential debate, an important victory for gun rights opponents was unanimously upheld by the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court on June 11.

The court upheld the constitutionality of Senate Bill SB 915, originally authored by state Sen. Dave Min in 2022. Min, a Democrat, was quoted on this legislative victory by saying in part, "Today's decision is a win for Orange County and California families who are sick and tired of senseless gun violence." The bill prohibits the sale of firearms or ammunition on state property, including 73 state fairgrounds across the state.

Min in his monthly newsletter announced that he and his team had passed a total of 11 bills in the California Senate focused on Orange County priorities. He represents the 37th Senate District and was elected in 2020.

Min is currently running against Republican Scott Baugh in the November general election for the 47th Congressional District. According to Politico, this race could determine the balance of power in the House in 2024.

Interestingly, Min worked as senior economic adviser to U.S. Sen. Chuck Schumer, the current Senate Democratic Majority Leader. And as a state senator, Min has passed 28 bills. He is focusing his current campaign on abortion, gun violence and climate change. Before entering politics, Min was a law professor at UCI where he taught and researched in the area of business law.

I have been following Min's political career and considerable accomplishments for several years and highly support his election to U.S. Congress.

**Lynn Lorenz**  
Newport Beach

## WORD

*Continued from page A6*

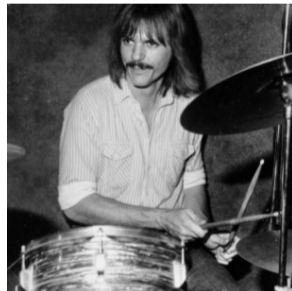
So unlike "hark," "hearken" and "harken," which mean to listen or listen carefully, "hark back," "hearken back" and "harken back" are phrasal verbs meaning "to go back to or recall to mind something in the past," according to Merriam's dictionary.

Merriam's usage guide claims that, though "hark" is now rare in the meaning of to listen, "harken" and "hearken" are still used that way. Personally, outside of one old Christmas song, I've never heard any form of hark or hearken used to mean "listen." But when I search a books database to compare "hearken" with "hearken back," "harken with harken back," and "hark" with "hark back," I see that all three words often stand alone and "back"-less. They're all correct, with or without "back."

So which is the most widely accepted in edited published writing? It's "hark back" — my friend's preference. My preference, "hearken back," which the dictionary prefers, comes in last place in terms of popularity, and it has for most of the last century.

So, harking back, my friend was right. Good thing I didn't try to correct her.

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



**John Alan Neilson**

*February 4, 1949 - May 23, 2024*

Longtime Huntington Beach resident John Alan Neilson died in his sleep May 23 from ventricular fibrillation. He was 75.

A musician from an early age, John played drums in several bands during the 1980s and 90s, including Nickels and Dimes and Backseat Boogie.

In November 1984, while playing at Johanna's in Costa Mesa, he met Marian Wolff. They married in 1985 and had two children Justin Samuel Neilson in 1987 and Angela Faye Neilson in 1994.

John was born in Dallas in 1949 to Oleta Ruth Neilson (Pilgrim), a homemaker, and Samuel Lester Neilson Jr., a building contractor. He was named valedictorian of MacArthur High School's class of 1967 and studied electrical engineering at Southern Methodist University and the University of Texas at Austin.

John played the trumpet in high school and gravitated to the drums after being influenced by the style of Buddy Rich. Over the years, he gained an encyclopedic knowledge of music and collected instruments and vintage stereo components.

John worked for Pioneer Electronics in Texas before being transferred to the company's Long Beach offices in 1982. His career at Pioneer ended in 2009 when the company cut 10,000 jobs after suffering a loss reported at \$1.4 billion.

He excelled at snow skiing, tennis and billiards where he commonly held the table for hours to the frustration of many who tried to beat him.

Even after relocating to Southern California, he remained a loyal Dallas Cowboys fan.

John loved the San Bernardino Mountain communities, especially Green Valley Lake where he owned two homes, one of which was destroyed in the Slide Fire that burned 275 structures in 2007.

In addition to his wife Marian of 39 years, son Justin and daughter Angela, Neilson is survived by a grandson Flight Neilson, a half-sister, one cousin, two nephews and a niece. His older brother Samuel III passed in 2012.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Restland Memorial Park in Dallas on Thursday Aug. 1 at 2 p.m. where his ashes will be buried next to his parents and brother.

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# Two O.C. pizzerias rank among 50 best

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

Orange County pizza has been having a moment, with new pizzaiolas and parlors popping up all over the county, serving a range of different styles of pizza. Last month, 50 Top Pizza, an Italian organization that ranks the best pizza in the world, recognized two Orange County-based pizzerias on its “50 Best Pizzerias in the USA” for 2024.

Truly Pizza in Dana Point ranked No. 42 and Nardò Italian Restaurant in Huntington Beach ranked No. 26 in an official awards ceremony held on June 25 in New York City.

“We are incredibly honored to be recognized as one of the 50 Top Pizzas in the USA,” said Truly Pizza co-founder Donna Baldwin. “This accolade is a testament to our team’s dedication and passion for crafting exceptional innovative pizzas.”

Una Pizza Napoletana in New York, owned by Anthony Mangieri, earned the No. 1 ranking for the third year in a row. Other Southern California parlors that were recognized included Pizzeria Sei in Los Angeles, which ranked No. 8, and Tribute Pizza in San Diego, No. 36 on the list.

50 Top Pizza is an Italian organization that launched in 2018 and sends out anonymous inspectors around the world to compile their 50 Top Pizza lists that also rank the 50 best pizzas in Latin America, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Spain.

The recognition for Truly Pizza comes as its celebrates its first anniversary after opening in Dana Point last summer. Co-founded by Baldwin and helmed by World Pizza Champion teammates John Arena, Chris Decker and Michael Vakneen, Truly offers both a round and a square pizza. The square is a light and airy dough, sometimes called a “grandma slice,” and the round is considered more traditional, with a thinner New York-style crust. Both pies incorporate their “micro blistering” technique that creates tiny bubbles in the dough and bakes up a crunchy dough.

Nardò Italian, located at Pacific City in Huntington Beach, is a concept from restaurateur Gianni Chiloiro, who named the restaurant for his mother’s maiden



Photos courtesy of Truly Pizza

JOHN ARENA, Michael Vakneen and Chris Decker of Truly Pizza at the awards ceremony for the “50 Best Pizzerias in the USA.”

name. Nardò focuses specifically on the region of Puglia, and the pizza is of the wood-fired Neapolitan pizza variety.

The menu is broken up by red pizzas made with San Marzano tomato sauce, white pizzas made without red sauce, and specialty pizza with stuffed varieties, like calzone and tronchetto. Nardò has locations in West Hollywood and Culver City, but the Orange County location was singled out by 50 Top Pizza.

Being part of the Orange County pizza scene, Baldwin said ranking in the top 50 means a lot to her.

“This honor not only elevates Truly Pizza but also shines a spotlight on Orange County’s growing reputation as a culinary destination,” she said. “We’re

proud to represent our community and contribute to its vibrant and diverse food scene.”

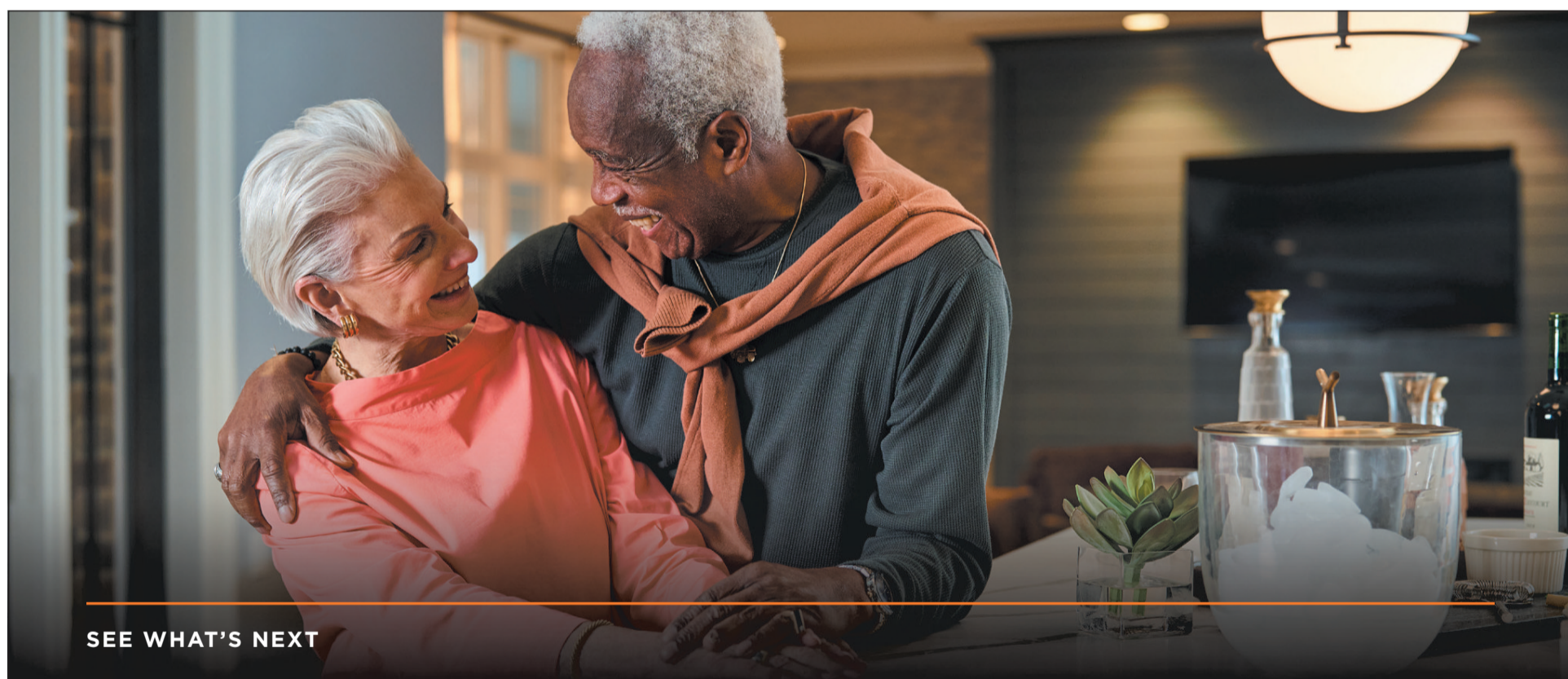
Inspired by the lemon trees woven throughout Truly Pizza’s patio, the restaurant is offering a lemon-infused special pizza to celebrate the ranking and its one-year anniversary. The lemon pizza is topped with smoked and fresh mozzarella, white sauce, thinly sliced lemon, stracciatella, lemon curd and basil and is finished with a black pepper frico.

“We’re excited to continue our journey and share our love for pizza with even more people,” Baldwin said.

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TRULY PIZZA in Dana Point was recognized as one of the “50 Best Pizzerias in the USA” for 2024.



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**ART**

Continued from page A3

graphically, as well as thematically. Visually speaking, the center's visitors start downtown before walking to the pier, experiencing surfing and other water themes before checking out the harbor and skate culture and car culture, as well as the wetlands.

In fact, water is a key theme of the exhibition that sticks in Semeta's mind.

"Whether it's the ocean or the harbors or the wetlands, it's depicted pretty much in every piece of art in a different way," Semeta said. "The exhibit kind of flows through the museum and really showcases different aspects of our city. The beauty of the beaches, the friendliness of the people, just the energy of the ocean and its waves and how people interact with that."

Zambrano, a member of the Huntington Beach Historic Resources Board, is in tune with that message. He compiled a picture book

that details the history of surfing in Surf City.

Orange County Poet Laureate Gustavo Hernandez contributed a poem for the exhibit, titled "I Can't Settle on One Figure for a Sunset," which is on display in the galleries. To Hernandez, a Santa Ana native, thinking of Huntington Beach evokes memories of his late father.

"Living in Santa Ana, you get this cool breeze, and I just remember my dad always saying, 'That's the sea breeze,'" Hernandez said. "Every time he said that, the place I pictured was always Huntington, so that was my authority. That was my way in. The second component of it was, how do I honor the place through the poem? That came with taking a little bit of a dive into the land's history, going as far back as the 1800s."

The jurists had a conversation with Hernandez during a June 25 event at the center. Zambrano said they hadn't met prior to that but that they all clicked upon

introduction.

"Our different views of art came together well here, and through the guiding hand of Dan and the art center team, I hope we brought something together," Zambrano said. "People have mentioned that it feels special and unique. It's just a broad representation of our city, and I'm proud to be a part of it."

As part of the "Surf City ART" exhibition, an Art For Lunch event will be held on Thursday, July 11 at 11:30 a.m. An Artist Spotlight event is slated for 1 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 3.

The art center opens at noon on Tuesday through Saturday, with extended hours on Tuesdays until 8 p.m. to coincide with Surf City Nights.

"I think that's a great addition to that night," Semeta said, adding that she considers the art center the crown jewel of the city.

"I take art classes there myself, and a lot of wonderful artists have taught there over the years," she said. "My kids went to art camp



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

"WHEEL WATCH," by Aaron Bernard, is one of the pieces on display in the "Surf City ART" exhibit at the Huntington Beach Art Center.

there when they were little, 20-some years ago. It has a lot to offer. We just need to get the word out more." Admission to the "Surf

City ART" exhibition is free. Huntington Beach Art Center is located at 538 Main St., Huntington Beach. For more information, call (714)

374-1650 or email artcenterstaff@surfcity-hb.org.

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**HEROINES**

Continued from page A5

On the way, Reyes sobbed through her mask. She, too, had lost family to the pandemic.

Rojas suggested taking time away to grieve.

"But we're dying," Reyes rebuffed.

The conversation stayed with Rojas for years.

After she put the finishing touches on a "Poderosas" mural in Costa Mesa that celebrated history-making Latinas, the stories shared by *promotoras* like Reyes gave her a moment of reflection.

"This, too, is a *poderosa* project," she said. "These women are American heroes."

Rojas applied for a fellowship through 18th Street Arts Center, a pilot grant initiative of the California Arts Council. The opportunity seemed tailor-made for an art project celebrating *promotoras* as propos-



Eric Licas

**A PORTRAIT COLLAGE** of "promotoras" for artist Alicia Rojas' "Las Poderosas de Latino Health Access" public art project.

als sought art dealing with the pandemic, among other social topics.

Other funding came by way of a National Assn. of

Latino Arts and Culture

grant, Grand Central Arts Center, Latino Health Access, Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento's office and the

city of Santa Ana.

When conceptualizing a monument, Rojas found some continuity with her "With Honey in the Mouth

- Con Miel en la Boca" exhibit at Grand Central Arts Center in Santa Ana last year, which focused on bees as a metaphor for forced migration.

This time around, Rojas envisioned a brass sculpture in the shape of a honeycomb as a proper metaphor for the *promotora* model as a beehive.

"The honeycomb represents their labor of love, their pollination, the strength of the hive that is Latino Health Access," Rojas said. "These women would come back to this office to recharge, and they're pollinating with information and care."

It won't stand as the only permanent fixture. Rojas' oral histories will be archived at Cal State Fullerton's Lawrence de Graaf Center for Oral and Public History.

A 200-page book is forthcoming this summer with *promotora* portraits framed by a paper flower installation backdrop. Pho-

tographer Cecilia Ortiz Fernandez helped Rojas with the portraits. QR codes will also lead readers to the oral histories.

The book is a not-for-profit venture aimed at supporting the model to address continued health inequities exposed by the pandemic and will be presented to the Library of Congress' American Heroes of the Pandemic collection.

In a county largely bereft of memorials to mourn the pandemic's dead, which now tally more than 8,600, "Las Poderosas de Latino Health Access" stands as a much-needed tribute to those whose work saved lives.

"We celebrated doctors and nurses as first responders and rightly so, but these women are also heroes —unsung heroes," Rojas said.

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