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Orange council breaks silence on illegal landfill in East Orange

By Tina Richards

After years of official silence on the illegal landfill, known colloquially as the Sully-Miller site, the Orange City Council finally held a discussion on the topic at its July 12 meeting.

The discussion was first requested by Councilwoman Kim Nichols in January 2021, then by Arianna Barrios in November 2021 and again by Nichols last month. It came on the heels of an agreement signed in June by the property owner Milan Capital and the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) that oversees landfills and disposal sites for CalRecycle.

The agreement forgives Milan's history of illegal unpermitted dumping of unknown, unrecorded materials on this site, if the company complies. It directed Milan to test the soil for contaminants that may produce methane and perform a geotechnical survey to determine the exact borders of the stockpiled material. If no contaminants are found, Milan will be allowed to use the stockpiled material as infill on its Sully-Miller site or the horse arena property. If contaminants are found, Milan must come up with a mitigation plan that LEA must approve.

Swept under the rug

The city staff report presented to the council refers to the 40-ft. mounds of construction waste as a sand and gravel operation, which, under the city's zoning allows clean stockpiling and backfilling. It defers to LEA for any regulatory authority.

City Attorney Gary Sheatz says the city has no jurisdiction over the site, that all it can do is issue a grading permit. Turning the site into an engineered landfill, he says, was permitted by an old Conditional Use Permit and it was up to the property owner to get the required permits from LEA.

After hearing the staff report, a half dozen residents addressed the council to, as Bonnie Robinson put it, "fill in the gaps." Robinson, along with Adrienne Gladson, Chuck Emanuelle and David Hillman, advised that the site is not a clean engineered landfill, but instead an illegal waste disposal facility, that residents have become "experts" on the topic, and that the city should ensure the entire property is cleaned up, not just the portion identified in the agreement.

See "Orange breaks" continued on page 3



Mike Knowles and Villa Park Mayor Chad Zimmerman

Villa Park dedicates its first park

The official grand opening ceremony of the Villa Park Knowles, formerly known as the Wanda Greenbelt in Villa Park, was held June 29. And – surprising all who know the humble and shy honoree -- Mike Knowles was on hand to cut the ribbon.

Knowles, the city's beloved Maintenance Supervisor for over 30 years, normally shuns the spotlight.

His tireless dedication to assist at any and every city function

or with any problem – whether it be staging and lighting for the HalloweenFest, holiday trees for the Villa Park Women's League, chairs for the Foundation, or even a resident's sewer issue – is much appreciated by the community.

As Mayor Chad Zimmerman and City Manager Steve Franks noted, it is only fitting that the city's first park be proudly dedicated in honor of Mike Knowles.

The beautification of this greenbelt area, originally a train

depot for the Villa Park Orchards Association's packinghouse, was a coordinated effort by city staff with support of the city council, sponsorships from the Villa Park Community Services Foundation and Villa Park Women's League. In a tribute to the city's agricultural history, photos of old packing house labels were incorporated into the project. The park's design was created by Terrain Integration and construction by Marina Landscape.

Residents hear from district supervisor, county sheriff at FCA annual meeting

By Tina Richards

"My position on the Tustin Hills Racquet Club [development] hasn't changed," Supervisor Don Wagner told the audience at the annual Foothill Communities Association (FCA) meeting, July 19.

"Property rights are important, but there are caveats. When you buy a linchpin in a community (the racquet club), where others have bought property due to its character, you need to get the support of the neighborhood before you change it. That hasn't been done," he said.

Wagner stressed that neighbors have property rights, too, and that they have every right to expect that the character of their neighborhood will remain. He advised that the proposed 37-unit racquet club development will likely come to the Board of Supervisors, and that he will vote against it. He also noted that it will take a "no" vote from three supervisors to defeat it.

Due to redistricting, he added, he now represents only two-thirds of North Tustin. The other third is now in District 2, which will be electing a representative this No-

vember.

The Supervisor was one of several speakers to address the 200-plus North Tustin residents who attended the meeting. Sheriff Don Barnes reported that while crime has increased statewide over the past decade, Orange County has not been hit as hard as neighboring counties. "We do something unique and innovative here," he said, "we still arrest people."

North Tustin has not been exempt from the rising crime rate. Barnes noted that there have been several residential burglaries in the foothill area, but that sheriffs caught three intruders in the act and took them into custody. "It's important that you call us when you see something in your neighborhood that shouldn't be there," he said. "We'd rather be preventive than reactionary."

Barnes also addressed school safety and assured the audience that the OC Sheriff's Department has made major investments to protect schoolchildren. The department has two programs targeted to school campuses. Sheriff's now investigate every reported incident or unusual behavior on school grounds. "We've taken

bombs and guns from lockers and kid's bedrooms," he said.

A divergent program gets troubled kids into treatment rather than "dumping them into the system." The department has a resource officer on 16 high school campuses, and maintains a hotline for students to call.

A spokesperson from OC Parks provided an update on the long-delayed park slated for Newport Blvd. and Crawford Canyon. "All the construction documents are finished and the permits are in place," Natilia Gaelan explained. But now OC Parks is waiting for Public Works to finish putting in sidewalks and a deceleration lane to allow access to the park once it's built. The project will not likely start until 2023.

The FCA convinced the county to buy that parcel for parkland in 2012. It did, but had no funding to do anything more. When Clearwater Senior Living on Newport was approved in 2018, the developer agreed to give the county \$850,000 to design and build the park. That obligation was met, but the start date on park construction has been slipping from year to year ever since.

NEWS INSIDE

NO PLACE FOR HOMES

Residents object to high-density multistory units penciled in for mall property on Tustin Street.

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WHEN THE SPIRIT MOVES YOU

Homespun parades celebrate the Fourth of July with horse, people and pedal power.

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NO REST, NO PEACE

Neighbors of a proposed cemetery balk at a burial site built in their backyards.

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GALLANTLY STREAMING

Locals stir national soul by placing American flags at the homes of local veterans.

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ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Young writer/director transforms towering childhood landmark into feature-length film.

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Residents respond to NT high-density housing

By Scott Logue

The countdown to determine the fate of the Tustin Hills Racquet Club (THRC) property continues as the county reviews more than 200 written responses opposing the site's potential rezoning and redevelopment to high-density townhomes.

It didn't take long after Orange County Public Works released a draft of the project's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for residents to express their concerns about the radical departure from the large lots and open spaces that make North Tustin neighborhoods some of the most desirable in Orange County.

The shoehorn proposal would rezone and pack 17 buildings, comprised of 34 single-family townhomes and three detached homes, replete with all the subsequent noise, parking, congestion and pollution of over 150 cars, into the agriculturally-zoned space.

With the THRC Steering Committee for the Foothill Communities Association driving awareness, hundreds of residents have voiced concerns as visions of the approaching infill development tide has increased and multiple infill incursions have been attempted.

Neighbors say nay

The county now has 30 to 60 days to review all EIR comments, and is required to address them. Once all questions are answered, and sufficient project information is gathered, a staff report will be generated for a Planning Commission action.

The Planning Commission meeting will likely take place in late September or early October. If either side appeals the decision of the Planning Commission, the project will be scheduled to be heard by the Board of Supervisors.

Fighting to preserve North Tustin's existing zoning for the benefit of the community, against the financial and legal wherewithal of developers, is no small undertaking. For more information on the efforts to prevent infill developing at the THRC, how to support these efforts, or to be added to the email list to stay informed, please contact Lori Chew at lorichew98@gmail.com or visit FCAHome.org.

District 6 Candidate Forum slated

City of Orange District 6 voters will have their first opportunity to choose their city council representative at the polls on November 8.

Voters are invited to get to know the candidates for District 6 and those running in the mayor's race at a forum, Tuesday, Aug. 23 at 7 p.m.

The Forum will be held at Salem Church Chapel, 6500 E. Santiago Canyon Road, and is open to the public.

The forum is hosted by East Orange residents, Orange Park Association and *Foothills Sentry*. For further information, call (714) 900-2672.

Orange Council agrees to rethink N. Tustin St. Specific Plan

By Tina Richards

The Orange City Council agreed, July 12, to revisit options within the North Tustin St. Specific Plan at its August meeting.

The scheduled review was requested by Councilwoman Kathy Tavoularis, who cited residents' concerns about high-density housing units on the Village at Orange Mall property.

Strawman

The North Tustin Street Specific Plan (NTSSP) is, at this point, nonspecific. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is being conducted, based on proposed zone changes from commercial to multiuse, using "placeholder" numbers that resulted from a market study. The EIR, for example, is addressing the impacts of 2,106 housing units, but those numbers do not reflect any actual project proposals at this time.

The original NTSSP scoping was paid for by a government grant intended to "facilitate housing." "That doesn't mean we have to build any houses," explained Interim Community Development Director Susan Galvan.

"The study was to see if housing could be built and what those impacts would be. Nothing in the grant says we have to build even one unit." Ultimately, she advised, it's up to the property owner.

Out of the loop

Tavoularis, appointed to represent District 3 (including the mall) and is now running for that post, lamented that she had not been kept in the loop during the Tustin St. planning process, and that she was ignored when she initially met with the consultants. She has lived in the district for 40 years, she said, and has been monitoring the specific plan, but has not been adequately briefed.

She noted that she met with residents, and asked the council to remove the mall property from the specific plan and to abandon housing options as a potential use for that site. Residents of the neighborhood, she stressed, have made it clear they do not want housing there. She noted that traffic on Tustin St. is already an issue, and that accidents happen

there every day. "It's poor planning," she said.

Tavoularis asked that the NTSSP be agendaized for the August council meeting; that city staff provide options to remove the mall from the planning area; and the mayor create an ad hoc committee to study it.

Mayor Mark Murphy agreed that a report on the issue would be welcome in August, and suggested that quarterly updates on the planning process could follow. Ana Gutierrez expressed her support for a study session on the topic, wherein the council could "let the public help us." The council agreed that public input should be a key element of future discussions.

Residents want to be heard

Mall neighbors in the audience applauded Tavoularis for raising the issue. Jeff Lawrence, Matt Hamilton, Sister Mary Sweeney and Darren Kempkes commented about the lack of neighborhood support for the plan, the lack of transparency about the process, and their desire to be included.

Councilwoman Arianna Barrios also supported a deeper dive into the NTSSP, but noted that residents in other parts of the city also have concerns about properties that "they've been talking about for years."

She suggested that instead of a one-off discussion about the NTSSP, the city council have a bigger contextual conversation about city planning as a whole. "I'm just looking for fair and equitable conversations," she said.

"It warms my heart to hear residents talk about good planning versus bad planning," Adrienne Gladson said during public comments. A former Orange planning commissioner and candidate for the District 6 council seat, Gladson suggested that it's time for the city to abandon its poor planning habits and engage with the community more. "It's time to get politics out of it," she said.

"The residents are the majority stakeholders in Orange. The problem is that residents don't trust the decisions being made on their behalf. The neighbors are fed up and angry."

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Photo by Tony Richards

Stockpiled construction debris dominates the landscape.

"Orange breaks"
continued from page 1

Dru Whitefeather said the city has turned a blind eye to the activity on the site, that it is not a sand and gravel operation, but an illegal landfill. He asked the city to provide inspection records (mentioned in the staff report) from 2013 to 2018, but suspects they don't exist.

Laura Thomas asked, "What responsible city council would allow those mountains of waste to happen?" And now, she added, the LEA is going to allow the perpetrator to police itself.

Kim Nichols took the lead on the council discussion that covered the status of the site, jurisdiction, zoning, private property and possibilities for the future. Nichols noted that it's a "complex issue," but what happened in the past is the past, the council needs to look forward, and "Something needs to be done."

That "something," she suggested, might be finding federal or state funds to buy the land. "Maybe the community would be willing to do a bond. I know there's a lot of anger in the community. We need to have a conversation about what is possible. I'd like to direct staff to see what we can do. A lot of people want to look back. I think it is important to look forward."

Time for due diligence

"It's important to understand the past to better form the future," Arianna Barrios countered. "I know there's been a lack of diligence, a lack of documentation from the property owner. That concerns me," she said. "I would want an independent review [of the cleanup]. I don't trust the landowner."

In order to move forward, Ana Gutierrez advised, "I need to learn a lot more about what has transpired to determine a proper end use. It's not our responsibility

her concern that the land next to Mabury Ranch was not part of the agreement.

"We don't know what happened at that other site," she said. "Are we at any risk? What if Milan doesn't clean it up, declares bankruptcy and walks away?"

Monaco monologue

Chip Monaco attended the meeting via telephone from Hawaii. During a roughly eight-minute monologue, he stressed that the site is private property, and the landowner can do whatever he wants with it, within regulatory constraints. The city, he said, had no control over what did or didn't happen there.

He chastised his colleagues for focusing on "wishful thinking" and "what-ifs." We need to stop talking about it and do something, he insisted. Do we want it as open space or do we not? If we want to buy it, we should find a way to do that. We should be prepared to pay market value for it.

He specifically called out colleagues Barrios and Gutierrez for "pandering to their constituents," "chest pounding," and "ignoring the facts." "It comes down to the leadership of this council, not pandering as some members continually do," he said. "My colleagues don't acknowledge what it takes to get things done. We change it by acquiring the property. We have to put our money where our mouth is. They are not going to clean it up."

Monaco criticized "those

OPA people," specifically public speakers Dru Whitefeather and Laura Thomas, for making comments that are "blatantly untrue and misguided" and "blaming the council for doing nothing. Stop coming to us," he steamed. "It's not our property. We have no regulatory authority over it. I'm tired of this discussion."

"I am tired of it too," Barrios conceded. "I'm tired of talking about what's important to me and being belittled and treated in a manner unbecoming to a professional sitting on this dais, and that you (Monaco) would belittle resi-

dents who disagree with you." "It's garbage," she said to Mark Murphy, "that he can call each one of us out as if we were children. We want to make sure if we move forward that the city is protected, that it's the right deal for us. What are our liabilities? It's not pandering, but asking for information."

Monaco attempted a rebuttal, but Murphy cut him off and closed the discussion. The council agreed that further discussion is needed and directed city staff to investigate "options" for a future meeting.



Mapquest photo

The city staff report on the Sully-Miller site said that the city performs annual inspections at the behest of the state water board. The inspectors apparently missed the large abandoned fuel tank sitting in the Santiago Creek bed. "There's no record of it," City Attorney Gary Sheatz said. Reportedly, there were two underground tanks that stored gas and diesel fuel and four above-ground tanks for oil and lubricant removed in the 1990s.

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LETTERS to the EDITOR



Landfill lamentations laced with Chip Monacologue

Dear Editor:

I watched the Orange City Council meeting on July 12, and am appalled at the behavior of Councilmember Chip Monaco. He interrupted Councilwoman Arianna Barrios on several occasions, and launched a rambling monologue that was punctuated by his lack of respect for Barrios, her position and her constituents.

When several members of the public, exercising their rights under the First Amendment, spoke about the effects of illegal fireworks in their districts, Monaco again jumped in and made disparaging remarks about the speakers, saying the he "was sick of the nonsensical discussion of illegal fireworks in the city." Mr. Monaco, you are an elected representative of this city and whether you agree with these residents or not, you have no right to insult them.

But that wasn't enough. The discussion of the Sully-Miller property was on the agenda. Monaco called out Councilmember Barrios for asking for clarification on the subject, and said that "Sully-Miller is private property, and they should be able to do as they wish." I guess that says our laws mean nothing when he is defending property owner Milan's wants and desires.

Monaco went on to state that the 'speakers', [Bonnie Robinson, Adrienne Gladstone, Dru Whitefeather, and Laura Thomas] comments were "untrue and misguided." He named them publicly.

He went on to say that he was "sick and tired" of hearing from the residents of OPA, and Councilmembers Ana Gutierrez and Barrios "pandering to their constituents." Pardon me, Mr. Monaco, but why is it that you can go on rambling, laborious rants but when other elected representatives take an opposing opinion to yours, they are "pandering?"

He capped off this vicious and unprofessional display by stating that Barrios and Gutierrez were "pounding their chests" and he was tired of their "BS" and that OPA should "stop coming to the city council."

This, along with his other public displays of anger and lack of respect for others' beliefs, should be more than enough for the voters of Orange to exercise their rights to VOTE HIM OUT IN NOVEMBER. He doesn't deserve to represent the people of Orange.

John Reina
Orange

Dear Editor:

Councilman Chip Monaco, at the July 12 Orange City Council meeting, told those assembled, "If we want open space, we need to acquire it. There are mounds of crazy stuff there. They [the property owner] will never clean up this site." Monaco was referring to the illegal dump on the former Sully-Miller site on Santiago Canyon Road.

How does Monaco know Milan will not clean up the site?

The city council has had many

opportunities to close down this site, but has chosen to side with the property owner. In 2003, city staff recommended closing this site. Mayor (then councilman) Mark Murphy, voted to keep it operating.

It is surprising that Murphy, Monaco and Kim Nichols fail to acknowledge that they helped perpetuate the problem by refusing to use their enforcement authority in 2019 to shut it down. Instead, they hid behind the false notion that everything Milan does is grandfathered and totally allowed.

It took a citizen (not the city) to bring this illegal activity to the attention of the county's Local Enforcement Agency (LEA). The LEA issued a cease-and-desist order and told Milan, in effect, to remove and properly dispose of all the material that had been illegally dumped onto the property. Unfortunately, due to a process error, the order was reversed and Milan convinced the county and the city to go easy on them.

Orange residents have endured the mess at Sully-Miller because of a willful lack of leadership and a refusal by certain council members to enact their powers to correct it. We need council members who embrace a mission to protect our health and welfare, not ones who disrespect and belittle residents while downplaying their own and the landowner's responsibility.

Kim Plehn
Orange

Dear Editor:

Arianna Barrios is my council member in District 1. I was appalled at how she was treated at the last council meeting by her colleague Chip Monaco. Late in the meeting, she had to politely ask council members to be respectful to one another.

That didn't stop Monaco, as he continued offensive rants insulting public speakers, entire communities, and fellow council members. He repeatedly accused specific councilmembers of "pandering to the wishes of their constituents."

My understanding is that council members, as elected representatives of the people, should do just that. They should work to fulfill the needs and wishes of the people who reside in Orange, not the demands of dishonest outside developers like Milan.

If I had to choose between electing a councilmember who "panders" to the people versus pandering to big money special interests, I'd trust the one who has the interests of the people at heart every time.

I was also sad to see that Mayor Mark Murphy allowed his bullying tactics to continue. There is no justification for Monaco's behavior or Murphy's failure to intervene. They need to do better for Orange and the people who live here.

Arlene Johnson
Orange

Dear Editor:

I attended the city council meeting on July 12, and was completely shocked at the conduct exhibited by Councilmember Chip Monaco. He attended via teleconference, as he was vacationing in Hawaii. Over the discussion of the Sully-Miller site, there were several speakers from the OPA community (where the site is located) as well as many questions asked by councilmembers Arianna Barrios and Ana Gutierrez. Following the discussion and questions, for almost 10 minutes, Monaco proceeded to rant, belittle, bully and scold Barrios and Gutierrez, saying that they should stop "playing and pandering to their constituents," quit "pounding their chests" and quit wishing that Milan would clean up its mess. His exact words were, "Milan is not going to clean it up and you need to stop your wishful thinking." (Which is an interesting statement in itself. How does he know this?). In fact, it was Monaco that was "pounding his chest." The questions asked by Barrios and Gutierrez were valid and responsible questions to get information needed to make decisions regarding this site. I commend and appreciate them both for their hard work and diligence.

Once he was done with Barrios and Gutierrez, Monaco then proceeded to call out, bully and belittle OPA and speakers Dru Whitefeather and Laura Thomas, stating that their speeches were blatantly untrue and misguided. This couldn't be further from the truth. All speakers on this topic are very knowledgeable about every facet of this site and the nefarious activities during the past several years. They speak with facts that have been checked and confirmed. He may not like what is said, but it is their civil duty and constitutional right to speak.

I sat there in complete disbelief. The disrespect, bullying and attitude exhibited by Monaco was unacceptable and unbecoming of a councilmember. And even more alarming was that Mayor Mark Murphy did nothing. He allowed Monaco's rant to go on and on. The city needs a code of conduct with severe consequences for this type of disrespectful and unacceptable behavior.

I hope that every resident of Orange will make their voice heard this coming election. This is the opportunity to bid farewell to Mayor Murphy and bring in a new mayor (Dan Slater), and replace Monaco with someone who represents the residents with respect and dignity. We need leadership that cares about our city and its constituents.

Laurel Maldonado
Orange

Dear Editor:

When one goes to a city council meeting, one expects an opportunity to share opinions and concerns with a respectful council about local matters. And sometimes, when an issue that has never been resolved and has lasted several generations gets rehashed, it can seem like a broken record, especially to the public that feels ignored.

However, one does not expect councilmembers to lash out with vitriol toward constituents, as Chip Monaco did during the last meeting. Chip not only pulled back the curtains on his lack of concern over the Sully-Miller dumpsite and his willingness to give Milan a pass on cleaning it

up, he also laid bare his contempt for the residents affected by the site and for those fellow councilmembers who seek responsibility from Milan.

The fact that Mayor Mark Murphy allowed Monaco's rant to go unchecked, and that Chip felt emboldened to act in such a manner toward the people he is supposed to serve and with whom he serves, makes me wonder if this council

even operates under a code of ethics or has any leadership at all.

I would hope that since Monaco seems so unhappy and so unsuited for the demands of being on the council, that he considers resigning. I certainly hope the residents of District 4 do not vote him back into office.

Sharon Mulé
Orange

Golden State Water announces conservation plans

Golden State Water Company, serving portions of North Tustin, is now under Stage 2 of its water shortage contingency plan, in response to worsening drought conditions.

Customers are expected to reduce water usage by 20 percent, as compared to 2020 usage; they should also limit outdoor watering to two days per week. Even-numbered addresses may water landscape on Sundays and Wednesdays; odd-numbered addresses will water lawns on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Outdoor wa-

tering is prohibited between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Golden State may also implement a drought emergency surcharge of up to \$2.50 per CCF (100 cubic feet or 748 gallons) for water usage in excess of the customer's baseline drought allocation, should local and statewide supply conditions warrant further action. Residential customers will not be asked to use less than eight CCCF monthly.

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A resident overlaid a site plan graphic onto the Wheeler St. cul-de-sac.

Seeing is believing

Dear Editor:

Once again, we are faced with a development project on the banks of Santiago Creek, seeking to rezone open space to commercial. This property is located on roughly 8 acres behind Chapman Hospital. It consists of five 3-story buildings looming over single-family homes.

The neighbors who abut this site have asked the city to require "story poles" to be installed, so that the true height, width and length of these buildings will be revealed – not only to the neighbors, but to users of Grijalva Park and the Santiago Creek Trail.

Story poles are usually required when the project significantly affects important public scenery views, and to make the necessary findings regarding appropriate size, bulk, and scale, and neighborhood compatibility.

The adjoining single-family neighborhood is impacted by this massive project, but users of

Grijalva Park and the trail system stand to lose the open-space ambience along Santiago Creek. These 3-story structures are clearly inconsistent in terms of size, bulk, and scale with other buildings in the surrounding neighborhood and with Santiago Creek.

The city's Design Review Committee should require the story poles to be erected so the true impact of these massive buildings is obvious.

Shirley Grindle
Former county planning commissioner
Orange

Dear Editor:

A rendering created by a neighbor showing a multistory building looming over single-story homes on Wheeler St. gives those residents an idea of what to expect from the proposed 158-unit Stonefield development. It does not provide visual details for anyone else who will be impacted by the project.

Slated to be built along Santiago Creek behind Wheeler and Malena Streets, the development will overwhelm all the single-story homes in that neighborhood, as well as the line-of-sight from Grijalva Park. Park visitors and trail users will also be impacted by the massive structure.

It is not uncommon for builders to install story poles indicating the height and footprint of proposed developments. In this case, story poles should be required to allow all effected parties to see what is planned for Santiago Creek, Grijalva Park and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The poles should be adjusted from the build benchmark grade, use the 43'9" elevation height and stake the footprint of all five buildings. That way, there will be no confusion.

In addition, all residents and users of Grijalva Park need to be notified about this project. Those who have fought for years to secure the trails and the meager amount of park space we have, should be told about the loss of open space and the effects on the park, the trail and the creek.

Bill Bouskos
Orange

Fourth of July fireworks; above the law?

Dear Editor:

As a lifelong resident of the City of Orange, I found it painfully disappointing to have to spend yet another July 4 hunkered down in my home, TV blaring, speakers blasting music as loud as one could stand, two white noise machines on full blast, windows shut with curtains drawn, this despite the fact our AC was on the fritz. It was a steamy 86° in my boisterous home that night. Sadly, this is how my husband and I have spent the past three consecutive Independence Days -- irony intended.

No, the city was not overtaken by insurgents, it was just our patriotic neighbors relentlessly detonating projectile-style fireworks into the night sky, nonstop, for hours on end. These blasts shake our homes, rattle our nerves and windows, and set off car alarms. And that's just some of the distress it causes. These blasts have a ripple effect on pets and wildlife, which then leads to the death of countless animals, in shelters and on the streets, when fleeing the perceived threat.

In the days following the Fourth, I connected with dozens of neighbors, including a war veteran, a mass shooting survivor, pet owners, people who struggle

with mental health and folks genuinely concerned about the fire risk posed by such flagrant behavior, all of whom shared the same sentiment: how is this allowed to happen?

I called the Orange Police Department twice that night to report a neighbor who deemed it appropriate to host an illegal fireworks show. All fireworks are illegal in Orange, but these babies were the real-illegal-deal, from sundown until well after 11:30 p.m. For hours, I watched in horror as the missile-style fireworks shot up, and the glowing embers rained down, occasionally checking on my semi-sedated dog in the process. I pleaded with OPD to come right at sundown, as I just knew what would follow. This neighbor didn't limit his festivities to just the 4th of July; he's been celebrating throughout the month of June. The 4th of July was the grand finale, except for a few encore performances in the following weeks. Turns out, OPD showed up, not once, but twice that night! But they didn't confiscate all of the illegal fireworks, leaving enough for the show to go on. Turns out they didn't fine the offender either, but let him off with a warning. I guess this would lead

one to the answer to the question of how this is allowed to happen.

City council didn't seem too interested in the topic, with one councilmember deeming it "impossible to stop," proclaiming "the police simply can't be at all places at all times," all the while openly dismissing a member of the public's suggestion to simply post signage around Orange to inform people that fireworks are illegal here. Not everyone knows; check out some of the local social media groups where residents are arguing, one side claiming it's their god-given right to light explosives, the other side pointing out the invisible law.

I do agree it is physically impossible for the police to be in all places at all times. But when you show up someplace, twice, during a crime in progress, wouldn't that give you better odds at stopping the crime, at least once? Maybe you'd even make an example of the culprit. Who knows, word might even get out around town that Orange has a zero-tolerance policy toward illegal fireworks. Isn't that how law enforcement is supposed to work?

Kat Marquez
Orange

Park management is no playground

Dear Editor:

There have been some questions as to what has been occurring regarding the Silverado-Modjeska Recreation and Park District in the past few months that warrants clarification.

The unincorporated canyon communities are a wonderful "jewel" in the heart of Orange County. The Silverado-Modjeska Recreation and Park District (SMRPD) was established on March 22, 1961 as a Recreation and Park District under authority of Resolution 61-305 of the Orange County Board of Supervisors. It is an independent special district, with a locally elected board whose members serve overlapping four-year terms, with elections every two years. Special districts are public agencies created to provide specific services to a community. The enabling act for SMRPD is the Recreation & Park District law, *Public Resources Code Section 5780 et seq.*

The SMRPD is the public agency with the authority to provide local recreation and parks programs and services within its boundaries. Its area encompasses 46,825 acres or 73.16 sq. miles, from the boundary of Orange/Riverside County in the Trabuco District of the Cleveland National Forest on the east, to Irvine Lake and Loma Ridge on the west. Specifically, SMRPD serves the communities of Silverado, Modjeska, Ladd, Black Star, Williams, Harding and Baker Canyons.

SMRPD owns and/or operates five facilities: two community parks, two community centers and

a children's center on land leased from Orange County Parks.

Members of the board of directors are public officials, and district employees are the board's representatives. Both are bound to uphold the U.S. Constitution and carry out the laws of the State of California. District officials and employees are required to carry out their acts with the highest standards of morality and discharge faithfully the duties of their offices, recognizing that the public interest must be their primary concern. Prior to taking office, each elected or appointed director takes an oath. Preferential consideration of the request of any individual citizen, or group of citizens, shall not be given. SMRPD is a steward of public funds utilized by the park district.

The board powers are defined in Article 7 of the *Public Resources Code Sections 5786 et seq.*

In developing district policies, the board:

1. Defines objectives and goals;
2. Carries out its legal responsibility and adopts procedures for the operation of the district;
3. Maintains its properties;
4. Contracts with staff/workers to provide management and support;
5. Approves financial plans and budgets;
6. Encourages the development of recreation programs, within budgetary limitations, that meet community needs and demands.
7. Informs and educates residents about recreation and park programs, facilities, and services;
8. Works with community

agencies and residents to provide economical recreation;

9. Works with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations on disaster or crisis response on a temporary basis.

By *Government Code §53234, et seq.*, board members are required to take ethics training courses as required under AB 1234 once every two years. The training must cover both ethics laws and ethics principles. In addition, board members, the general manager and the SCC director are required to file a Form 700 Statement of Economic Interest every year.

The board must adhere to the Brown Act and determine district policy subject to statutory requirements. SMRPD coordinates with other local planning authorities, parks and recreation departments, nonprofit agencies and community groups to ensure the continued provision for community parks and recreation while striving to represent the interests of the entire community responsibly and responsively.

As president of the SMRPD Board of Directors for the last two years, I can attest that I, and my fellow board members, strive to do our best in being stewards of the special district, its facilities and the residents that we represent.

If you have any questions, please reach out to us directly. Our contact information can be found on SMRPD.org.

Isabell Kerins
President, SMRPD

Tustin Dems hold bootcamp

Tustin Dems are hosting an Activism Bootcamp in August. Local candidates will be there to answer questions about themselves, their campaigns, and how community members can get involved in meaningful ways.

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the centrally-located campus of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1221

Wass St. The August/bootcamp meeting will be Wednesday, Aug. 24 at 7 p.m.

Anyone wanting to connect with fellow Democrats, get informed and help increase community involvement in civic engagement is welcome to join Tustin Dems. More information is available at TustinDemocraticClub.org.

Candidate filing deadline approaches

The filing deadline for candidates wishing to run for local office is Aug. 12. Filing for city offices should be made with the clerk of that jurisdiction; school board seats should be filed with the county.

In Villa Park there are three open council seats. Orange has

four open council seats (Districts 1, 3, 4 and 6) and the office of mayor.

Orange Unified School District has four board seats open (Districts 1, 4, 5, 7); TUSD has two (Districts 3, 5). The Silverado-Modjeska Parks and Recreation District has three open seats.

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Publisher/Editor
Anita Bennyhoff
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Editor
Tina Richards
editor@foothillssentry.com

Sports Editor
Cliff Robbins
sportseditor@att.net

Graphic Designer
Stephanie Gundran
graphics@foothillssentry.com

Advertising Sales
Andie Mills
advertising@foothillssentry.com
714-926-9299

Office Manager
Kathy Eidson
officemanager@foothillssentry.com

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A fixture of 4th of July festivities, it's the OPA Parade

The 55th annual Orange Park Acres 4th of July Parade made its way through the equestrian community, past streets lined with enthusiastic spectators who cheered, waved flags and collected candy tossed from the many participants with homemade floats, pristine classic cars, decked-out golf carts and beautifully groomed horses.



Photos by Tony Richards



The Grand Marshals of the OPA 4th of July Parade were Joan Gregory and Mary Suchy, residents of Orange Park Acres since 1962.




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Oh, no, not another learning experience!

All politics is locals

As of press time, two more candidates, in addition to incumbent (appointed) Secretary Jessie Bullis, have publicly announced for Silverado-Modjeska Recreation and Park District Board, all planning to file paperwork before the August 12 deadline. Look for profiles of others in next month's "Canyon Beat," assuming more step up.

Ted Wright is a professor of cognitive science at UC Irvine and director of UCI's Campus-wide Honors Collegium. He's lived in Modjeska for over nine years, appreciates the low-key community and enjoys hiking in, and photographing, the canyons. "I see the SMPRD parks and facilities as the heart of our community," says Ted, "and I favor policies that will minimize obstacles for those who wish to use these resources in ways that benefit the community." Nina Macdonald is slowly retiring from running a web development company. She spends her time taking care of her garden and chickens. She has lived at the far end of Modjeska Canyon for over nine years.

In news from the new 40th

Congressional District, local Democratic activist Linda May reports that Dr. Asif Mahmood now has an official campaign office located in Tustin on Irvine Blvd., just off Red Hill. She says Canyon Tustin Democratic clubs are "overjoyed that he is keeping it local."

Utilitarian

Complaining about our electrical power utility is good canyon fun, but your humble scribe learned a bunch after taking the SCE email survey gauging my awareness of power outage protocols, resources and more. I could have gotten the subsidy for the purchase of a generator, and known about the Critical Care Backup Battery Program, free food and transportation, as well as discounted hotel stays.

Hey now!

Saturday, Aug. 16, 5 p.m. at the Community Center: Summer Concert Series features Dawgful Dead and Hempstring Orchestra in the season's penultimate musical wingding. We challenge you to guess their respective musical genres.

Maple Springs has sprung

Microcosm is a big word for a little world. It's sometimes hard to reconcile the obvious, that canyon life is a representative reconfiguration of life in the flatlands, but with trees. Until somebody starts a fire, speeds through your neighborhood, or dumps a sofa on Santiago Canyon Road. Campaign signs, redistricting news, and dispatches from our supervisor and assembly person gesture toward our local concerns, but sometimes community leaders perhaps feel like interpreters or docents, explaining things to outsiders or governmental agencies, in addition to being advocates and problem solvers.

The heavily impacted Maple Springs trailhead situation offers a case study, with concerns over traffic, noise, rowdy behavior and potential fire danger expressed by residents at Mine Track, and at both the entrance and far end of the canyon ... and even from deep inside the forest.

See if you can guess how the problem is seen and described by three players, all attempting to define and solve the problem. Let's call them, A Concerned Resident, An Elected Official, and an Environmental Activist.

One assesses the situation as follows: "We have seen a tremendous increase in traffic after COVID. Silverado Canyon Road is no longer a residential road. It's become a highway for off-roaders to get to Santiago Peak, average speed 45-50 mph. Noises from the off-roaders is 24/7."

Another points to jurisdictional challenges and resources:

"There is no enforcement of fire or other violations beyond the gate. Cleveland National Forest (CNF) pleads no staff, but that is just encouraging the reckless behavior of those traveling into the forest. Not blaming local CNF staff. They don't have real control over staffing or resources for enforcement in the area. This needs to be addressed at a higher level by those who decided to cut staffing and seem oblivious to current conditions."

Finally, here's our third contestant, offering a large perspective on land use and management, "Regarding proposed closure of roads during red flag conditions, while I'm all for it, forest users, in general, aren't. The fact is that U.S. forests are open 24 hours every day. No forests have restricted hours or an "entry booth," for instance. That's the territory of National Parks. Bureau of Land

Management properties have even fewer restrictions than forests, and they look like it. Forest closures are based on two things: wet weather or fire danger/limited firefighting manpower; read safety. I still believe, however, that pressure on the forest supervisor (not the ranger in Corona - Trabuco District) might be successful. Fire weather IS a weather condition. And if they can close for rain, in severe drought, they should be able to close for fire weather."

With only three other open access points to an incredibly popular recreational destination, limited parks' law enforcement, and an understandably long response time from sheriffs, many solutions or mitigations are being discussed -- your chance to play this fun game of cooperation and community politics together again.



The Orange Emblem Club hosted a Father's Day breakfast, June 19. Here, members of the Emblem Club and Orange Elks Lodge prepare to serve dads and their families. From left, are Orange Emblem Club Chaplain and Recording Secretary Heide Bush; John Salas; Irene Jones; Exalted Ruler Roslyn Peggins; Loyal Knight Kelly Martinez; and Jennifer Martinez.

Orange residents respond to green cemetery environmental report

By Tina Richards

Neighbors of the proposed Kormerstone "green" cemetery, slated to be built on the old YMCA site behind Yorba Dog Park, are urging the city to conduct an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) before approving the project.

Instead of doing a full-fledged EIR, the city has issued a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), a document that is acceptable if a project's impact is deemed "not significant" or can be "mitigated to a less than significant level."

Residents disagree that the cemetery's impacts will be less than significant, and are scrambling to carefully read and provide comments on the 190-page MND before the deadline.

In a green cemetery, bodies are not embalmed or placed in caskets, but buried about 3.5 feet deep. The Kormerstone green cemetery would consist of 3,339 gravesites, a 5,138-sq.-ft. building, a 51-space parking lot, an 800-sq.-ft. storage shed, fencing and landscaping.

Methane menace

The property served as a solid waste disposal site until 1956, and now produces methane gas. The YMCA building housed methane monitors (all since destroyed by fire); the dog park has a monitoring system; and a house closest to the landfill was demolished due to methane gas encroachment.

The MND acknowledges the presence of methane, but notes that it can be mitigated with increased monitoring. A child development center and day school and located within 200 feet of the site. That proximity, the report says, will require the property owner to adhere to a number of procedures and performance stan-

dards in the "event of a discovery of unknown environmental concerns."

The report claims that the cemetery will result in 36 traffic trips daily, and 83 trips on the weekend, which are not enough to cause any impacts. The MND, however, does not acknowledge the predicted 815 daily cars trips generated by a proposed senior living facility that will use the same Chapman/Yorba intersection. Residents say they don't trust the analysis.

Listen up

Nor do they trust the report's noise analysis that notes that construction decibel levels may reach up to 81 dBA at the school property line and 71 dBA at the nearest residence. The noise, the MND says, will be intermittent and can be mitigated by limiting hours of operation, screening construction equipment, and limiting truck idling and hauling time.

To avoid disturbing the contaminated landfill soil, a 7-ft.-deep layer of clean dirt will be deposited over the site. That's a problem, says resident John Nguyen. He calculates that the necessary 11,610 cubic yards of imported dirt would weigh some 25,542,000 pounds. Seven feet of fill placed over a single 4 ft.-by-8 ft. gravesite equals about 17,900 pounds, not including a grave-stone or concrete cap.

Nguyen notes that the OC Health Department stated that the additional weight will exacerbate the ground settlement process and enhance methane gas generation. Methane migrates laterally, produces 30 times the global warming potential as carbon, and stays in the atmosphere for 10 years (EPA data).

Sharon Galasso points out that insect activity is not mentioned at all in the MND. Her research indicates that blowflies (attracted to unembalmed corpses) lay over 250 eggs in a 24-hour period. The resulting maggots generate heat, raising the temperature by 10 degrees. That, in itself, she says, will have an impact on the microclimate of the cemetery.

The rest of the story

The environmental document does not acknowledge the impact a cemetery has on property values. Real estate studies have shown that cemeteries reduce home value by an average of 12%. According to Zillow, the aggregate value of the 120 homes impacted by Kormerstone is \$115,680,000, with the average home value being \$974,000. A 12% decrease, neighbors calculate, is \$115,680 per home or an aggregate loss of \$13,881,600.

The Kormerstone neighbors are asking the city for more in-depth studies on methane migration, traffic circulation, noise, and compliance with General Plan guidelines. Those guidelines include expanding open space, protecting watersheds and natural resources, community safety and environmental compatibility.

Ironically, the MND states that the project will have no impact on park facilities. Orange has 1.78 acres of public park space per 1,000 residents, which is less than the three acres per 1,000 encouraged by state legislation. The 6-acre cemetery parcel, currently zoned open space/recreation, should, according to neighbors, be a park or recreational facility. That, they say, would reduce the city's park deficit and have a significant, positive impact.

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Orange couple celebrates 50th



High-school sweethearts David and Cheryl Markovitz of Orange celebrated their 50th anniversary by vacationing in Maui. The couple met at Savannah High School in Anaheim, spent 20 years in Santa Ana and Tustin, and the last 30 in Orange. They raised three children, and now spend their time tending to their seven grandchildren and participating in Seniors Over Sixty, a zumba dance team, known for its flash mobs around town.



Community members celebrated CA40 House candidate Dr. Asif Mahmood's grand opening of a campaign office in Tustin, July 11. Mahmood is a Tustin resident and pulmonologist. His concern over patients' struggles with accessing healthcare was his inspiration for running. Seen here, from left, Aliso Viejo Mayor Ross Chun, Dr. Mahmood, Tustin City Councilmember and mayoral candidate Beckie Gomez, Encinitas Mayor and District 38 State Senate candidate Catherine Blakespear, and Tustin City Council District 3 candidate Dr. Frank Gomez.

CPOC to meet in September

After a summer break, Conservative Patriots of Orange County will kick off its fall season with a roundtable workshop on Thursday, Sept. 15. Topics will include election integrity, how to volunteer and vaccine mandates. The meeting begins at 5:30

p.m. with a buffet dinner for \$30 per person. Purchase tickets online at conservativepatriotsofoc.org, or make an advance reservation by calling Peggy Baranyay at (714) 828-1289. The meeting will be at the Santa Ana Elks Lodge, 1751 S. Lyon Street.



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Stars on Parade in Villa Park

The July 4th "Stars on Parade," sponsored by Villa Park Community Services Foundation, made its way through the residential streets of Villa Park, with patriotically dressed participants and pets on all manner of wheels, including decorated trikes, bikes, wagons, skateboards, strollers and unique autos, all following OC #23 Fire Engine.



Keeley Tully awarded STAR Scholarship



Keeley Tully, STAR Scholarship recipient

Keeley Tully, a 2022 Foothill High graduate, was awarded a P.E.O. STAR Scholarship, through the recommendation of P.E.O. Chapter S Orange, a local chapter of a U.S.-based international philanthropic educational organization for women.

The highly-competitive scholarship award is for an exceptional woman completing her senior year of high school. Keeley was recognized for her leadership, academic achievements, extracurricular activities and community service.

Keeley has been an active Girl Scout for 12 years, and recently earned the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest honor in


Scouting. She also volunteered in her community through Assistens Auxiliary of Assistance League of Tustin and with the Orange County Rescue Mission.

Keeley was a competitive swimmer for nine years and a varsity swimmer at Foothill High, where she was also a part of the National Honor Society and the founder/president of the Knights of the Library Club. Keeley will be attending the University of San Diego in the fall, where she intends to study history.

The motto of P.E.O. is "Women helping women reach for the stars," and Chapter S Orange is proud to help a young woman achieve her dreams.

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"Flags Over Orange" founder JC Cortez is shown on the monitor while recording a segment for NBC News.

"Flags Over Orange" reaches national audience

A news segment about locals JC Cortez and Gary Doebereiner and their initiative to mount U.S. flags at the homes of vets aired, fittingly, on the Saturday of the July 4 weekend. Anchored by Jose Diaz-Balart, the segment on the NBC Nightly News Week-end Edition was the result of six hours of filming JC Cortez, Doebereiner and numerous veterans who received the flags. The "Flags Over Orange/Villa Park/Tustin" program is sponsored, in part, by the Orange Elks and Home Depot. As a result of the television coverage, he has received com-

ments and plaudits from veterans and their families and friends throughout the nation. He hopes the publicity will inspire others to begin similar programs, and expand the outreach to other communities and lodges to honor those who have served and to spread the patriotic spirit. After installing a flag at a veteran's residence, Cortez enjoys having a conversation to learn about the individual's service experience. He then shares it on his Facebook page. To view the news clip and read more about the program see the Flags Over Orange Facebook site.



The Soroptimists of Santa Ana/Tustin installed new officers for the 2022-23 year. From left are Sharon King, treasurer; Chris Gregg, vice president; Brenda Wilcox, assistant secretary; Dawn Marie Lemonds, who presided over the installation; Eligia Nicolai, president; Gay Joyce, assistant treasurer; and Martha Sosa-Johnson, secretary. Sosa-Johnson was recently named a "Superhero of Tustin," for her volunteerism. The group is also celebrating the international organization's 100th anniversary.

VP Rotary names Rotarian of the Year



Vito Canuso, left, and Rotarian of the Year Don Ware

The Villa Park Rotary Club named Don Ware as Rotarian of the Year, 2021-2022 at a ceremony June 26, 2022. The award is given annually to the Rotarian who best exemplifies the club's motto of "Service Above Self." Don Ware, who resides in Orange with his wife Rochelle, has been a member of the Villa Park Rotary since 2017. He is a realtor with HomeSmart Evergreen Realty, and has been involved in many of the club's community projects. At the same ceremony, outgoing Villa Park Rotary President Vito Canuso was lovingly and humorously roasted by incoming President Robert Frackelton.



Vito Canuso, left, with incoming President Robert Frackelton



Parking lot shade structures with solar roof panels are being installed at Orange Unified schools (Cerro Villa Middle School, shown here) over the summer. The district estimates that \$7.8 million in OUSD electricity costs will be saved over 25 years.



FOCAL scholarship recipients are, left to right, Katie Pham, Sidney Muntean, Siraj Bajwa, Megan and Lauren Nishitani.

Scholarships awarded by FOCAL

Friends of the Canyon Hills Library (FOCAL) awarded monetary scholarships to five outstanding teen volunteers from Canyon High School who, this past school year, served at the Canyon Hills Public Library and Canyon High School Library. Katie Phan will attend UC Davis, majoring in computer science and engineering, was integral in creating storytelling videos on the library YouTube channel during the pandemic closure. Sidney Muntean developed a virtual writing workshop for students during the pandemic and will attend UCLA to study busi-

ness economics. Siraj Bajwa served as Young Adult Council President this academic year and planned several programs for the community. He will attend UC Irvine, planning a double major in literary journalism and political science with a minor in creative writing. Megan Nishitani, along with sister Lauren Nishitani, worked hundreds of hours at the school library circulation desk, distributed textbooks during registration, trained a new library assistant and tutored peers in the library. Megan and Lauren will attend UC Irvine.

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Local filmmakers make waves



Filmmaker Spencer Whiteout

By Betty Slade

In a Northern California town where nothing happened, Spencer Whiteout and his boyhood friends made their own fun. Their adventures often took them to an abandoned radio tower that locals called “space.” Whiteout envisioned the old tower as a great place to make a movie one day. The genesis of his film, “Space Waves,” started with a tower, a friendship and a dream.

The movie is a coming-of-age comedy written and directed by Orange resident Spencer Whiteout. The full-length feature film centers on young mischief-seekers, Marvin and Joey, who turn

their misadventures into a podcast. Their goal is to do whatever it takes to catapult their “Space Waves” podcast to the top of the iTunes charts by the end of the summer.

Whiteout was a 21-year-old student in the Cinema Media Arts Dept. at Biola University when he met Tustin resident Andrew Baer, 18, in a summer photography class. Whiteout presented his feature film idea to Baer, who said, “Why not?” and then wondered what he had gotten himself into.

Writer/Director Whiteout and Producer Baer enlisted a motley crew of young filmmakers to create a personal story of friendship and forgiveness. Using a small team of passionate film graduates and a \$10,000 budget, they shot most of the film in Northern California, with additional scenes around Orange County.

Whiteout says, “The storyline is strong, with a feel-good first half and a more dramatic second half. It’s about letting go of how things were, embracing how things are, and knowing that although times change, friendship and adventure can be found in every season of life.”

The filming was not without its ups and downs. One month before shooting, two of the main actors dropped out, and other

crew members left the film due to schedule conflicts. On day one, the crew arrived at the radio tower, the centerpiece shooting location, to witness it being torn down and destroyed. Undaunted, the pair looked for another radio tower while they shot the rest of the film.

Day two, the red 1967 Mustang, principal vehicle in many of the scenes, broke down and had to be towed (pushed) from location to location. The funding didn’t come in as projected; the original \$10,000 budget grew to \$50,000, which the pair ended up financing themselves. Through trial and error, Whiteout and Baer learned to negotiate, be flexible and find solutions to complete the movie they envisioned.

“Space Waves” stars Andrew Gabriel, Rudy Pankow (“Uncharted,” “Outer Banks”), Tyson Pestner and Andie Mueller. Whiteout and Baer, now 26 and 23, report that the film was released to streaming platforms in June. See spacewavesfilm.com to learn more, or to rent or buy it.



The film was inspired by an abandoned radio tower.

Orange Chamber bestows historic awards



Legacy awardee Pat Buttress and Centurion honoree Al Ricci

ergy, enthusiasm and wisdom will be accessible to the board, as she continues in an advisory capacity.

Chair Al Ricci received the L.F. Coburn Centurion Award, the highest honor the Chamber has to bestow. Coburn, an attorney and community leader, was one of the founders of the Orange Chamber of Commerce and served as its first chairman 100 years ago. Ricci was installed for his fifth term as Chair of the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber recognized the time, heart and dedication he has given to the Chamber for many years.

A song created for the city, “Sweet Orange,” with music and lyrics by Kim Le, additional lyrics by Dave and Kelly Simpson, was premiered at the gala. Its refrain speaks to the spirit of the event: “In Orange I’ve grown into who I’m supposed to be, in Orange I know we are one community, in Orange I’m home with my friends and family, In Orange I know I am free... Sweet Orange.”

At the Orange Chamber of Commerce Board Installation & Dinner Gala, held July 7 at the Orange Woman’s Club, the new board was installed, two unique and historic awards were given and the new city song “Sweet Orange” debuted.

Pat Buttress was the surprised recipient of the first-ever Legacy Board Membership Award. Pat has served on the board for over 12 years, served as an ambassador, committee chair, and as Executive Committee Chair three times. Her valuable knowledge of the Chamber and the city, en-



A featured classic Mustang stopped running and had to be towed.



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Follow the yellow brick road to see the "Wizard of Oz"

The Tustin Area Council for Fine Arts (TACFA) is pleased to announce its 20th Broadway in the Park production, "The Wizard of Oz" will be performed on Tuesday, Aug. 2, through Saturday, Aug. 6, in Peppertree Park in Old Town Tustin.

Gates open at 5:30 p.m., and the show starts at approximately 7:45 p.m. There will be food for sale, a kids' fun zone, raffle prize drawings and an autograph session after the show. Individuals can also bring their own picnic.

Lythgoe Family Productions ("American Idol") is producing, and lead actors Barry Pearl as the Wizard and Lauren Samuels

as Glinda have extensive stage and movie experience. One of the most exciting changes to Broadway in the Park will take place behind the actors on a 20 x 40-foot video projection wall featuring the artistry of Aaron Rhyme, with over 100 productions to his credit.

"We have pulled out all the stops, and it is guaranteed to be a spectacular show," said Co-chair Cathy Crair.

Tickets are \$20 for general admission; children 10 and under are \$10. Tickets are good for any night of the performance.

For more information, visit tacfa.org.

Villa Park Women's League commences new year



The 2022-23 VPWL Executive Board consists of, left to right, Sandy Bass, Pam Dunn, Carla Gilkerson, Risa Scott, Barbara Perez, Candy Carlberg and Eva Wyszowski-Hartman.

Another fiscal year has begun, and new leadership is ready to lead the Villa Park Women's League into this new term. The group is excited about the opportunities and possibilities that lie ahead. The 2022-23 Executive Board consists of President Risa Scott, First Vice President (Programs) Sandy Bass, Second Vice President (Philanthropy) Pam Dunn, Third Vice President (Membership) Carla Gilkerson,

Recording Secretary Barbara Perez, Treasurer Candy Carlberg and Parliamentarian Eva Wyszowski-Hartman.

The new board is already meeting and sharing ideas for improving attendance and membership, as well as ways to be more inclusive with the community and its residents. One theme for this year is "It Takes A Village ..."; the board is hoping that more members get involved and participate

in the activities that VPWL offers. The second theme is "Villa Park Proud," and emphasis will be on revisiting what makes people proud to live in this community and encouraging them to show and share their pride.

The first General Meeting will be held Thursday, Sept. 15. Membership is open to all women who reside in Villa Park, and applications can be found at VPWL.org. Please join us!

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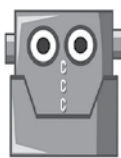
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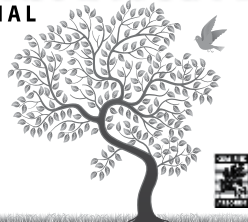
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Frankie enjoys the company of other female dogs, but he doesn't care for male dogs, small dogs or cats. He would love to be your constant companion. See more info about Frankie and other dogs available for adoption at gsroc.org. The rescue currently has more than 90 dogs looking for loving forever homes.

SAVE THE DATE


Golden Orange Street Fair
The Orange International Street Fair will take over the Old Towne streets for its 50th year. The Golden Orange merriment, with entertainment, ethnic foods and vendors, will begin Friday, Sept. 2 at 5 p.m. and continue until Sun., Sept. 4 at 10 p.m.

OTPA Home Tour
The Old Towne Preservation Association will sponsor its OTO

Historic Home Tour, on the weekend of Oct. 8 and 9, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Boutique Noël
Bring on the holidays! Boutique Noël, the popular shopping event with crafts, home décor and gifts, sponsored by Assistance League of Orange, will return to OTO, Wed-Sat, Oct. 12-15, after a two-year hiatus.

GOCAT Gala
The Greater Orange Community Arts Theater (GOCAT) Foundation will kick off Halloween on Friday, Oct. 28 with "GOCAT Unmasked," a masquerade gala, where the progress toward the building of an arts center in Orange will be revealed, and loyal supporters revel in anticipation of a state-of-the-art performance venue for the community.



The Orange Unified School District Board appointed Dave Rivera to Deputy Superintendent, July 21. Formerly assistant superintendent for business services, Rivera has been with the district since 2018. He held a key role in the development of the four High School science centers financed by Measure S.

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The Orange Elks have done it again!

By Bill Neessen
For the seventh time in the last eight years, Orange Elks Lodge 1475 is designated an "All American" Lodge. This is also the fifth time the lodge has been the number one lodge in its division. The term "All American" in Elkdom means that you are the best that you can be.

For the 2021-22 Elk year, the Orange Elks officers, their committee chairmen, members, spouses and friends helped the lodge earn this title through their hard work in the community and in the dedication to the lodge and the programs of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

The key programs include: scholarships; Eagle Scout and Girl Scout Gold Award recognition; youth activity programs, including the Americanism Essay Contest and Teenager of the Year; donations and participation in programs benefiting veterans; community outreach with articles and photos, and the Drug Awareness Education Program.





Going green with artificial turf

As you drive through your neighborhood, you might see more and more tired lawns and dead grass on every street. That is unless that home has already installed artificial turf or is utilizing a substantial amount of water.

As we head into the high heat of summer, it's possible that we will see more water use restrictions coming our way. So, how do you keep your curb appeal without losing your lush green lawn?

That's where artificial grass, or as it's also called, artificial turf, comes into play. As a local real estate professional, I'm seeing this trend become more common in neighborhoods. There have been times when I have been at a property where I had to kneel down and touch to determine whether it's real grass.

As with most things in life, the more they make of this product, the better they get, and this is no different. Artificial turf has come a long way.

Recently, I installed approximately 1,100-sq.-ft. of turf at the home I grew up in right here in Orange. From start to finish, I watched the whole installation process. Here's how it went.

After the initial visit from the company, a date was set for install. The installer arrived around 7 a.m. The process began with the removal of the old lawn. Next, the installer leveled the yard, added loose dirt and gravel and compacted the ground. He then put down the new turf, cut and nailed it into place, added the infill, power broomed the area and cleaned up. All in one day's work.

The end result is a fantastic lawn that looks freshly cut to perfection. The neighbors let us know how much they loved it too.

If you're considering going green, do your research, find a reputable company, and enjoy a beautiful yard for years to come -- without ever having to water, mow or edge again.

VPHS Class of '77 to hold reunion



7-8 p.m. Special discounted rates have been negotiated for the reunion group at The Ayres Anaheim, and includes a full American buffet breakfast, parking and Wi-Fi; phone (714) 634-2016 and mention the reunion, or group code VPHS77.

The Villa Park High School Class of '77 will hold its 45 Year Reunion on Saturday, Oct. 8 at The Villa in Orange, owned by Tim Zimprich, at 510 E. Katella.

The fun-filled evening will commence with Happy Hour Hors D' oeuvres from 5-6:30 p.m., followed by dinner from

Ticket prices for the event are \$90, and include dinner, raffles, photo booth and many memories. To purchase tickets, Venmo Sandra (Yamashiro) Kosin @SandraKosin; or Zelle Ckosin@yahoo.com; or mail a check, payable to Villa Park Class Reunion 1977 to 10581 Beardsley Circle, Villa Park, CA 92861.

Embroidery class goes live at SCC

The popular online hand embroidery class at Santiago Canyon College will meet in person this semester, beginning Aug. 25.

The SCC class was so well received that it is now also offered online at Santa Ana College. As a result, Instructor Marilu Morency earned the Profiles in Excellence Creative Expression Faculty Award from that institution.

Morency reports that in addition to learning a skill through the course material, students ap-

preciated the opportunity to "stay connected" via the online class during the pandemic.

Registration is open at both colleges. Call SCC, (714) 628-5900, for information about the on-site class that meets from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays, through Dec. 15.

The online course is offered through At Santa Ana College on Wednesdays, beginning Aug. 24 - Dec. 14, 10 a.m. to noon; call (714) 241-5700 to register.



This little bakery, which magically appeared outside of the Assistance League of Orange Thrift Shop in Old Towne Orange, is apparently open to only a select gnome/fairy clientele. These miniature shops have shown up throughout the city, tweeking the curiosity of all.

MARKET SNAPSHOT

ORANGE, CA - MARCH 2022
Single Family | Townhome | Condominium

\$1M Avg. Sales Price ↑ 4%	\$1.30M Avg. List Price ↑ 27%	90 No. of Prop. Sold ↑ 10%	15.00 Avg. Days on Market ↓ 36%	71 No. of Props. for Sale ↑ 38%
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Based on data from Orange County (CRMLS) for property types: single family townhome/condominium in the price range \$1-\$999,999 for the period Dec 2021 through Mar 2022. March 2022 stats compared to previous three months' average. Source data is deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

MARKET SNAPSHOT

TUSTIN, CA - MARCH 2022
Single Family | Townhome | Condominium

\$1.06M Avg. Sales Price ↑ 7%	\$1.29M Avg. List Price ↑ 14%	61 No. of Prop. Sold ↑ 69%	19.00 Avg. Days on Market ↓ 40%	51 No. of Props. for Sale ↑ 46%
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Based on data from Orange County (CRMLS) for property types: single family townhome/condominium in the price range \$1-\$999,999 for the period Dec 2021 through Mar 2022. March 2022 stats compared to previous three months' average. Source data is deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

MARKET SNAPSHOT

VILLA PARK, CA - MARCH 2022
Single Family | Townhome | Condominium

\$2.45M Avg. Sales Price ↑ 14%	\$2.63M Avg. List Price ↑ 11%	5 No. of Prop. Sold ↓ 25%	36.00 Avg. Days on Market ↓ 15%	11 No. of Props. for Sale ↑ 38%
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Based on data from Orange County (CRMLS) for property types: single family townhome/condominium in the price range \$1-\$999,999 for the period Dec 2021 through Mar 2022. March 2022 stats compared to previous three months' average. Source data is deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

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From Left, SCC Foundation Board President Beatriz "Betty" Valencia, Ph.D.; Board Secretary Karen Bustamante; Interim Executive Director Ruth Cossio-Muniz; and Treasurer Jimmy Ko.

SCC Foundation names new board member

The Santiago Canyon College Foundation welcomed Jimmy Ko to the executive board of directors. Ko, SCC alumnus, class of 2014, established a scholarship at the college and has awarded funds to students during the past two years. He earned his bachelor's degree in business administration at USC and is now a commercial banker. He will serve as Foundation treasurer.

The Foundation is a six-member board with three ex-officio members: the college president, district chancellor and executive

director. Ko joins newly-elected SCC Foundation President Beatriz "Betty" Valencia, Ph.D., a compliance and risk management executive; Vice President Mark Schmidt, an OC business owner; and Secretary Karen Bustamante, a database manager. All four executive directors will voluntarily serve in their leadership roles for a one-year term.

Founded in 1998, the SCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving SCC by increasing public awareness of the college and expanding its vol-

unteer and financial support network. Funds raised by the Foundation support students directly through scholarships and may fund student programs, projects and services not typically funded by the state, or those needing additional funding to serve students more effectively.

For more information and/or to contribute toward the advancement of the college, contact Interim Executive Director Ruth Cossio-Muniz at (714) 628-4888, foundation@sccollege.edu or visit sccollegefoundation.org.

Animals head to OC Fair

There is no summer break for the Orange Acres Back Breakers 4-H club members or Orange High School/Future Farmers of America students as they prepare their animals to compete at the Orange County Fair.



OHS Seniors Makayla Lopez, above left, and Juan Nava, right, visit the school at least twice each day to care for their respective animals, Winnie the Pig and Maggie. To support the school agricultural program students by purchasing a market animal, or portion thereof, contact instructor Angie Velasquez at avelasquez@orangeusd.org.



Mika Horan, OABB member, with her pen of Grand Champion Market Rabbits.



Left to right, livestock Judge Cameron Rocha, OABB members Ava Steward-Puga with Hammy, Joshua Smith with Chris P Bacon, and Isaac Bignami with Garfield, First Place Hogs in Club/Group.



OABB Bryson Sara's fowl won Grand Champion Market Turkey.



Grace Khan and her two Angus cross steers, Jefferson and Kingston, won their respective weight classes. Shown here, Grace and Kingston won the blue ribbon for showmanship.

Women's League is revived and growing



OPA Women's League President Emilia Sugiyama demonstrates how to create a charcuterie board for the Entertaining in Pearls activity.

board. They brainstormed and put forth creative strategies to encourage women of all ages and interests to join together and breathe new life into the league. Their determined campaign efforts and a hosted spring membership social resulted in today's growing list of nearly 120 members.

The league's mission statement of "Friendship, Philanthropy and Community" blends good works and fun activities, providing value, support, and a place to create new memories. The interest sections are diverse, ever-changing, and offer activities weekly throughout the year. Currently, they include Pickleball, Home-stead & Gardening, Dog Pack Walkers, Hot Trotter Equestrians, Bridge, Literature, Bunco and Entertaining in Pearls, wherein participants learn how to pair wines with foods, create charcuterie boards, tablescapes and arts and crafts, all while wearing their favorite pearls.

On Aug. 13, OPA Women's League will host a "Blue Hawaii" champagne brunch, its first fundraiser in over two years. Members, plus a guest, are invited to attend this luau-style event held at a private sprawling OPA estate. Guests will be invited to bid on an array of auction items as they sip endless champagne and mimosas under garden cabanas. All proceeds go to OPAWL philanthropic endeavors.

The OPA Women's League's primary mission is to support Orange Park Acres in building a community that is a better place for generations to come. For more information, or to become a member, visit opawomen.org.

By Julie Maurer

The OPA Women's League is back and better than ever. Less than a year ago, the organization was challenged by apathy, a dying membership, and numerous board vacancies. COVID made it impossible for OPAWL to fundraise and stay financially viable. The future seemed bleak until several determined women stepped in to reinvigorate the

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BEN'S ASPHALT – supplying cones for the parade route

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JOHN REINA – BMW convertible for Arianna Barrios

National League of Young Men And Boy Scouts of America