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A Monthly Community Newspaper

NOVEMBER 2025

Orange council explores additional safety measures for Plaza

By Tina Richards

Prompted by yet another incursion into the Orange Plaza by an impaired driver, the City Council is exploring additional methods to ensure motorists drive around the Plaza and not through it.

The city has already installed bollards around Plaza Park and upgraded lighting to make the area more visible at night. It has installed reflective raised pavement markers, roadway delineators and supplemental traffic signs. Metal posts at intersections where Chapman and Glassell meet the roundabout are intended to force drivers to turn right instead of going straight toward the Plaza.

While the modifications have decreased the number of incidents at the Plaza, speeding impaired drivers remain unfazed. As Councilmember Kathy Tavoularis noted, the crashes are caused by inebriated drivers and they all happen at night. "We can't change behavior," she said. "I don't think bollards are a deterrent. I don't see any of these options working."

Deterrence, no assurance

The city, however, is trying. During its Sept. 23 meeting, the council was presented with several options that could further deter straight-through motorists. They included additional crash-rated bollards, large boulders, rumble strips and closing the area to traffic after midnight.

Of those, boulders and street

See "Safety" continued on page 4



Photo by Tony Richards

A three-quarter-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, The Wall That Heals, was displayed for four days in Orange's Grijalva Park, giving visitors the opportunity to remember and pay tribute to soldiers lost in that war. See *Traveling Vietnam Memorial*, page 2

OUSD vows to take it slow before making school consolidation decision

By Tina Richards

Declining student enrollment (a statewide phenomenon) and aging elementary and middle schools have spurred the Orange Unified School District Board of Education to explore options to consolidate some facilities.

OUSD has lost 5,000 students over the last 11 years. It was down 330 students this year. Birthrates are declining and therefore enrollment is projected to decrease into the future.

Potential school consolidation has been under discussion for some time. A committee consisting of teachers, principals, staff and parents was formed in February to formulate consolidation suggestions. When its proposal, naming several schools (Prospect, Imperial, Jordan) to be consolidated, was presented in June, no one was happy.

Concerned parents spoke of the sense of community those schools

gave to families, the continuity provided for neighborhood children and the student-teacher-parent relationships that had been built. It was noted that one was a community school, making its closure more complicated.

A critical assessment

Board members wanted more information about projected enrollment, more details on what the schools offered and what they did not, and impacts on the community. A separate ongoing study regarding the status of district facilities and those that could potentially be surplus had not been considered.

At that meeting, Board President Kris Erickson stressed that no decision was imminent, there was still much to learn and consider before any steps are taken. Several other board members assured the audience that they had heard their concerns, read their emails, were sensitive to the com-

munity's issues.

The committee itself was critical of the outcome. In a follow-up to the poorly received presentation, the committee reported that its "voice was lost in translation to the board," it was given unclear goals and a rushed timeline, was missing current facility and program information and did not have a solid rationale for proposed changes.

A closer look

Superintendent Rachel Monárrez and OUSD trustees agreed more data is needed on the whys behind consolidation, the needs of the student population, and a deeper dive taken into the criteria for consolidating selected schools. It was time to slow down.

Those issues were addressed and the entire consolidation pro-

See "OUSD" continued on page 5

Volunteer group pitches an alternative plan for East Orange

By Heather Westenhofer

Save Orange Hills, a volunteer organization working to preserve the 396 acres of wilderness between Irvine and Peters Canyon Regional Parks, has claimed a win in its fight against development of the area.

The group filed a legal challenge in December 2024 regarding The Irvine Company's (TIC) Incidental Take Permit for the Crotch's bumble bee, a rare ground-nesting pollinator that is a candidate for listing as a threatened or endangered species in the Orange Hills. Surprisingly, TIC withdrew the permit in June, settled the Save Orange Hills lawsuit, and is moving forward with slightly revised plans and intent to build in 2027.

Save Orange Hills is taking advantage of the pause in construction to put forth a different vision for the acreage. The group imagines this land preserved in perpetuity as Orange Hills Regional Park, that would connect Irvine and Peters Canyon Regional Parks and create 1,245 contiguous acres of parkland in the heart of Orange County.

The vision for Orange Hills Regional Park includes 4.5 miles of additional public trails for hiking, cycling, mountain biking and equestrian use. It would also provide for safer wildlife crossings, better protection from the threat of fire, relief from traffic congestion and preservation of the prehistoric Native American village site known as CA-ORA-556, as well as scenic vistas.

In addition, Orange Hills is the home of Newport (designated M317), the male mountain lion whose exploits generated headlines, the interest of wildlife biologists and the compassionate support of residents throughout Orange County. He was seen swimming across Lake Mission Viejo, wandering into a nail salon in Irvine and exploring yards in Newport Beach and Laguna Beach.

Save Orange Hills is actively fundraising in hopes to acquire the land before the developers make their next move. Supporters emphasize that permanent preservation will deliver long-term economic and quality-of-life benefits to Orange County residents, while development would burden infrastructure and erode natural

resources. The group's founder, Joel Robinson, calls this a "once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect habitat, expand trails and give Orange County more of what it truly needs: open space, clean air and safe wildlife corridors."



Photo by Collin Eckert

M317, aka Newport

NEWS INSIDE

BLESS THE BEASTS

Pampered pets and barnyard critters receive spiritual blessings in OPA men's group-sponsored event.

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POWER OF THE PURSE

Grants from the Orange Blossoms give local teachers funds for elementary classroom projects.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Quiet Modjeska Canyon is battleground for ballot measure one-upmanship.

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FAIR THEE WELL

Annual Silverado Country Fair brings costumed characters, artists and crafters, music and munchies to the canyon.

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CROWNING ACHIEVEMENTS

High school homecomings salute queens and their courts, deemed royalty for one special day.

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Traveling Vietnam Memorial replica brings memory and honor to Orange



Photos by Tony Richards

The Wall That Heals was a powerful presence in Grijalva Park for four days in October.

The three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, also called the Wall that Heals, was on display in Grijalva Park from Oct. 2-5. The monument, featuring the names of the 58,281 service members who lost their lives in Vietnam, drew some 5,000 visitors and was served by 358 volunteers.

The wall was brought to Orange thanks to the efforts of James Kushon, who, late last year, made the original request to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, the organization that

oversees the mobile exhibit and education center.

The project was subsequently spearheaded by a committee of volunteers and veterans led by Doug Redding. It was a success, Redding says, because everyone from the police, fire department, public works and community services “said yes.” Local supporters included the Elks Lodge 1475, American Foreign Legion Post 132 and MSI International, the company that provided the tiles for the memorial in Washington, D.C.



Photo by Smetona Photo

The Wall was escorted to Grijalva Park by a fleet of motorcycles ridden by members of American Legion Post 132, veterans and scores of others who wanted to honor those whose names were on the memorial.



The Orange Elks made a donation to The Wall That Heals Orange 2025. Members and friends of the lodge greeted the trucks carrying the exhibition as it traveled through Old Towne.

Chapman University advances in college rankings

Chapman University has once again advanced in the annual U.S. News & World Report rankings of America’s Best Colleges, climbing 11 spots nationally. The new ranking continues Chapman’s upward trajectory among the nation’s best institutions of higher education.

U.S. News placed Chapman in the top 25% of 434 national universities in the study, which includes those who offer a full range of undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral degrees and strongly emphasize research. There are close to 2,700 four-year colleges and universities in the U.S.

Key factors leading to Chapman’s rise include: improved graduation rates; student retention, with first-year retention rates averaging 91%; social mobility gains; and graduation rates for Pell Grant-eligible students. Students from lower-income families who qualify for federal need-based aid matched or exceeded those of peer universities, driving a significant rise in Chapman’s social mobility ranking.

Chapman also earned recognition as one of the nation’s Best Colleges for Veterans and continues to be cited for its strength in undergraduate teaching, business and psychology programs.

Additionally, Chapman was re-

cently named to the 2026 Forbes America’s Top Colleges List, which highlights institutions offering the best educational, financial and career outcomes for all students.



Vietnam veteran, Doc, travels with the Wall to share stories and history with visitors.



A visitors pays his respects.



A soldier is honored by loved ones at The Wall That Heals.

WHAT’S THE VALUE OF WATER?

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Havana Nights gala celebrates the power of community



Gala attendees included, from left, Martin Daly, Adam Carr, Gina Carr, and Mayor Dan Slater.



Paulette and Supervisor Doug Chaffee share a photo op with Friendly Center CEO Dr. Kenia Cueto.

By Alisa Driscoll

The Friendly Center transformed the Turnip Rose Promenade into a vibrant celebration of community, culture and purpose for its annual Havana Nights Gala, Oct. 3.

The event brought together civic leaders, local businesses, hospital and educational partners, and community champions united not by tuxedos or formalities, but by a shared commitment to end generational poverty in Orange County.

In true Cuban spirit, the night pulsed with live music, dancing, colorful décor and even Porto's gift bags as midnight snacks. With heartfelt stories and a powerful paddle raise, nearly \$200,000 was generated to directly support Friendly Center's three core pillars: food and basic needs, education and workforce development and family services.

Friendly Center was honored to welcome several distinguished guests, including City of Orange Mayor Dan Slater, Orange County 4th District Supervisor Doug Chaffee and wife Paulette. Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento's office, represented by Senior Policy Advisor Carlos Valenzuela, served as one of this year's top Havana Sponsors.

Sponsors in attendance included Chapman University, Cummins & White LLP, States Logistics, Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County and United Business Bank.

The Havana Nights Gala reflected the strength of a community that cares deeply for its neighbors. Every dollar raised helps Friendly Center continue its mission of supporting families with dignity and compassion.

To learn more about Friendly Center's work or to get involved, visit friendlycenter.org.

OPA Men's Group hosts Blessing of the Animals



Sweet Nyah fully participated, putting his paw on Pastor Ron's hand.



Anna Madeline rode Tyson, and brought Alice for blessings.



Samantha Wagner brought her ball python Clyde for a blessing.



Mini-donkeys Pepe and Jack, owned by Michelle and Mike Schmidt, arrived for a blessing.

The OPA Men's Group held its first annual Blessing of the Animals on Oct. 4 at the home of Michael and Michelle Schmidt.

OPA resident and Pastor Ron Spence officiated, blessing 55 furred and feathered companions, including ducks, mini-donkeys, chickens, alpacas, horses, ponies, dogs, cats and even a snake. A commemorative medal and a prayer card were given to each special pet.

The OPA Men's Group offers numerous interest groups, including golf, woodworking, pickleball, mountain biking, aviation, Bible study, barbeque and more; email opamensgroup@gmail.com for information.

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Sounds of silence

Dear Editor:

The last nine months we have seen a shocking amount of chaos, scandal and violence in our local Orange County community, and I can't help but notice the silence from local elected Republicans.

Daily kidnappings from masked gunmen targeting our diverse immigrant communities in Santa Ana, Irvine, Garden Grove, Fullerton, Orange and many others. Mothers, fathers, grandparents, children ripped from their cars, homes, jobs and parks! Silence from our elected Republicans.

Billions in funding to our schools, colleges and universities

cut or ransomed!

Crickets from our elected Republicans. Except for Republican Congresswoman Young Kim. She voted to take those billions from our schools and local economy.

Billions in healthcare and food assistance stripped from poor, sick and disabled citizens, hurting our local hospitals, food banks and farmers!

Silence from our elected Republicans. Except for Congresswoman Young Kim. She voted to take those billions from our most vulnerable community members.

Tariffs raising our costs for food, clothing, electronics, cars and lots more.

Silence from local elected

Republicans. Except for Congresswoman Young Kim. She chose to give away her Congressional powers and allow these tariffs.

If you look at the social media of our local Republican politicians, it seems they exist only to send surrogates to ribbon cutting ceremonies, but that's it.

Why haven't Steven Choi, Tony Strickland, Phillip Chen, Diane Dixon, Laurie Davies, Tri Ta, Kate Sanchez, Don Wagner or Janet Nguyen stood up for immigrants and American citizens being kidnapped from our community?

Why haven't they spoken out against the billions being taken from our schools and colleges?

Why haven't they screamed about the poorest and sickest constituents losing their healthcare and food assistance?

Why haven't they pushed back on the tariffs that harm our small

businesses and YOU and I? Were they elected to do nothing?

Soren Williams
Anaheim

Don't ditch DRC

Dear Editor:

I am writing regarding the Orange Planning Commission and City Council decision to substantially reduce the scope of the Design Review Committee.

From my personal perspective, their professional review and experience are extremely relevant to preserve the character and desirability of the City of Orange. This type of review is important to not just Old Towne, but all of Orange.

As a resident of Orange Park Acres, I see massive "rebuids" that are the size of small commercial buildings that no longer reflect the OPA goals

and objectives or neighborhood compatibility.

These projects are passing with administrative design approval by city staff and have not been reviewed or presented to a committee that evaluates the impact on neighboring properties in terms of mass, light trespass, privacy, use of color and building materials. Furthermore, it seems the city has limited ability to enforce plans that have already been approved.

In my opinion, the Design Review Committee is a valuable asset to be preserved. The DRC's professional perspective and expertise in design, architecture and landscaping serves as a resource to both city staff, with its limited resources/budget constraints, and adds value to community aesthetics.

Laurie Sandoval
Orange

"Safety"
continued from page 1

closures were nonstarters. Boulders placed around the park's pedestrian walkways would need to be lodged deeply into the ground, and placement would be impeded by the area's shallow pipes and roots.

While boulders can slow vehicles, they are not engineered to be crash barriers and are generally used in slower speed situations. Mayor Dan Slater allowed that boulders might be considered a temporary fix that would indicate the city is "doing something," but they are not a good idea.

Nor is closing the 100 blocks of Chapman and Glassell to through traffic at night. Staff reported a number of disadvantages, rang-

ing from cost to staff time to impacts on surrounding thoroughfares. Glassell and Chapman serve some 800 to 1,000 vehicles from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., and there are 125 on-street parking spaces in that area. The Plaza is also an emergency response route.

Nix on some fixes

Closure would hamper late night visitors' ability to reach downtown businesses, strand cars parked on the street and increase emergency response times. Closing the Plaza would also divert traffic onto other streets, many of which are residential.

A nightly closure would also require barriers to be set up and taken down daily by a city crew. Additional staff would be needed, adding \$150,000 to \$400,000 to the budget.

Mayor Dan Slater and Councilman John Gyllenhammer viewed rumble strips as a reasonable stopgap to reduce traffic speed while the city explores permanent options. "The point is to protect life," Gyllenhammer said, "to slow traffic before it reaches the Plaza. Have we thought of speed bumps?"

"Rumble strips are at least something," Slater advised. They could, he said, be installed faster, before someone gets killed.

But rumble strips, laid on the road to alert motorists to slow down, are noisy, not suitable in the Old Towne environment and would be a nuisance to businesses and residents. They would also slow down emergency vehicles "It's a dead idea," Jon Dumitru concluded.

the footprint of the street fair, reducing booth space and pedestrian access. At a cost of approximately \$300,000, medians were not ruled out.

Bollards gained the most support. There are currently 16 crash-rated bollards installed at the beginning of the pedestrian walkways through the Plaza. Staff recommends putting in 11 more to fill gaps, increase pedestrian safety and further impede impaired drivers. "Although," Public Works Director Chris Cash noted, "they won't stop everything. It depends on the size and speed of the vehicle."

A strategic approach

Arianna Barrios suggested that before a decision is made, the council should consider crash data that the Police Department likely has already. "There have been 44 incursions since 2018," she said. "The police do a fine job plotting trajectory of these accidents. Right now, cars are getting past the bollards. We need to look at this with more science, with a better understanding of how incursions are coming in."

Jon Dumitru agreed that there "might be interesting data from a trajectory study."

"Councilmember Barrios brought up an interesting point," Denis Bilodeau added. "We need a larger data set. The enhancements have helped, but the issue is impaired drivers at night. Are flashing lights helpful? Maybe curb reflectors? I'm concerned about bollards; they can kill people. We're not trying to kill motorists, just make them turn right."

Ana Gutierrez said she liked bollards, but wanted more information on how to slow errant traffic before it reaches the barriers. "I'm concerned about life over property," she explained.

tions and get final thoughts from the city traffic commission. In the meantime, he added, install rumble strips on the 200 blocks of West and East Chapman where there are no residences.

Jon Gyllenhammer seconded the motion.

Barrios asked that residents be alerted to rumble strips before

they are installed, and Bilodeau opposed the motion outright because "rumble strips won't stop drunk drivers."

Gutierrez made a supplementary motion agreeing with everything Slater said, minus the rumble strips. Bilodeau seconded. The vote was 5-2 in favor, with Slater and Bilodeau dissenting.

Nathalie Adourian named Orange city attorney



Nathalie Adourian

The City of Orange has appointed Nathalie Adourian as its next city attorney.

A longtime Orange resident, Adourian previously served as senior assistant city attorney, playing a key role in advising all city departments and overseeing liability, employment matters, transactional agreements and compliance with the California Public Records Act.

"I'm excited to welcome Nathalie as our next city attorney," said Mayor Dan Slater. "She has been a very effective member of our city attorney staff for more than six years and has proven her leadership capabilities."

Adourian began her service with the City of Orange in 2016 and joined the city attorney's office in 2019.

Previously, she worked as human resources and risk manager for the City of El Monte and in private practice as an employment and labor defense attorney.

"Consistent and equitable ap-

plication of laws and policies, combined with empathy and professionalism, creates an environment where organizations can thrive," said Adourian.

"Orange is home to me, my husband and two children, and it is a privilege to serve as city attorney. I look forward to continuing to support the city council, staff and our local community with dedication and integrity."

Adourian holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies from the University of California, Irvine; a master's degree in dispute resolution and juris doctor from Pepperdine Caruso School of Law; and an associate degree in risk management for public entities.

Born in France, Adourian moved to the United States at age 13 and is the first in her extended family to earn both bachelor's and graduate degrees.

OC Book Fair coming

Book lovers, alert! The OC Book Fair will be held in Old Town Tustin on Sat., Nov. 15, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The day will feature author talks and book signings, activities for kids of all ages, panel discussions and community roundtables, a plethora of books in a wide variety of genres and unique gifts, brought to you by Arvida Book Co., Tustin Community Foundation and other local, independent booksellers, publishers and book-ish vendors.

For information, visit theoc-bookfair.org.



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Waste not, want not
Waste Management representatives, for whom a customer wastes, er, waits 20 minutes on the phone, first talking to robots while humming along to sleepy electronic hold music, confirm updates reported in a recent WM communication. Three free bulky item pickups per year is back, with a total of four items per pickup. Additionally, in Area 5 (Irvine and the canyons) one additional bulk pickup is available for new residents. We recommend scheduling online.

In other news(letters)
Irvine Ranch Water District’s (IRWD) newsletter is titled “Pipelines” for a reason. Notice a bigger pumping surcharge on your water bill? Increased usage means more work getting water up or over a hill. Predictions of a dry winter mean you might consider a graywater system. Want to see the source? Tour the renowned San Joaquin Marsh

Wildlife Sanctuary and waste treatment site on Friday, Nov. 7, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Lunch provided. Supervisor Don Wagner’s newsletter is “The Supervisor’s Scoop.” Think ice cream or pet waste and celebrating Leif Erickson Day (but not Indigenous Peoples’ Day). Rep Kim’s dispatch is “Catch up with Young Kim,” and displays her staff’s affection for gerunds. Action verbs galore!

Wag the dog
Supervisor Wagner attacked Prop 50 via a measure to undermine faith in, no kidding, the county’s Registrar of Voters. Despite assurances from OC Vote and the District Attorney, Wagner implied massive fraud after a Costa Mesa Republican (!) was prosecuted for felonious dog-voting, the single and singularly ironic case. “What are we doing to find out if cats are registered?” asked Wagner. As Republicans, we assume. Wagner has held perhaps more elected offices than

anybody in OC. Meow.

Speed Kills
The Orange County Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP) survey process speeds along, ha ha, toward reducing fatalities and injury on unincorporated county roads and to “eliminate these crashes by 2050.” So, not speeding. Canyon locals, familiar with reckless motorcyclists, midnight racers, deer and afternoon freeway traffic, will not be surprised by “Safety Trends” observed across unincorporated OC: “Crash severity is highly dependent on vehicle speed,” with 30% of injuries from speeding and 22% of fatalities and injuries involving alcohol.

Bipartisan
Signed by Governor Newsom and now law, AB247 compensates incarcerated hand crew members who fight wildfires, in addition to awarding sentencing credits. “Incarcerated individual hand crew members: wages” takes effect immediately as an “urgency statute.” Stipulations include an hourly wage of \$7.25 “while assigned to an active fire incident.” To be clear, “inmates convicted of rape or other sex offenses, or arson, or those with an escape history are automatically disqualified from participating as a firefighter. Inmates with high-profile cases,

active warrants, or medical issues are also ineligible.” Introduced by Democratic Assemblymember Bryan, it was supported by the Progressive Caucus and the Legislative Black Caucus, opposed by the California State Sheriffs’ Association, with canyon reps State Senator (R-37) Choi and Assemblymember (R-71) Sanchez voting “yes.” In related news, I’d love to introduce our new Cleveland National Forest (CNF)/Trabuco District Ranger Matthew Bokach. He’s eager to chat but with government shutdown and public affairs reps furloughed, Bokach can’t do media without their OK. This frequent mountain bike rider offers an unofficial on-site Harding Trail report from a stalwart CNF volunteer who recently replaced a picnic table at lower Laurel Springs and reminds us that firefighters do not use the now-empty concrete cistern at upper, instead able to quickly assemble a 1,500-gallon portable water collection system just about anywhere, until the old concrete reservoir is repaired.

Expiration date
Four years ago, grant writer Francesca Duff secured block captain’s emergency packs, including bottled water and first aid kits, solar-charged power banks and water filtration systems. Likely unused and unopened, it’s

time to check adhesive on the Band Aids and perhaps charger levels, replace drinking water and aspirin. This resident keeps a gallon of gas (safely stored), a megaphone, conventional batteries, flashlight, fire extinguisher, pet carriers (pet food and litter box), contact lenses, medications, protein bars, and go-bag near his cars, along with a complete set (hidden) of vehicle keys.

Fair thee well
Inter-Canyon League (ICL) prez and Country Fair organizer Geoff Sarkissian thanks all volunteers who helped make it a success, with 15 acts on stage and 41 vendors displaying mostly handmade arts and crafts. Special thanks to three generations of volunteering Kirklands — Ken, Katie, and Hope — along with Alice Phillips, Lisa Enochs, Lisa Unger, Jane Bove, Cody Mileham, Dee McKibben, Bic Tran Edwards, Ted Wright and Nina MacDonald. Christmas Boutique organizer Scott Breeden reports a net of about \$1,900 for Friends of the Library and thanks volunteers Phillips, Judy Myers, Mary Pearson, Barbara Carrier, Pam Lau, Diane Young, Bic Edwards, Linda Osborn, Mitzi Perry, Andrew Tonkovich, Melody McWilliams, and Janet Coughlin. Some “regulars” are actually ex-canyonites who return to help.

"OUSD" continued from page 1

cess revisited at the board’s Sept. 25 meeting. Erickson admitted that the committee was formed in the waning days of Interim Supervisor Mike Christensen’s tenure, and there was, in fact, a perceived rush to judgement. “The board should have thought further ahead,” she said. She also stressed the need for clear guidelines regarding the board’s role, the committee’s role, staff’s role and the community’s role in the process. Monárrez advised that the “why” should come from the board, that the committee should be given detailed criteria to examine what individual schools, have or need to have, and how classrooms are being used. No schools would be named; it would just be data points. She agreed that community involvement is essential, but that it should wait until the district is closer to a realistic proposal. The goal is not to feed rumors about school closures. “Why would a parent enroll their child in a school that might close; why would a PTA launch fundraising drives?” she asked. Going forward, the process will be more structured, regard-

ing framework and timeline. Actions include a comprehensive facility audit, building stakeholder knowledge, creating a fact and rumor management plan and establishing progress updates. The facilities committee will be consulted; alternate uses for facilities, i.e. pre-K and family programs, multi-purpose rooms, wellness rooms will be considered. “We want to be prepared not just for today’s learning,” Monárrez said, “but be nimble enough for the future.”

Community included
Erickson stressed the need to engage the community, “not just the people who come to board meetings or those who know they can send us emails,” she said, “We don’t want to just report out, we want the process to be interactive.” She suggested enhancing the district website to allow constituents to offer advice and opinions. “We need to make a commitment to the community, to let them know why we are doing this.” The board will learn more and have progress reports at subsequent meetings before making a decision. “This is going to take a lot more time,” Monárrez concluded. “We’re not rushing the process.”

Remembering the et als. in Mendez v. Westminster

The Orange Community Historical Society will look at how an Orange family figured prominently in a landmark case that fought educational inequities, at its Tuesday, Nov. 18 meeting. The society will welcome Michael Ramirez, son of Lorenzo Ramirez, who was part of the Mendez et al. v. Westminster lawsuit, decided in 1947. Often, this landmark case is abbreviated to Mendez vs. Westminster and the et als. — Ramirez, Guzman, Estrada, Palomino — lost to history. Michael Ramirez was born in 1955 at St. Joseph Hospital and lived in El Modena throughout

his childhood. He attended Lincoln Elementary and Jordan Elementary, built to eliminate the memory of segregation. He was a business owner, currently works for the Moreno Valley School District and has been married to his high school sweetheart for 49 years. He founded the Et Al Committee to preserve his parents’ legacy and that of the other families who joined this suit. Members of the Estrada, Guzman and Palomino families will be on hand as well. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Orange Public Library, 400 E. Chapman.

Orange Elks donations support students



The Orange Elks Lodge’s 3TueKitchenCrew donated \$500 to support the El Modena High School Culinary Program. From left, EL Modena High Culinary Arts teacher Jim De Leo, and Elks Americanism Chairman Chris Michaelis

Orange Elks Lodge members visited 27 Orange Unified School District elementary schools to deliver 1,723 U.S. Pocket Constitutions. From left, Americanism committee members Amelia Castro, Melissa Hatch, Dana Encheff and Dara Walker. The committee also donated 25 American flags for classrooms.

Dr. William Langstaff marks 50 years in Villa Park

This year, Villa Park celebrates a familiar face and steady hand in local healthcare — Dr. William Langstaff, who marks the achievement of 50 years in practice. Throughout decades of change, Dr. Langstaff’s unwavering commitment to patient care has made him a trusted fixture in

the community. After navigating a period of unexpected challenges, the practice has found renewed strength with his son taking over as CFO, and new trusted local associate Dr. Alia Kabarra joining the team. With fresh new energy, and the same heart for service that

has guided Dr. Langstaff for half a century, the Villa Park Dental Care team looks forward to continuing the tradition of compassion, trustworthy dentistry that has defined their work for generations of local families in Villa Park and neighboring communi-



Dr. William Langstaff and wife Toby in 1975. She is still helping schedule patients in the office.



Dr. William Langstaff today



The Fireman's Memorial, held Oct. 14 at Irvine Park, honors Orange County firefighters who passed away within the last year. Friends of Bob Bell, who died in March, remembered him for his 21 years of service as a Villa Park volunteer firefighter; he served as chief for 15 years and represented the Villa Park City Council on the Orange County Fire Authority Board for 16 years. From left, VP Councilman Robert Frackelton, Bob's daughter Mindy Bell and Steve Palmer. Not pictured, VP Rotarians Eric Sense and Greg Mills.

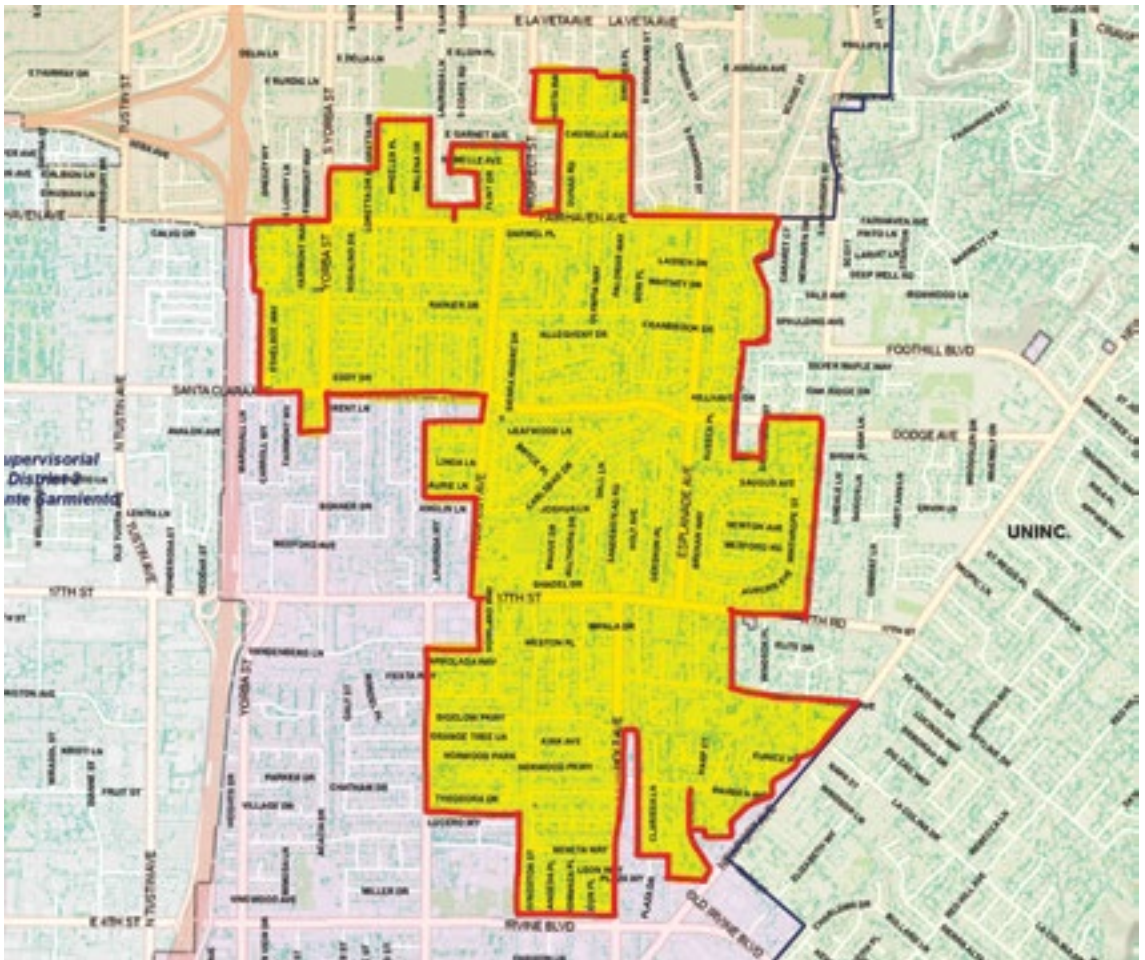
Tustin History Society to host annual party

The Tustin Area Historical Society (TAHS) will hold its annual members and guests party on Saturday, Nov. 22.

The event will feature appetizers and wine from Red Hill Winery, music by keyboardist Ron Kobayashi, and living history from descendants of early Tustin families. Randy Ema will share his passion for automobile restoration and Janet Peal will share remembrances of TAHS co-founder Vivien Owen.

The event, from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Clifton C. Miller Community Center, 300 Centennial Way, is free to TAHS members. Contact the Tustin Museum, (714) 731-5701.

Wanted: Residents to serve on the North Tustin Advisory Committee



The portion of North Tustin outlined in red is within Supervisor Sarmiento's Second District. He is seeking North Tustin Advisory Committee candidates from the district he is responsible for. The advisory committee, however, has representatives from and serves the entirety of North Tustin.

By Vicente Sarmiento
2nd District Supervisor

Public participation is the cornerstone of a well-functioning democracy. When residents engage—whether through serving on committees, volunteering, voting, or staying active in civic discussions—they help build a government that is responsive, inclusive and effective.

County commissions and committees play a crucial role in advising policymakers, ensuring community voices are heard, and helping shape projects that impact residents' daily lives. That is especially true for unincorporated areas of the county, where residents are directly represented by their supervisor, and where these

committees are the places we turn to for local resident input.

We are currently seeking to fill two openings on the North Tustin Advisory Committee. This committee is responsible for reviewing and commenting on proposed land development projects within the geographic area of North Tustin, which is comprised of all the unincorporated areas, as defined by the North Tustin Specific Plan.

The committee considers permit applications for new construction, zoning requests for new buildings, and improvements to residential and commercial properties in the area. These are projects that can have an impact on the daily quality of life and on the character of a neighborhood.

The committee meets on an

as-needed basis, with meetings scheduled on the third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Applicants wanting to serve on the committee must reside in the unincorporated neighborhoods east of the 55 Freeway and roughly bounded by Fairhaven Avenue to the north and Irvine Boulevard to the south (see map).

Interested individuals may submit their current resume to Manuel Escamilla in my office by email at manuel.escamilla@ocgov.com, and complete a short application.

I urge everyone to explore these opportunities to serve and contribute to your neighborhood's quality of life.



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Orange Blossoms Auxiliary awards teacher grants



Orange Unified elementary teachers celebrated their Links to Learning grant awards, courtesy of the Orange Blossoms Auxiliary of Assistance League of Orange.

By Britta Marques

The Orange Blossoms, an Auxiliary of the Assistance League of Orange, awarded grants to teachers in over 14 schools, impacting approximately 2,800 students, as part of their Links to Learning philanthropy. The total grant value was over \$17K for elementary school teachers across Orange Unified School District.

Teachers use the grant monies for programs to benefit their students. Some examples: Jessica Koehler of Serrano Elementary will use her funds to provide flexible seating in her energetic second grade classroom to enhance engagement and cater to different learning styles. At Villa Park Elementary, the grant will allow Mandy Ballesteros to purchase collaboration kits, themed California History in Action. The grant will provide 60-plus fourth graders with hands-on, project-based learning activities.

The grant for Judy Long, Taft Elementary, will help update the science book collection, some of them 25 years old. The funds for

Amanda Burzumato, also at Taft, will support a fifth-grade field trip to the Orange Coast College Planetarium.

A grant was also awarded to Jennifer Greenwalt, Fletcher Mandarin Language and GATE Academy, to send the TK class on a field trip to Pretend City. This will reinforce the school's goal of offering play-based, developmentally appropriate learning, as well as connecting to Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations.

Amy Craig at Cambridge Elementary will use grant funds for her fourth-grade students to visit the San Juan Capistrano Mission. The trip directly supports California Social Studies Standards and aligns with their school's goals of fostering meaningful, real-world learning opportunities that connect classroom instruction with authentic experiences.

West Orange Elementary teaching partners Keely McMacken and Ken Felipe know that team sports are beneficial to the physical education curriculum and team building at the elementary

level, but some sports may be difficult for some students. They will use their grant to help make sports achievable and successful for all.

The grant awarded Lindsay Krill, Olive Elementary, will be used for ELPAC prep books to help English language learners prepare for the ELPAC test. Anaheim Hills Elementary teacher Clarissa Covarrubias will use her grant to provide age-appropriate physical education equipment for TK and Kindergarten students.

Janis Mauldin at Crescent Elementary will purchase a light table with accessories for her students. The light table will help support learners who benefit from sensory input or alternative learning strategies. Taft Elementary resource teacher Nicholas Marcigliano will purchase sports equipment, as the school does not have a dedicated P.E. teacher, or enough equipment to keep kids active, especially affecting fourth, fifth and sixth graders who are at a critical stage of developing teamwork and athletic skills.

Emily Heide, from California

Inspire Academy, will purchase kits that are designed to help her fifth graders with their academic skills, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration through

escape-room style games.

For information about the Orange Blossoms Auxiliary and their many projects, see assistanceleague.org.



The annual OPA Barbeque was a sell-out, with guests enjoying Western-themed food and live country music. Auctioneer Bruce Ferguson encourages bidding from an enthusiastic crowd.



Tustin resident Mark Svoboda loves parades, particularly the Shriners darting around in their mini-cars. The Shriners participated in Tustin Tiller Days and so did Svoboda. His wife Susan captured his joyful moment.

Imagine a new regional park in Orange

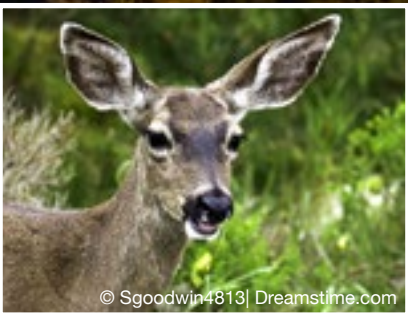


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www.SaveOrangeHills.org

Pictures worth a thousand words

By Andrew Tonkovich

By early October, with ballots in the mail, Modjeska Canyon Yes on Proposition 50 supporters had seen a dozen of their homemade signs stolen and destroyed, stakes removed and/or wire frames stripped of their messages. Infinitely replaceable, posterboard and tempura paint are a fun bespoke democratic medium, easily displayed in public areas adjacent lost dog, firefighter appreciation, home for sale, yard sale, birthday party and community events announcements.

Delighted to poke the anti-free speech bear, one stubborn Modjeska resident planted complementary signs in response, reminding anti-democracy miscreants of private property rights next to brand-new red, white and

blue “yes” signs.

Soon arrived tiny hand-crafted “no” signs, clearly not spell-checked. (It’s Newsom!) Fair enough. But not content to play nicely in the civic arena, “No” vandals stole or destroyed both the free speech and pro-50 signs even as theirs remained unmolested. Friends of the tenacious yes advocate responded, calling out anti-speech goons with a Burma-Shave highway sign-style display.

That, not the thievery and unfair play, provoked a couple of locals to complain --- not about First Amendment rights, but about too many signs --- but before a homeowners’ association or militia could be formed, the Yes on 50 signs were once again attacked.

At press time the signs, slightly altered, were up (on private

property) at another free speech-loving voter’s house, a gesture of solidarity. Photos tell the story and, who knows, might teach local vandals something about civic life in a democracy. But these stirring words, posted on Nextdoor, seem a more instructive caption: “Shame on the person who stole my yard signs in Modjeska Canyon next to my house and driveway. You have every right to your beliefs but you do NOT have the right to trespass and steal my property. We can disagree and be respectful. As I am sure you know living here, I am 82 years old and get around with a cane, but I’ll keep putting up more signs for every one you steal. I’ll also be glad to give you a free copy of our Constitution. As they say in the South, ‘Bless your heart.’”



Local community participates in No Kings day



Photos by Tony Richards

Yorba Park in Orange hosted several thousand people who participated in the nationwide Oct. 18 No Kings demonstration. Chapman Avenue and Yorba Street were lined with sign-bearing protesters, long after the organized event concluded.



Playful characters spice it up.



Virginia Gannaway, 82, came from Anaheim to send her message.



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Local color on display at annual Silverado Country Fair

The Silverado Country Fair, celebrating 55 years of canyon camaraderie with a nod to the area's colorful Western-flavored history, brought musicians, artisans, cooks and nonprofits together at the Community Center, Oct. 11 and 12.



Gunslinger Guy Atwood, center, is flanked by saloon proprietors Madelynne Atwood, left, and Lisa Unger.



Allison Vaughan displays the artwork of her father Bruce Sanford, a well-known local artist who has been capturing images of California and the southwest in his Modjeska Canyon studio for 50 years.

Orange creates liaison committee with Chapman

The City of Orange has announced a new partnership with Chapman University to explore innovative ways that the two entities can work together to create a thriving, equitable and sustainable college town that all residents can take pride in and enjoy. "This collaboration signifies a continued commitment to strengthening our relationship with Chapman University," said Mayor Dan Slater. "By bringing together city and university leaders, we can actively work together towards common goals." The liaison committee will be made up of three City of Orange councilmembers alongside leadership from Chapman who will meet to provide updates, share insights and discuss and collaborate on issues of mutual interest. "Chapman has been a long-standing anchor in this community, and we value the City of Orange as a partner in building a vibrant, thriving place to live, work and learn," said Chapman University President Matthew Parlow. "We welcome ongoing conversations and are committed to constructive dialogue to ensure that both the City of Orange and Chapman continue to succeed together."

Santiago Canyon College named number one in OC

Santiago Canyon College (SCC) has once again earned top honors as the No. 1 community college in Orange County, and continues to rank among the best in the state and nation, according to Niche.com's 2026 Best Community Colleges rankings. In the 2026 list, SCC is ranked No. 7 in California and No. 19 nationally, continuing a trend of strong academic performance and student success. The rankings reflect SCC's steady rise in national recognition. Niche, a trusted source of college data and student reviews, compiles its rankings using comprehensive data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the U.S. Department of Education, and millions of verified reviews. Factors considered include academic quality, faculty expertise, student experience, diversity and career outcomes. From preparing students to transfer to top-tier universities like UCLA, UCI, Stanford and CSUF, to offering workforce-ready degrees, apprenticeships, and certificates in fields like business and technology, SCC continues to serve the diverse needs of the Orange County region.

Orange Park Acres Women's League President Charla Harris holds her festive pumpkin centerpiece, created with succulents and fairy furniture during the meeting of the OPAWL Home & Garden group. For information about the League's many activities and membership, see opawl.org.



Chris Larocque of FireLineUs, explains the workings of the FyreBX, a compact fire-fighting track loader that holds 500 gallons of water, a hose reel, dozer blade, and equipment. It can assist fire agencies and property owners in clearing areas ahead of time or battling a blaze when it occurs.



Annette McCall of the Bird of Prey Center introduces an owl ambassador.



Chris Larocque settles into the cab of the FyreBX.



The Passing Fancies take to the stage with a fusion of bluegrass, Americana, jazz and rock.



Puppeteer Franklin Haynes entertains the kids in the crowd with his ghostly marionette trio.



Amber Ray of the Library of the Canyons offers a lesson in yarncraft.

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Reading Promise is Elks signature event



The Reading Promise Project, held at the Orange Public Library on Oct. 5 is one of the Orange Elks premiere annual events.

The Reading Promise is a promise to provide a book for a student who then promises to read it. The Reading Promise believes that by placing a brand-new book in the hands of a child who would not otherwise have an opportunity to own a book, a life-long reader will be created.

The 2025 Reading Promise event was enjoyed by around 1,100 guests, with help from 125 volunteers from the Elks and 22 members of the Orange High School girls basketball team.

Elks Committee Chairman Mike Cash headed the project to serve the Orange Unified School District Title I school families. The Orange Elks Lodge received a Beacon and Spotlight Grant



Bob Doberneck reads to the kids.



Matthew Gates hands out backpacks and school supplies.

from the Elks National Foundation to help cover most of the cost of the event.

It takes teamwork

The Elks' community partners dove in to help. The Kiwanis of Orange served, and ran out of, hotdogs; Home Depot supplied building kits; the Orange Blossoms, an Auxiliary of the Assistance League of Orange, and the

Elks handed out combined school supplies; Orange GRIP (Gang Reduction Intervention Partnership) handed out drug awareness materials; and Chapman University donated bookmark craft supplies.

Elks mascot Elroy T. Elk was present for pictures with the children. The Orange High School Agriculture Program barnyard animals were a big hit, as was

an Orange City Fire Department truck.

The Orange County Bird of Prey Center brought feathered friends and the Independent Therapy Dogs were enjoyed by all. Face painting and balloon art were popular attractions.

And to conclude the event, the Orange Library staff processed library cards so the children could continue reading.

Chapman inaugurates new president



Matthew Parlow

In a ceremony combining pomp and circumstance, meaningful speeches and symbols, Matthew "Matt" Parlow was inaugurated as the 14th president of Chapman University at Musco Center for the Arts, Oct. 10.

Parlow was appointed after a national search, ahead of the planned retirement of Daniele Struppa. A Southern California native, Parlow had been at Chapman for 12 years, serving as executive vice president, chief advancement officer and the Parker S. Kennedy Chair in Law.

Previously, Parlow served as a professor and associate dean for academic affairs at Marquette University Law School; practiced law at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips; and worked in the White House Office of Legal Council and for the Office of Mayor Richard Riordan.

Parlow's inaugural speech reaffirmed the importance of higher education and his commitment to free speech, academic excellence and the need for civil discourse.

TAWC honors Foothill High senior



Brianna Mun

The Tustin Area Woman's Club honors an outstanding senior from each Tustin Unified School District high school each month.

For October, Foothill High School is represented by Brianna Mun, founder of the FHS Smile Train Club and a Smile Train Student Ambassador. She advocates for the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act, fighting to secure insurance coverage for children with cleft lip and palate.

Mun also participated in the American Legion Auxiliary California Girls State, where she was elected Majority Floor Leader of the Senate. She authored the Hormonal Risk Disclosure and Public Awareness Act, which is now under consideration by the California State Senate. She is also fencer who earned the bronze medal at the 2024 Junior Olympics, and the 2023 California State Junior Women's epee title. She plans to take pre-med courses in college.

Also recognized were Nina Huang of Beckman and If-fah Sheikh from Legacy High School. Tustin High did not submit a candidate for October.

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OBITUARIES

Edward Rene Fredette
1941-2025



Edward Rene Fredette, born in Springfield, Massachusetts Sept. 11, 1941 sadly passed away on Friday, Oct. 17 at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Orange. He was surrounded by his loving family and friends as he peacefully passed. He was the son of the late Jean-

nette Fredette and Arthur Fredette of Springfield, Massachusetts. Ed and his wife Lore resided in Modjeska Canyon together for 37 years. Edward owned a transmission shop with his eldest son Edward Fredette Jr. Ed enjoyed and loved his life in Modjeska Canyon in a close-knit community with good friends and good family close by. Edward enjoyed nature, kids, animals, music, camping, hiking, biking, kayaking and walking his dog Bubba around the canyon to meet friends at Modjeska Park. Edward joined the local Southern California Golden Retriever Rescue society where he adopted his dog Bubba and fostered another golden until that dog found it’s forever home. Edward is survived by his wife Lore Fredette; his children Edward Fredette, Jr. and wife Kellie Fredette, Christa Smith and son-in-law Richard Dong, Christian Fredette and Joslyn Markuson; his sister Jeanne Brittingham and husband Mike Brittingham; his sister-in-laws Mar-

lene Williams and husband John Williams, Jeanette Walters and Patricia Fredette; his grandchildren Tom Donovan and his wife Bethany Donovan, Tiffany Nolan and husband Danny Nolan, Grace Fredette, Lisa Fredette, Reese Campbell, John Fredette and Ryder Smith, his great-grandchildren Luke Donovan, Charlotte Donovan, Benjamin Donovan, Danny Nolan and Sandra Nolan; his niece Shari Pastore and husband Michael Pastore; and great niece Alexis Pastore; his nephew Brady Walters and wife Katie Walters; and greats Lyla, Roma, Graham and Grey, Travis Walters and wife Chelsea Walters; and greats Bryn and Colby; his nieces Tracy Hill and husband Steve Hill, and Lisa Rohrer and Brooke Rohrer; and all of the Farber family and Williams family and friends. Edward was predeceased by his brothers Arthur Fredette and Tom Fredette and his sister Rose Kieffer. To honor and pay tribute to Ed the Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, Nov. 8 at noon at Holy Sepulcher Cemetery at 7845 Santiago Cyn. Rd. and the Celebration of Life will be held right after at Joslyn Markuson and Reese Campbell’s home at 28721 Modjeska Cyn. Rd.

Orange mountain bike team seeks riders and coaches



Martin Thom tackles the course during a competition.



Vielle Capada, from El Modena, races uphill.

Mountain bike racers from sixth to 12th grade are invited to join the Orange Mountain Bike Team, which operates out of El Modena High School but is open to all middle and high school students. The season officially begins Dec. 1, with endurance and strength training taking place several times per week. Racing begins in February 2026. Races are held through May at trail venues in Southern California. Race days for middle school athletes are on Saturdays; high schoolers compete on Sundays. The team is open to students attending El Modena High, but riders from other high schools – both inside and outside of Orange Uni-

fied School District, are welcome to compete as independents. Sixth to eighth graders from local schools, not limited to OUSD, may also participate. The team emphasizes that there are no try-outs; anyone able to ride a mountain bike is eligible. Riders may submit their names, school, grade level and contact information to elmombt@gmail.com. To learn more about the teams or find out about upcoming events/activities, visit @elmo_mtb on Instagram or El Modena High School Mountain Bike Team on Facebook. Head Coach Danny Ambrose is also seeking adults over 18 to serve as assistant coaches. Those interested may email elmombt@gmail.com.

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Villa Park Women's League to host artist



Mick Victor

Celebrating its 56th year, Villa Park Women's League (VPWL) will host its second General Meeting on Thursday, November 20, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 2400 N. Canal St. in Orange.

Following league business items, the evening will feature Mick Victor. Victor, a multi-disciplinary artist and designer, is the creative force behind the successful creative agency I MOBIUS. He will share about his recent solo exhibition, The Tea Papers Series, recently shown at Alder & Sage in Long Beach.

He will share how, with the aid of a light box, members may collaborate and create abstract art using everyday household items, such as tea bags and leaves.

Membership is open to Villa Park female residents; please learn more at VPWL.org.

Little Saigon turns 50



Vietnamese refugees in 1975

By Guy Ball

Vietnamese Heritage Museum Founder and President Chau Thuy will discuss “The Vietnamese Diaspora and Little Saigon,” at the next meeting of the Orange County Historical Society on Thursday, Nov. 13.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and the beginnings of the Vietnamese-American community in the part of Orange County we now know as Little Saigon.

After the fall of Saigon, USMC

Camp Pendleton served as America’s first Vietnamese refugee camp. Soon, church groups in the heart of Orange County began sponsoring many of those refugees. Many families settled permanently in Westminster, Garden Grove, Orange and surrounding cities, building a new community that attracted still more displaced people. Today, Orange County’s Little Saigon is a thriving commercial and cultural center and home to the largest Vietnamese community outside Vietnam.

A survivor of a harrowing boat escape from Vietnam to Thailand, Chau Thuy’s personal journey fuels his deep passion for cultural preservation and education. He is an artist, author and engineer dedicated to preserving the history and legacy of the Vietnamese diaspora. He has worked to safeguard and share the stories of

resilience, sacrifice and survival that define the Vietnamese refugee experience. His books about the Vietnamese “boat people” include “Vực Xoáy” and “Blood-stained Sea.” He is also an expert in Vietnamese calligraphy and his artwork has been exhibited at numerous universities and museums and at the state capitol in Sacramento.

His vision is to establish a permanent institution that preserves and amplifies the history of Vietnamese refugees worldwide, ensuring their struggles and triumphs remain a vital part of the global narrative. To learn more about the Vietnamese Heritage Museum, visit vietnamesemuseum.org.

The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 2400 N. Canal St. Attendance is free for OCHS members, or a \$5 donation

for non-members.

For more information about the Orange County Historical Society, local history, and future meetings, visit OrangeCountyHistory.org.

OPA to host Town Hall meeting

The Orange Park Association will hold a Town Hall meeting Wednesday, Nov. 19 at the Salem Church Chapel.

Meeting topics will include an update on OPA issues and activities, and nominations for the Gary Bandy volunteer award will be solicited.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. The chapel is located at 6500 E. Santiago Canyon Rd.



The Orange Elks worked with its community partners from Mission Viejo Saddleback Valley Elks, Santa Ana Elks, and community members to clean up the old fire station at Grand and Almond, to get it ready to become the California Fire Museum and Safety Learning Center.

COMMUNITY SPORTS

BY CLIFF ROBBINS, CHAD CLINE AND DIANE TORRANCE



Emma Welker (2), defensive back for Canyon High School, runs down the Crean runnerback.



Halle Calderon, El Modena quarterback, looks downfield as Destiny Forgash from Villa Park, in black, applies the pressure.



Ella Feldhaus from Canyon High climbs the ladder to break up the pass against Crean Lutheran.



El Modena's Kylie Tafua hauls in a Calderon pass and sprints up the sidelines.



Avery Rickrode from Villa Park, left, pulls the flag on Bella Sorenson (with ball) from El Modena.



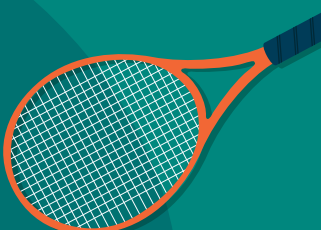
Canyon's Caroline Hicks goes up for the reception. Canyon won the game against Crean, 19-12.



Villa Park quarterback Kayla Dadabhoy (28) gets the pass off, as Faith Montes De Oca from El Modena goes for the flag.



Ethan Sorenson, left, from El Modena High School follows the block of Aiden Macias (64) and Henry McAleer in the homecoming game against Western, winning 28-21.



COMMUNITY SPORTS

BY CLIFF ROBBINS, CHAD CLINE AND DIANE TORRANCE



No escaping the defensive duo of Sienna Hernandez, middle, and Sydney Schmidt, right, from Foothill High School.



Oakley Montague, right, from Foothill breaks up the downfield pass in the game against La Habra.



Amy Lewis from Santiago Canyon College sets up for a spike against Saddleback College.



SCC's Riley Bingel, a former El Modena athlete, scores over the block attempt in the Saddleback College game.



Ashlyn Smith from Santiago Canyon College sends the ball over the net against Saddleback College.



Villa Park's Trevor Gordon had the Yorba Linda receiver covered and broke up the pass.



Cooper Nagele (6) from Villa Park stopped the run in the backfield.



Luvie Clark (0) and Sean Byrnes (3) from Villa Park break up the downfield pass.

COMMUNITY SPORTS

BY CLIFF ROBBINS, CHAD CLINE AND DIANE TORRANCE



Chris De Jesus from Orange High School, the top scorer, puts the ball in the net in the game against Estancia.



John Fernandez keeps the pressure on the Estancia player forcing the turning over.



Aiden Rodriguez from Orange High School advances the ball after the steal.

USA women's water polo celebrates 25th anniversary

The silver anniversary of the inclusion of women's water polo in the Olympic Games will be marked by the creation of a new women's water polo event: the Legacy Crown, set for Nov. 15-16 in Costa Mesa. The two-day championship will celebrate women's water polo and those in the community who have helped foster growth, excellence and opportunity. It will feature the nation's top collegiate teams, elite domestic clubs and USA Water Polo National Team Academy squads. The event is free, and will be held at Orange Coast College and Costa Mesa High School.

Stanford University will headline the collegiate field as the reigning NCAA champion, and will be joined by perennial NCAA tournament qualifiers: UCLA, USC, California, Hawaii, Arizona State, UC Irvine, Long Beach State, Loyola Marymount, Fresno State and UC San Diego. Rounding out the competition will be the next generation of USA Water Polo stars from two USA Academy squads.

The winning team will receive the inaugural Legacy Crown championship trophy. Individual awards to honor top performers will include: MVP, Best Goalkeeper, Leading Scorer, Best Defensive Player and Rising Star.

El Modena and Canyon celebrate homecoming 2025



The Canyon High School Princesses surround Queen Lylian Naime; from left, they are Eguo Ighedo, Hazel Barajas, Queen Lylian Naime, Adriana Eickhoff and Layne Lipscomb. The Homecoming King was Troy Branham.



Lylian Naime from Canyon High School was crowned 2025 Homecoming Queen during halftime of the football game against Irvine.



Kylie Tafua was crowned 2025 El Modena High School Homecoming Queen during halftime of the Western football game.



El Modena High Homecoming Princesses, left to right, are Maddie Gallegos, Lauren Radzki, Queen Kylie Tafua, Morgan Bowman and Jocelyn Alatorre.