

FOOTHILLS SENTRY

The Best News In Town Since 1969

East Orange • Old Towne Orange • Orange Park Acres • Villa Park • Silverado/Modjeska Canyons • North Tustin

A Monthly Community Newspaper

JUNE 2026

Grading halted on Sully-Miller site when contaminated stockpiles breached

All grading and hauling operations permits relating to a housing tract slated to be built between Mabury Ranch and Santiago Creek were suspended by the City of Orange Public Works Department, per a letter dated April 29.

The city letter followed an April 28 Cease and Desist Order from the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) which is authorized to enforce solid waste laws and regulations.

In that Cease and Desist communication, the LEA noted that during a routine monthly site inspection, there were significant changes that violated the agreed terms and conditions in the Stipulated Notice and Order (SNO) and the work plan previously approved by LEA on Feb. 26.

The site inspection changes included disturbance of the stockpiles and widening of the access route through the site. A land bridge was also seen, connecting the site to Mabury Ranch.

The original SNO be-

See "Stockpiles" continued on page 2



Orange Union High School Class of 1951 held its 75th reunion at Polly's Pies on May 2. Alumni included, back, from left, Keith Radford, Pat Power Higgins, Lois Macoskey Gilbert; and front from left, Darlene Stolhand Glenn, Elaine Davis Humphrey and Kay Goodwin Munshower. They graduated June 12, 1951 from the campus that is now part of Chapman University.

OC Supervisors approve housing project, undeterred by threat to public safety

The Orange County Supervisors denied an appeal filed by two canyon conservation groups challenging a 181-home development slated to be built in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone on El Toro/Santiago Canyon Road, just south of Trabuco Canyon.

The appeal, filed by the Saddleback Canyons Conservancy and the Rural Canyons Conservation Fund, was denied at the May 5 Board of Supervisors meeting. The decision was disappointing to canyon residents who will be impacted by the new tract,

but not unexpected.

The reasons neighbors in nearby Trabuco Canyon and Hidden Ridge oppose the Saddleback Meadows project have not changed since it was revealed to the public, "as a done deal," in 2023.

Of primary concern is that the development will sit in what the State Fire Authority terms a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The evacuation route from Hidden Ridge consists of one exit out of the tract onto the two-lane El Toro Road. Similarly, many Trabuco Canyon evacuees would also

exit on that thoroughfare. Additional housing will, residents say, add to the congestion and impede their ability to flee approaching wild-fire safely.

Uncommon sense

Opponents also note that the project is inconsistent with county zoning and the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan. That is, lot sizes should average 20,000 sq. ft. to reflect the area's rural character. Saddleback Meadows will consist of lots averaging 2,062 sq.

See "Housing project" continued on page 2

Orange Council OKs one proposed ballot measure; defers another

By Tina Richards

With the City of Orange facing an anticipated \$15 million deficit, the council voted, May 26, to place a measure asking voters to increase the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) on the November ballot.

A TOT, commonly referred to as a "hotel tax" or "bed tax," is imposed on short-term lodging facilities. The fee is paid by the guest, not the es-

tablishment. The city's current TOT is 10% and generates \$6.3 million annually. The average rate in neighboring cities is 8 to 15%. The council is seeking an increase to 14% for facilities with 11 or more rooms. Those with 10 or less would remain at 10%.

An increase to 14% would bring in an additional \$2.4 million an-

See "Ballot measure" continued on page 3



Photo by Tony Richards

Orange Park Acres' historical figures hoof it down Chapman Avenue during the May Parade, May 2.

NEWS INSIDE

THE I'S HAVE IT

Canyon denizens counter work on infrastructure and controversial development with books, music, natural wonder and friendly fundraisers.

See Canyon Beat, page 4

STREET SMARTS WITH HEART

Traffic on Chapman Avenue was transformed into a thoroughfare of dancers, prancers, floats and frolic for the May Day parade.

See story, page 5

100 YEARS IN THE MAKING

Orange Centenarian celebrates a big birthday between time at the gym, the dogpark and neighborhood walks.

See Centenarian, page 7

MAKING A MILESTONE MEMORABLE

Communities celebrate the nation's 250th anniversary with local flavor, flair and care.

See stories, page 9

A FINE FINISH FOR ALL

A new addition to the city's annual Health Fair, the Villa Park 5K drew runners and walkers of all ages.

See Timing, page 14

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Canyon Beat Page 4
Real Estate Page 10
Service Directory Pages 10-12

"Housing project" continued from page 1

ft. In addition, the project relies on an environmental analysis completed in 2002. Since then, the state has experienced catastrophic wildfires at the wildland/urban interface. There is also new information regarding the status of wildlife, specifically endangered mountain lions, and the importance of protecting habitat for birds, fish animals and native plants. A 2022 addendum to the 2002 EIR did not address any of those subjects, finding instead that the project did not create new significant impacts.

A less-discussed project shortcoming is the lack of water to support it. The Trabuco Canyon Water District has issued a conditional "will serve" notice, advising that the developer must install a one-million-gallon water tank to accommodate the new community. That installation will require an additional environmental study. So far, no location for the tank has been identified.

Despite dozens of public comments opposing the project made at the May 5 meeting, the January 28 Planning Commission hearing, and a June Board of Supervisors meeting, the county's position has been, "Those issues have been addressed and it's too late to bring them up."

Indeed, development plans for that property have been on the books for decades, with official county "approval" for housing dating back to 1980. Over the years, the number of proposed units has been reduced, the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) revised, and the evolving project challenged by two lawsuits, in 1998 and 2002. Both suits were settled in 2004, and revised plans for 266 units were administratively approved. The public was not given notice of anything new about the project until October 2023.

A done deal

Those earlier approvals, according to the Supervisors and its legal counsel, essentially tie their hands regarding the 181-unit Saddleback Meadows, rendering the county unable to reject the project. All that is left is approvals of the



The proposed Saddleback Meadows project sits in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

tract map, setbacks and building heights – none of which, the county notes, were addressed in the appeal.

"You can blame Todd Spitzer," Third District Supervisor Don Wagner told the audience. "The last time the board had discretion was during his first term." He further suggested that the public could have voiced their concerns when Spitzer was evaluating the project.

Wagner, whose district encompasses Saddleback Meadows, acknowledged that, "Fire is a legitimate concern." He assured residents that the fire/evacuation issues had been addressed by the OC Fire Authority, and that due to advances in construction and codes, "newly built communities don't burn." He also noted that there are already about 3,000 homes in the area, and the addition of 181 is not catastrophic.

Several people making public comments reported that they had been evacuated several times from Hidden Ridge and Portola Hills, and they were adversely impacted by traffic congestion. "The road infrastructure is outdated, a minor obstruction will trap people," Gail Moana said. "Please keep the canyons safe."

No reflection on reality

"This project threatens public safety," Gloria Sef-ton, Saddleback Canyon Conservancy founder, advised the board. "The EIR is 25 years old. No documents address the evacuation risk. There is no water supply for this project. Mountain lions are now a threatened species. There are mandatory findings needed, but no studies have been done."

Wagner reiterated that the original EIR had been amended, and that legal counsel was satisfied. Regarding Santiago Canyon Road's effec-

tiveness as an evacuation route, he said that it was canyon residents who do not want it improved. "You tell us no widening, no stoplights, no stop signs. What do you want us to do to reduce the threat?"

Second District Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento also had questions about fire safety and asked someone from OCFA to weigh in. A representative assured him that the agency had revisited the site at Wagner's request "just yesterday" and found that the evacuation routes were code compliant.

"So there will be no harm to residents who live in the periphery of the site?" Sarmiento asked.

"I can't speak to harm, but it meets California fire code," the OCFA spokesperson replied.

The vote to deny the appeal was four in favor; Sarmiento abstained.

"Stockpiles" continued from page 1

tween Milan and the LEA, dated June 16, 2022, required Milan to conduct soil testing of the Rio Santiago Disposal Site (also referred to as Sully-Miller). That SNO was amended two times.

In February 2025, however, Milan executed a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement with the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (SARWQCB) for oversight of data collection, and for evaluation of the stockpiles, many of which contained contaminants.

Later that year (December 2025) Verdantas Inc., on behalf of Milan, submitted a proposal to the LEA and SARWQCB requesting a relocation of 12,765 cubic yards of Stockpile H to accommodate a truck hauling route for clean imported fill dirt to the Mabury site. Then, in

February, Milan informed LEA that an alteration to Stockpile H was no longer necessary, as an existing haul route would be used without disturbing the onsite stockpiles.

Three days later, the LEA issued an approval letter, citing additional conditions, one of which was not moving any stockpiles or storing any additional fill on the site.

The activities observed during LEA's routine monthly inspection violated the agreed terms and conditions in the SNO, as well as the Feb. 26 work plan previously approved by the LEA.

While acknowledging that Milan has "shown a willingness to cooperate," next steps will include submission by Milan of an "as-built" plan documenting all actions taken on the site to disturb, move or utilize the stockpiles. The LEA will determine the specific steps needed to bring the site into compliance.



Photo courtesy LEA

Some material from Stockpiles G and H was moved to widen the haul road, violating the terms of the LEA agreement.

SMART METER INSTALLATION UNDERWAY NOW

EOCWD has begun upgrading customer water meters to new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) devices, sometimes known as "Smart Meters". This allows real-time data regarding your water usage to be communicated automatically with EOCWD.

LEAK DETECTION

The new smart meters have integrated leak detection that can notify the customer and EOCWD when a meter is registering continuous flow, in an effort to prevent high bills.



This project is partially financed by the grant funding administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through EPA's Community Grant Program.



Every Drop Counts

Learn more at eocwd.com

"Ballet measure" continued from page 1

nually. An informal poll of Orange residents found that 70% supported a TOT tax increase. The council approved the measure in a 5-2 vote, with Denis Bilodeau and Jon Dumitru opposed. To pass in November, the measure must be approved by over 50% of voters.

Punt on sales tax

The council also discussed adding a ballot measure for a one percent sales tax increase. The increase would bring in an additional \$37 million per year. While council members agreed that one percent is the right number, they could not reach consensus on how long the tax would continue. Separate votes for 10 years, 12 years and "until voters end it" failed. The decision was tabled until the next meeting. The deadline to submit ballot measures to the Registrar of Voters is July 16.

The tax measures were just two of the revenue generating options presented to the council

at its May 12 meeting. The other options were a utility revenue tax, a vacant property tax, a parking lot operator tax, a document transfer tax, an increase in business license fees, allowing sales-tax-producing cannabis dispensaries within the city or selling the city-owned water utility.

Of those, a utility user tax, selling city water to a private operator, a tax on private paid parking lots, and a vacant property tax were dismissed out of hand. Orange does not currently impose a utility user tax, but some OC cities collect up to 4%. Considering that the city is likely to ask voters for a sales tax in November, an additional tax on utility usage is ill conceived at this time.

No easy fix

Selling a utility would first require voter approval, would likely need regulatory approval and would take a long time. City Manager Jarad Hildenbrand noted that the City of Bellflower approved the sale of a city-

owned utility in 2016; the PUC approved it in 2022. Council members objected to the levy on private parking lots, noting that the largest parking lot operators in Orange are hospitals and an added fee would essentially tax health care.

The vacant property tax could, as a side effect, reduce blight and boost economic development, but is estimated to generate only \$1 million per year. It was also deemed too difficult to determine what was a vacant property (empty apartments?), hard to track and would require voter approval. In addition, blighted, overgrown lots already fall under the auspices of code enforcement.

The proposed document transfer fee was questioned by Mayor Dan Slater, who noted that he's been selling real selling estate for 40 years, and never seen this as a line item. The county collects \$1.10 per \$1,000 of the property sale and half of that goes to the city. No city in Orange County has ad-

opted a higher transfer tax. Regarding the business license increase, the council asked staff to look at various ways to assess it for later consideration.

The high road

Staff was also asked to further explore allowing cannabis dispensaries to set up shop – with restrictions – in Orange. "We'd want very strict controls," Arianna Barrios insisted. "We could do the prework as a council."

"Other cities are doing it all wrong," Slater suggested. "They have an unlimited number of dispensaries. I'm envisioning three or four quality, well-run, clean dispensaries. That could generate a lot of sales tax."

Denis Bilodeau pointed out that cannabis is already sold in Orange via mobile delivery. There is likely no way to tax that? The council voted 5-2 to revisit the cannabis option in a month. Denis Bilodeau and John Gyllenhammer voted "no."

American Legion Post 132 hosts service members for Fleet Week



Photos by Doug Redding

Service members enjoyed breakfast at American Legion Post 132 during Fleet Week.



Post 132 members greet American sailors and Marines.

By James Gomez

American Legion Post 132 welcomed approximately 100 active-duty service members, May 21, serving a full breakfast before the group headed to Disneyland as part of the park's commemoration of America's 250th birthday.

The event was organized in partnership with the L.A. Fleet Week Foundation, which coordinates community engagements for the annual Fleet Week, held May 19-25 this year. The morning gathering brought together sailors, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel serving across Southern California, representing a cross-section of the men and women currently serving the nation.

Attendees included junior and senior enlisted sailors from the USS Essex (LHD-2), a Wasp-

class amphibious assault ship homeported at Naval Base San Diego, and personnel from Naval Base Ventura County. Marines were represented primarily from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, while Coast Guard members came largely from U.S. Coast Guard Base Los Angeles/Long Beach. The service members hailed from home states across the country.

Post 132 volunteers prepared and served a hearty breakfast of eggs, potatoes, sausage, pancakes, orange juice and coffee. The mood was warm and festive throughout the morning. In an unscripted highlight, several members of the American Legion Auxiliary joined some of the service members for an impromptu line dancing session – a moment that drew cheers and laughter from the room.

ORANGE PARK ACRES

NO

FIREWORKS ZONE

59th Annual 4th of July Parade

Orange Park Acres Celebrates America's 250th Birthday!

Saturday, July 4, 2026

9:30 Staging ~ 10:00 Parade

June 1 Online registration:
orangeparkacres.org

OPA Hotline: 714.900.2OPA(672)
OPA 5k Shotgun 7:30AM Go to: **OPA5k.com**



CANYON BEAT by Andrew Tonkovich

Inflorescence, incumbents, invitation

By Andrew Tonkovich

hood named "Loose Gravel and Sand."

USA USA USA!

No, the folks at Edison are not chanting jingoistically for war, invasion or the U.S. ski team. "USA" stands, of course, for Underground Service Alert, lately spray painted in water-based biodegradable white paint on area utility poles and the asphalt pavement under them. It has been busy in the canyons lately, with line maintenance, pole replacement and infrastructure-hardening work. It is almost like they are anticipating something! Residents received both an apology for a recent extended day-long planned outage, which lasted only a short two hours past its scheduled period, and an invitation to complete a customer satisfaction survey.

Not rumble fish

"Rumble Strips" seems to be the easy default nickname for the small community on the Modjeska Grade, where road signs from a failed traffic control experiment remain two years later, but welcome visitors and residents. Perhaps somebody will write a screenplay for an American teen drama noir film about organized racer gangs who pull up speed control strips or locals who did not like the noise or bump. Easier than imagining a neighbor-

The Rats

The ICL Friends of the Library expects a big crowd for its Sunday, June 7 Third-Annual Spring Fling (5-7 p.m.), but is happy to add to the headcount. Expert dessert makers can show up last-minute at the Modjeska home and garden of Sarah and Geoff Sarkissian with their contributions to the auction, held after live entertainment by local acoustic classic jazz combo The Rats (featuring canyon-raised musician Grant Wilson) and a chili dinner (cornbread, salad, beer and wine). Admission is \$25 per person, with proceeds supporting special summer activities and year-round enrichment programs at the county's smallest, if mightiest, branch. RSVP (949) 235-8193.

Bibliophilia

Wednesday, June 3, at 5 p.m., the Book Group of the Canyons discusses "The Last Murder at the End of the World" by Stuart Turton, a mystery novel set in a post-apocalyptic world. Copies are available at the service desk. Or, you could catch up with last month's selection if you missed it, no kidding, "The Librarianist" by Patrick deWitt, a comic portrait of an introverted librarian, the wonderfully

named, if definitely not meteoric, Bob Comet.

Save the date for one of the library's most popular events. Monday, June 30 at 11 a.m. is the loud, dramatic, annual trash truck visit, with an OC Waste Management truck and crew in action and a trash craft activity.

Old but chipper

Steve Kerrigan and Mary Schreiber remind us, reliably, gently, but firmly, that defensible space is urgently important, and removing vegetation from within five feet of your home reduces the chance of embers starting a fire when the inevitable winds blow. Fire Safe Council hosts a Chipper Day on Saturday, June 6, at the Silverado Riviera, 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., with a crew on-site to chip and help unload. Green waste only, no trash, which means those shrubs and limbs you cut back the day before to protect your digs. OC Conservation Corps does the work, ICL pays the crew and opines Kerrigan, "It is a great return of capital used to help out job skills for these hard-working folks."

And your participation in Chipper Days contributes to maintaining our status as a Firewise USA community, resulting in an insurance premium discount. You might get ahead of the pending Zero Zone law and remove trees, shrubs and vines now. Old tires also accepted.

They did it

I adore Scott Breeden's deadpan missives from the Inter-Canyon League, where he serves as secretary and also on the History Committee:

"The Board of Supervisors approved going ahead with the 181-unit Saddleback Meadows housing development south of Cook's Corner despite the Inter-Canyon League writing a letter asking that they not do that.

"ICL's view is that such a development would be inappropriate for a rural area that is supposed to be a buffer between urban Orange County and the Cleveland National Forest."

Here's the ICL letter's opener: "Dear Supervisor Wagner: The Inter-Canyon League, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the unique, rural way of life in Orange County's canyons, asks that you and your fellow supervisors deny approval of the Saddleback Meadows use permit in its current form."

The Saddleback Canyons Conservancy, which has prevented the controversial development for decades, cites the Foothill/Traubuco Specific Plan and increased traffic as well as compromise of the urban-rural wildfire corridor ("Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone") and invites your engagement with its efforts to continue the fight against developer California Quarter, even as 3rd District Supervisor Don Wagner dismissed wildfire concerns and argued the need for (luxury) housing.

Classic Sabbath. Timeless evil.

That's the line-up for the Saturday, June 20 6 p.m. Silverado Summer Concert this month. Young musicians from the local RSM School of Rock open with classic

rock, followed by Black Sabbath/Ozzy Osbourne tribute band Planet Caravan. BYOB. (Bring your own bat.)

By any other name

You might know them as Our Lord's Candle and Coulter's Matilija poppy, respectively, but both *Hesperoyucca whipplei* and *Romneya coulteri* have had a great long season, late spring and early summer playing peek-a-boo with fog, rain and then heat. Both the iconic yucca and gorgeous white and yellow poppy feature an inflorescence, which is either a cluster of flowers arranged on a plant's stem, or the name of a band scheduled for a future summer concert.

The lede, buried

Most voters will have already returned their vote-by-mail ballots at press time, or so we hope. A four-day in-person Vote Center runs Saturday through Tuesday, June 2, primary election day at the Community Center. It is incumbent Sanchez versus Silverado local JJ Galvez for Assembly and, of course, an eight-person race for the newly redrawn 40th CD, with redistricted incumbent Republicans Calvert and Kim vying for Trump voters. Three serious Democratic challengers (Ramirez, Kerr and, yes, Kim-Varet) hope to run in November against one of them. Your signed, dated VBM ballot can be cast at a drop box, Vote Center, or put in the mail, post-marked before, or on, Election Day. If mailing on Election Day, ask the friendly staff at Silverado Post Office for a hand-stamped postmark before 4 p.m. closing. USA!

SAVE THE DATE
ORANGE PARK ACRES
55TH. ANNUAL FALL BBQ
DINNER AND DANCING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2026



Orange Grove Lodge 293 continued California Freemason's support of public schools by hosting its 25th Annual Public School Recognition Night, April 2. The lodge honored students and educators from the Orange Unified School District, celebrating OUSD's five high schools: Canyon; El Modena, Orange, Villa Park and Richland Continuation High School.

May parade Celebrates Orange and America's 250th birthday

This year's Orange May Parade, themed: "Orange You Glad It's America's Birthday! Celebrating 250 Years!" took to the streets May 2. Some 100 participants, including bands, equestrians, vintage cars, floats and nonprofits proceeded down Chap-

man Avenue, past City Hall around the Plaza to Almond Street. The event was part of the "Celebrate Orange" weekend that also featured Taste of Orange 2026 on Saturday night, and the Orange Plaza Rotary Car Show on Sunday.



The Liberty Bell Grand Prize, selected as the Overall Winner of the 2026 Orange May Parade was Lionheart Pride.



Photos by Tony Richards

Duke of Orange Cameron Pate and Mayor Dan Slater.



Orange High School pep squad



Cub Scouts salute America's 250th birthday.



The GOCAT entry was chosen as the Best Float, The Rolling Revolution Award.



Folklorico dancers practice prior to the parade.



The Mustang Car Club hosted Martha Washington

Orange Elks support service dogs



From left, Chair Kati Bye, Therapy Dog Astrid, Orange Firemen M. Gonzalez, J. Alonzo, raffle winner Heidi Falcon, Fireman C. Perez and Elk Janine Strom.

The Orange Elks Lodge held a Kentucky Derby Party in support of Orange City Fire Peer Support Dog Program. The afternoon included lunch, a hat contest and raffle baskets.

Kati Bye, committee chairman, introduced

Astrid, the newest support dog. She joins Ember as a support/therapy dog that aids the firefighters who routinely go out on traumatic calls.

Heidi Falcon, an Elks member, won one of the raffle baskets, Firefighter for the Day.

Young Women of the Month announced



Indaiah Lowe

The Tustin Area Woman's Club named Indaiah Low from Tustin High School and Ellie Chung from Legacy Magnet Academy as its Young Women of the Month for May.

Indaiah Lowe has been involved in the Tustin High School Marching Band, serving as battery captain this year, mentoring younger students, organizing rehearsals and building a strong and supportive team environment. She is the president of the Rotary Interact Club for THS and the president of the Black Student Union. She has earned numerous honors in her Advanced Placement and Dual En-



Ellie Chung

rollment studies. In the fall, she plans to attend Xavier University in Louisiana as a psychological science major.

Ellie Chung developed her leadership skills through her work on the Legacy Robotics Team for three years. In addition, she is the founder of her own all-girls private robotics team to encourage inclusivity and gender diversity within STEM programs. Chung values creativity, and plans to explore arts that encourage innovative thinking and problem solving. She plans to double major in applied mathematics and applied physics at the University of California, Irvine.

Tustin Area Woman's Club names scholarship winners

The Tustin Area Woman's Club (TAWC) has announced its college scholarship winners for 2026.

For over 60 years, TAWC has given college scholarships to deserving graduating seniors in the Tustin Unified School District. This year, scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 were awarded

to Foothill High's Briana Mun and Daniella Warren; Emma Cecena and Sofia Suarez from Tustin High School; and Estefai Garcia and Emily Heather Juarez from Hillview High; Kaila Gleason, Melanie Reyes and Safiya Nawas from Beckman High; and Amreen Islam and Katally Lin from Legacy Magnet Academy.

Orange May Parade announces winners

The Orange Chamber of Commerce has announced the winners of the participants in the May Parade, "Orange You Glad It's America's Birthday! Celebrating 250 Years!"

The Liberty Bell Grand Prize | Overall Winner

- First Place – Lionheart Pride
- Second Place – Orange Unified School District Combined Band
- Third Place – GOCAT

The Stars & Stripes Spirit Award | Best Use of Theme

- First Place – Freemasons of Orange Grove Lodge #293
- Second Place – Orange Park Acres
- Third Place – OC Colony of Mayflower Descendants

Sound of Freedom Award | Best Band

- First Place – Orange Unified School District Combined Band
- Second Place – North Park Academy of the Arts Middle School
- Third Place – Desert Mirage HS Band and Pageantry

The Rolling Revolution Award | Best Float or Vehicle

- First Place – GOCAT
- Second Place – Orange Elks
- Third Place – OHS Future Farmers of America

The Spirit of '76 Performance Award | Best Cheer/Dance Squad

- First Place – OHS Spirit Squad
- Second Place – La Purisima Catholic School
- Third Place – OC Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento's Ballet Folklorico Dancers

The Young Republic Award | Best Youth Entry

- First Place – Orange Little League
- Second Place – Release Time Christian Education
- Third Place – Youth Centers of Orange

The E Pluribus Unum Award | Best Community Group

- First Place – Orange Homegrown
- Second Place – Assistance League of Orange
- Third Place – Orange American Legion Post 1328

Jubilee Choice Award | OCC Foundation Board of Directors' Choice

- First Place – El Poder de la Cultura Morelense
- Second Place – Legacy Syncopated Thunder Drumline
- Third Place – OC Mustang Club

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CA DRE #00681197

Centenarian Verna Wagner celebrates on Cinco de Mayo

Verna Wagner celebrated her milestone 100th birthday on May 5, surrounded by friends and family, including her five children and five grandchildren. The centenarian attributes her longevity to chocolate, the gym and her many friends, especially her two- and four-legged dog park friends. She still loves to walk around her Orange neighborhood, and is out and about almost every day.



Verna and husband Bill in 1945 (left), Verna at 100.

Verna married her high school sweetheart Bill in 1945, upon his return to Pittsburgh after serving as a tail gunner in WWII. When an Army Air Corps friend called to say jobs were plentiful in California, the young couple jumped on a west-bound bus, with one

duffel between them. As their family grew to include five children, they moved from Santa Ana to a new home in Orange in 1954.

Bill worked for a new start-up, UPS, which had 10 trucks at the time. Verna was a stay at home mom until the children were mostly grown, then

began working at Sears. After retirement, she volunteered at Mary's Kitchen, while Bill drove for Meals on Wheels. After 68 years together, Bill passed in 2013. But Verna continues, marveling at the changes she has seen - from horse and carriage days to electric cars and cell phones.

Tustin Concerts in the Park returns

By Guy Ball

Music returns to Peppertree Park in Tustin this summer, with eight more bands playing on the open sound stage while residents enjoy evening picnics on the lawn with friends and

family. The concerts are on Wednesday nights during June and July, from 6 to 8 p.m.

There will be a variety of food trucks and other vendors. Admission is free. Peppertree Park is at 230 W. First St.

This year the bands include:

- June 10 - **That's What I Like**, Bruno Mars Tribute
- June 17 - **90s Rock Show**, 90s Rock, Alternative
- June 24 - **DSB**, Journey Tribute, Classic Rock
- July 1 - **Smith Country Band**, Country, Rock & Roll
- July 8 - **Kings of Queens**, Classic Rock
- July 15 - **U2xPERIENCE**, U2 Tribute, Rock
- July 22 - **The Trip**, Classic Rock
- July 29 - **Jumpin Jack Flash**, Rolling Stones Tribute

For more information, visit Tustinca.org/concerts or call (714) 573-3326.

Kiwanis Club hosts park concerts

The City of Orange Concerts in the Park series are held at the Hart Park Bandshell on Wednesdays from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The events are free and open to the public.

Bring blankets, low lawn chairs and picnic baskets but leave any alcohol and pets at home as they are not permitted. There will be food available for purchase.

This summer the bands include:

- June 24 - **Sam Morrison Band**
- July 8 - **90s Rock Show**
- July 15 - **Stone Soul**
- July 22 - **Brad Johnson & The Killin' Time Band**
- July 29 - **Retro Revolution**
- August 5 - **The Fenians**

For more information, visit www.kiwanisfororange.org.

Taste of Orange serves up food, fun and philanthropy



Orange Blossoms Auxiliary members took time to gather for a group photo at Taste of Orange. The members are young professionals, stay at home parents, college students and recent grads passionate about helping others. For information, see alorange.org.

Orange Blossoms Auxiliary, an Auxiliary of Assistance League of Or-

ange, moved its Taste of Orange event to the Plaza in Old Towne Orange, collaborating with Orange Chamber of Commerce and Orange Plaza Rotary for the inaugural Celebrate Orange Weekend.

The sold-out event, held May 2, is fully volunteer-run, with proceeds directly reinvested into the Orange community. Over \$30,000 was raised to support philanthropic programs.

More than 40 restaurants, breweries, wineries, coffee shops and

local business participated, helping make this the largest and most attended Taste of Orange to date. In addition to live music, family-friendly activities and expanded VIP experiences, nonprofit partner booths were featured for the first time.

Sponsors for the event included Tucker Family Farms, Chapman University, The Toll Roads, Albert A. Webb Associates, Old Towne Healthcare Solutions, OCLA Accident Lawyer, Modern Wealth Design and Fowler Sporting Goods.



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

Graphic Designer
Jef Maddock
graphics@foothillssentry.com

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

Office Manager
officemanager@foothillssentry.com

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Hunter Smith receives Eagle honor



Miss Orange Kalista Brown with Eagle Hunter Smith

Elks Lodge #1475 recognized Hunter Smith for achieving his Eagle Scout Award, the highest honor offered by the Boy Scouts of America. Hunter is the sixteenth Eagle Scout from the Lodge's Boy Scout Troop 1475 since 2006.

Hunter was around Scouts before he was old enough to be a Scout. His two older brothers were Cub Scouts, so Hunter spent his early years attending family Cub Pack meetings and camp outs.

He couldn't wait to join Scouts himself. Hunter entered as a Tiger, earned rank advancements and activity badges, including the Cub Scout outdoor

activity badge, and the Whistling Chip.

Hunter bridged over into Boy Scout Troop 1475. During his time in the troop, Hunter held various leadership positions and earned all his rank advancements, including an additional 13 merit badges beyond what was needed for Eagle and joined Order of the Arrow.

For his Eagle project, Hunter oversaw the planting of drought tolerant, low-profile plants and stepping stones leading to the door of the Orange County Fire Authority - Station 82 in Garden Grove, and the placement of a sunshade over the firehouse patio.

Orange Elks work in the community



Orange Elk Kim Smith with the bags of trash from the monthly Santiago Creek clean-up.

Once a month, the Santiago Creek Greenway Alliance cleans up Santiago Creek. In addition to picking up trash, they cut down invasive plants. Orange Elks Kim Smith and Marc Kenton, along with the Orange High School JROTC, helped collect a lot of trash!

The Elks Cleaver Crew, delivered a \$400 check to Mrs. Schmitt at Villa Park High School, who works with special needs and at-risk youth.

Assistance League awards \$75,000 in scholarships

Assistance League of Orange awarded scholarships in the amount of \$75,000 to 27 graduating high school seniors, May 1. Many of the recipients are first-generation college-bound students, chosen from a field of 70 applicants, based on community service, academic achievements, extracurricular involve-

ment, essays and financial need.

The recipients are Bryce Lloyd, Tiffany Jung and Anderson Parke from Canyon High School; Michael Tu, Ruben Maffey Lujan and Carter Pilon from El Modena High; Miranda Mendoza Malo Juvera from Orange Lutheran; Alexandria Claire Jose, Sandy Nguyen, Wil-

liam Tran, Anya Viera, Stephanie Medina, Patricia Nieves, Crystal Bernal, Jorge Garcia, Sarah Nguyen, Sabrina Legorreta, Angelique Pacheco, Adan Alvarado, Giselle Soto, Nancy Victoriano-Rufino, Araceli Figueroa Esquivias, Princess Emeleen Hasim from Orange High; Yamin El-Kahlout from Villa Park.

Brianna Mun receives P.E.O. STAR Scholarship



From left, Sheryl Franke, scholarship committee; Pat Robles-Friebert, chapter president; Brianna Mun, scholarship recipient; Marsha Reynold, scholarship committee

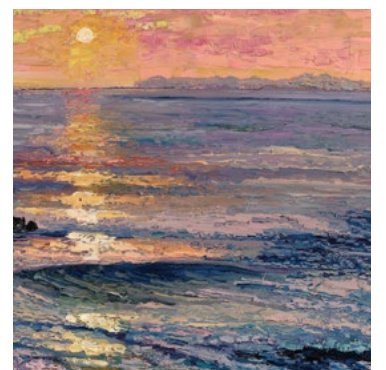
Brianna Mun, a senior at Foothill High School, was selected to receive a \$2,500 STAR Scholarship from the P.E.O. Sisterhood. She was recommended by P.E.O. Chapter IE of Orange.

Mun was the editor-in-chief of the school newspaper *Knightlife*, president of the Foothill chapter of the California Scholarship Federation and represented Foothill at California Girls State. She is a competitive, nationally ranked fencer. She is dedicated to community service, participating in the National Smile Train organization, and local Korean orga-

nizations benefiting immigrants. Mun will be attending Harvard University majoring in human development and regenerative biology.

The P.E.O. STAR Scholarship was established in 2009 to provide scholarships for exceptional high school senior women to attend an accredited postsecondary educational institution in the U.S. or Canada. The competitive STAR Scholarship is for women who exhibit excellence in leadership, academics, extracurricular activities, community service and potential for future success.

Orange Art to feature Majors



Mike Majors will be the featured artist at the Monday, June 8 meeting of the Orange Art Association. He will demonstrate oils with a palette knife. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m., with the demonstration at 7:30 p.m., at the Community of Christ Church, 395 S. Tustin For further information, contact Pat at (714) 539-8069.

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Tustin celebrates America

By Guy Ball

The City of Tustin is celebrating America's 250th anniversary of independence with a special Field of Honor, a tribute to community veterans and active-duty service members.

The dedication ceremony will take place on Thursday, June 25, at 4 p.m. at the Veterans Sports Park, 1645 Valencia Ave. The ceremony will include various community speakers and performances by the Beckman High School Marching Band.

The field will feature 250 American flags to honor our local heroes. Residents may dedicate a flag to honor family members or close friends. Each dedicated flag will have a card with details about the local hero, and that flag will

be returned to those who submitted dedications. The display will remain open during park hours, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., until July 5. Flag dedication submissions will remain available until noon, June 11. Visit tustinca.org/DedicateaFlag.

In addition, student winners of the Tustin Art and Essay Contest will be celebrated for their creative works. The contest theme is "What does America mean to you?" Students in grades 3-12 are invited to submit original visual art and/or short essay on the topic before 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 11. Prizes will be awarded by grade level category. For details, see tustinca.org.

Information is also available by calling (714) 573-3027 or emailing cityclerk@tustinca.org.

OPA annual parade will celebrate America's 250th birthday

Orange Park Acres invites the community to participate in, or simply watch, the 59th Annual 4th of July Parade. This year's theme is "Happy Birthday, America!"

Parade grand marshals are George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

The parade begins at 10 a.m. at Orange Park Blvd., adjacent to Salem Lutheran Church. Stag-

ing commences at 9:30 a.m. at that location. Parade entry registration opens June 1 online at orangeparkacres.org. Scheduling, a road closure map and additional information is also available on the website.

The parade is preceded by the OPA 5K run, which starts at 7:30 a.m. at the beginning of the parade route. For information visit OPA5k.com.

Orange hosts responsible for fireworks on their property

An ordinance that would make social hosts responsible for the use of illegal fireworks by anyone on their property under their control was passed by the Orange City Council, May 12.

The ordinance is intended to strengthen enforcement capabilities that have, to date, been focused on the individual violator rather than the environment wherein the illegal activity takes place. Police must actually witness the possession or discharge of illegal fireworks before initiating any criminal action, which is difficult in group settings or in private backyards.

The social host liability approach shifts accountability to those who possess or control the premises, or over-

see gatherings where fireworks may be used or discharged. The ordinance imposes strict liability on property owners, landlords and tenants, block party or special event permit holders. Administrative fines would start at \$3,000 for the first violation and increase up to \$7,000 thereafter.

The city is adopting a separate schedule of progressive fines for individuals who possess, sell, use or discharge illegal fireworks ranging from \$2,000 to \$6,000.

Illegal fireworks include aerial mortars, skyrockets, Roman candles, firecrackers and commercial-grade pyrotechnics.

The new enforcement parameters will be in effect for this coming Fourth of July holiday.

Elks honor the fallen



The Antlers, from left, Julianne Taylor, Sierra Hay, Bobby Nelson, Seth Lawrence and Wyatt Wozneak placed a wreath at Tri-City Memorial Park.



Elks Lodge members, from left, Brian Fitzpatrick, Christina Grosso, Julie Sutton, Garret Hamblin and Stephanie Fitzpatrick, placed a wreath at Fairhaven to honor the fallen.

Orange Elks Lodge #1475 members commemorated Memorial Day by placing flags on veteran gravesites. Coins had been placed on many gravestones. Each coin has a meaning: a penny indicates that you knew the deceased; a nickel means you trained together; a dime signifies serving in the same company; a

quarter tells the family that you were with them when they died.

The lodge placed over 400 flags on the headstones of veterans at the Santa Ana Cemetery and at the Fairhaven Cemetery. And wreaths in honor of fallen heroes were placed at both the Tri-City Memorial Day and the Fairhaven Cemetery Ceremonies.



Monica Zmudzinski, Orange Resident, graduated from the University of Arizona with her Doctorate of Audiology. She attended Louisiana State University for her undergraduate education, earning a degree in Communication Disorders, with minors in English and Psychology. She also attended El Modena High School and St. John's Lutheran School. As an audiologist, Zmudzinski aims to work with families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing in a clinical setting and through research. She plans to continue her education at the University of Arizona to pursue a Ph.D. in speech and hearing science.

VPCSF plans 4th Extravaganza

In honor of America's 250th Fourth of July, the Villa Park Community Services Foundation is combining their summer events into one big extravaganza!

The Stars on Parade, Picnic in the Park, and Concert in the Park will all come together to create one of Villa Park's most exciting Fourth of July events.

Calling all bicycles, wagons, walkers and floats! Show your patriotic colors in the parade!

The parade lineup begins at 9 a.m. at Cerro Villa Middle School at 10 a.m. The Stars on Parade will head east on Serrano, south on Lemon, west on Jocotal, then north on Center, west on Taft, ending at Serrano and Nicholas, where the Picnic in the Park/Street Fair has begun.

There you will find inflatables, a bubble making station, the Kids Market, food trucks and a dunk tank.

At 11 a.m., the Jim Flaherty Band will begin playing rock, country and blues. And, no Fourth of July celebration is complete without a pie eating contest, which will be held during the intermission. See VPCSFfoundation.org

For a special treat, view the City of Villa Park-USA 250 YouTube video, which features former mayors, dignitaries, original families and founders of Villa Park organizations read the Declaration of Independence. See City of Villa Park USA250 on YouTube.

Fireworks time!

Safe and sane fireworks will be on sale in Orange, from noon to 10 p.m. on July 1 - 3, and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on July 4. Fireworks may be enjoyed ONLY on July 4 from Noon to 9 p.m. in allowable areas.

City fireworks stands will be located at: 1628 Lincoln Avenue; 1411 West Katella; 2102 North Tustin; 460 The City Drive South; 222 West La Veta; 123 East Collins Avenue; 1888 North Tustin Street; 1803 East Chapman; 1411 North Tustin; 2222 North Santiago Boulevard; 305 South Main Street; and 2139 North Tustin Street.

Villa Park fireworks booths will open on June 30 at 10 a.m., closing at 10 p.m. through July 4.

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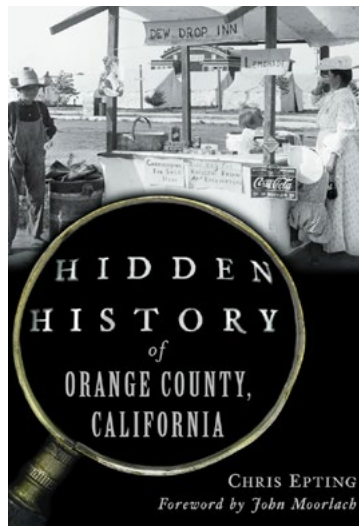
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Hidden history of Orange County revealed



By Guy Ball

Since its founding in 1889, Orange County has captured the world's attention with its iconic attractions, stunning beaches and vibrant communities. Dig a little deeper, and you'll find a treasure trove of hidden gems.

Author and historian Chris Epting shines a light on offbeat and exotic tales of the OC at the June "Night at the Museum" meeting at the Tustin Area Museum.

From lion safaris and an alligator farm to roaming buffalo, the theme parks of Orange County once offered a

variety of thrills before fading into obscurity.

The county is also the site of one of the most infamous UFO sightings in history, documented by Rex Heflin's Polaroid camera in 1965.

A plethora of famous rock stars, athletes and actors have left their mark, although many of their local haunts have long since disappeared. Social justice movements and dramatic showdowns are woven into the tapestry of the county's history.

A prolific writer, Chris has written over 45 books, including many local history books on a variety of themes. He has also penned a variety of biographies of unique personalities. He will have copies of his new book, "Hidden History of Orange County, California" available for purchase and to sign.

This "Night at the Museum" will be held Friday, June 26, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Tustin Area Museum, 395 El Camino Real. Tickets are \$20 per person and \$15 each for members.

For more information and tickets, visit Tustin-History.com, or call the museum at (714) 731-5701.

America250! community event coming to Orange library

The Daughters of the American Revolution Mojave Chapter (DAR) and the Sons of the American Revolution Orange County Chapter (SAR) invite the public to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence at the Orange Public Library.

On Saturday, June 6, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., the DAR and SAR will host a free event with memorabilia, crafts, games and contests for children of all ages. Make a paper tricorne hat, write with a quill pen and ink, make a cup-and-ball toy, or challenge yourself in American history trivia. SAR members will be in full military uniform for photos.

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Recent incidents highlight e-bike safety needs

**By Vicente Sarmiento
Second District Supervisor**

E-bike use has grown rapidly across Orange County, and while these bikes offer an affordable and efficient way to get around, recent incidents and fatalities in our region underscore the importance of safety and responsible use.

Parents and riders should be aware that many e-bikes can reach speeds comparable to motor vehicles, and when used improperly, they can pose serious risks—especially

for youth and inexperienced riders.

Key safety reminders for parents and riders:

- Know the law and classification: Not all e-bikes are the same. Some models function more like mopeds and may have different rules regarding age limits, helmet requirements, and where they can be ridden. Make sure you understand which class of e-bike you or your child is using.

- Helmet use is essential. Helmets should always be worn, regardless of age or distance traveled. A properly fit-

ted helmet significantly reduces the risk of serious injury.

- Set clear rules for young riders. Parents should establish expectations around speed, where the bike can be ridden, and whether passengers are allowed. Many accidents involve young riders operating e-bikes beyond their skill level.

- Follow traffic laws. E-bike riders must obey the same rules as bicycles and vehicles, including stopping at red lights, using hand signals and yielding to pedestrians.

- Be visible and alert.

Use lights, reflectors, and bright clothing—especially when riding at dawn, dusk or night. Avoid such distractions as headphones or phones while riding.

- Avoid modified or illegally upgraded e-bikes. Altering speed settings or motors can make bikes unsafe and illegal for road use.

As e-bike use continues to grow, safety education is critical to preventing further tragedies.

For more safety information, visit octa.net/getting-around/active-oc-bike/e-bikes.

Congrats to the Grads!

Orange Unified seniors will be celebrating graduation at Fred Kelly Stadium, as follows: on Wednesday, June 10, Orange High School at 3 p.m.; Villa Park High will follow at 7 p.m. On Thursday, June 11, diplomas will be awarded at 10 a.m. to Richland High and Parkside graduates. El Modena High graduation ceremony will be held at 3 p.m., followed by Canyon High School at 7 p.m.

Be aware for traffic and parking, as middle schools in the district will hold promotion exercises during the week. El Rancho Charter School promotion is June 10 at 6 p.m. On June 11, Portola Middle School promotion exercises will be held at 8 a.m.; McPherson Magnet Middle School at 8:30 a.m.; Yorba Middle School, at 9 a.m.; Cerro Villa Middle School, at 9 a.m. Santiago Charter Middle School will hold commencement on June 12 at 9 a.m.



The Orange Emblem Club #418 introduced its new officers, from left, Laura Lockridge, financial secretary; Irene Jones, second trustee; Kim Raya, treasurer; Barbara Keeler, proxy for corresponding secretary Amelia Castro; Carole Walters, first guard; George Padilla, vice president; Laurie Padilla, president; Jan Genelle, marshal; Terry Castellon, Chaplain; and Diane Ramirez, recording secretary.

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Assistees of Orange honored at 59th Medallion



The 2026 Assistees Medallion Recipients are, back row from left, Reese Hogan, Fox Finamore, Aidan Young, Tatum Bailey, Remington Galvan, Nathan Fujitani, Sophia Lopez, Emily Aufdemberg; front row, from left, Keiana DeGrave, Sophia Young, Emma Dierking, Dahlia Davis, Emily Vu, Celiana Eaton, Jasmine Huynh and Adria Eickhoff. Not pictured: Addison Hansen, Colin Kim, Dean Le.

By Deena Arnold

The Assistees Auxiliary of Orange graduating class of 2026 gathered for its milestone Medallion Ceremony, April 28. Each senior was presented a medallion, reflecting their commitment to philanthropic service and the strong values of compassion

and leadership. Assistees Auxiliary is a coed group of 120 teens in 7th-12th grade who are dedicated to caring for others and providing philanthropic services in their community. These graduating seniors, from eight different high schools, have each been a member of the Assistees Auxiliary

of Assistance League of Orange for at least two years, volunteered in the community for a minimum 90 hours, worked together and held an office or chairmanship within the auxiliary. For more information about Assistance League of Orange and its Assistees Auxiliary, visit alorange.org.

Orange Elks bestow Youth Appreciation Awards



From left, Exalted Ruler Kelley Martinez with Teen of the Year Victoria Vega and Miss Orange Kalista Brown.

The Orange Elks celebrated National Youth Week with its annual Youth Appreciation Night. Orange Mayor Dan Slater proclaimed May 3 – 9 as Youth Week. They honored 41 youth community, showcasing the many programs the Lodge has for young people. The Boy and Girl Scouts of Troop #1475 presented the flag, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance; Kalista Brown, Miss Orange, sang the National Anthem. Orange Police Chief Adam Jevic's keynote

message to the youth was to strive to do your best, do the right thing, and be resilient. Scholarship Chairman Lynda Einstein introduced nine high school seniors who were awarded a total of \$14,000 in scholarships. Additional awards were bestowed on Americanism essay winners, Youth Centers of Orange winners, and Drug Awareness posters and video winners, and Antler winners. Victoria Vega received the Teenager of the Year Award for the Antlers.

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Woman's Club of Orange members rise to the top



Photo by Lynda Stewart

The Woman's Club Board for 2026-27 consists of, from left: Dorinda Von Tersch, Diane Clemenson, Rebecca Martinez, Pat Hamilton, Denise Wardlow, Vivian Herrera, Irene Duff, Vicki Maciha, Kathleen Wilhelm, Carol Allen, Susan Moore, Kathy Thomas, Diana Carpenter, Christine Berringer, Linda Hicks, and Kathleen Stevens. Kathy Host and Susie Huber are not pictured. The Club also collected \$2,000 worth of baby clothes and baby items for Casa Teresa.



Each year, the Woman's Club recognizes 10 women as its 2025-26 Shining Stars, honoring their inspiration, dedication and behind-the-scenes contributions. They are, left to right from top: Sharon Whittlesey, Amy Fipps, Bonnie Stebner, Liz Lawrence, Mary King, Sandy Johnson, Kirsty Macintosh, Mary Ellen Oves, Mary Beth Syms, Yvette Paulson.



Mary-Ellen Manning, right, with president Carol Allen, was named WCO Clubwoman of the Year in recognition of her generosity, dedication and commitment to the community. A WCO member since 1998, Mary-Ellen has remained actively involved in club life for decades. She also served as publicity chairwoman for 15 years.

Central Dems to feature educational leaders

Central Orange County Democratic Club will host an education forum during its Wed., June 24 meeting. The forum will feature educational leaders from kindergarten through the university system to discuss the state of education in Orange County and the country.

The group will also be collecting craft materials for the Boys and Girls Club of Tustin. New or gently used materials are welcome.

Snacks and shmooze at 6 p.m., general meeting at 6:30 p.m. A RSVP to CentralOCDems@gmail.com or CentralOCDems.com is required to attend.

Democrats from all communities in Orange County are welcome to join. Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month in Tustin.



WCO President Carol Allen recognized Home Depot representatives Carl Schmidt and Melissa Coronado for the company's generous partnership and support of the club's refurbishment projects. She also thanked Pat Hamilton, WCO Director of House, for her leadership and project management throughout the work. From left, Carl Schmidt, Melissa Coronado, Carol Allen and Pat Hamilton.

Elks "Knocking it out of the park!"

The Orange Elks participated in the 60th May Parade in Old Towne Orange with the theme "America has been knocking it out of the park for 250 years!"



The Orange Elks Antlers carried the American flag. From left to right are Wyatt Wozneak, Seth Lawrence, Sierra Hay, Julianne Taylor, KJ Martinez, Bobby Nelson, Bailey Karich and Brooklyn Colvin.



Elks Lodge veterans rode on the float with members of the El Modena baseball team. From left are Mike Jung, Logan Honikel, John Smith, Jacob Lopez, Matt Gutierrez, Larry Smith and Guy Erskine.



Congratulations to the Orange Elks Lodge #1475 members, who won second place for their Orange May Parade float.

Open / Shut

O SEA, the seafood restaurant in Old Towne Orange, announced its closure for April 30, as the O SEA brand was purchased by King's Seafood Company. However, staffing challenges moved the final date up to April 18. The remaining inventory of seafood and wine was sold at the location on April 21, as former patrons shared stories of past good times and great meals.

Where's the Panda Mart? Not coming. No plans yet have been revealed by the owners of the Village at Orange.

The former Best Buy on

Tustin will become, per plans, 71 dwelling units, comprised of single-family units and duplexes.

Kura Revolving Sushi Bar - located at The Village at Orange, opened a month ago, after successful launches at the Brea Mall, in Irvine, Garden Grove and Cypress.

The Subway shop in the Villa Park Towne Center closed; owners are reportedly interviewing successors.

Another Trader Joe's? The former Big Lots/Pic 'N' Save on Fairmont and Santa Ana Canyon Road is being renovated to house a Trader Joe's.

Timing was right at Villa Park 5K and Health Fair

Everyone was a winner at the 2026 Villa Park 5K and Health Fair: those who completed the run/walk course, and those who stopped by the numerous booths to get advice and recommendations for living better and longer. Villa Park Community Services Foundation sponsored the event, held primarily at the Town Center on May 16.

A total of 363 runners/walkers started on the 5K course, which went up the hill on Lemon, past residences on Henderson and down to end in the Town Center. The clocks show 361 finished. There were four Virtual 5K participants, with Eric Handorf being the top finisher, 23:53, followed by Josh Wallace, Leah Watson-Rodgers and Jeannie DeSantis.

Medals were given overall, and by age category. Overall winners, female, were Mila Hose, first place, with a time of 22:27; Katie Hoagland, second; Livia Mason, third; and Mylee Miladinovich, fourth. Male overall winners were Spencer Handorf, first, with a time of 16:05; Patrick Leiby, second place; and Paul Hermann, third place.

Medals for females, age group 1-9: Claire Sistrunk, 8, first place, 42:21; Rosalie Kim, 9, second place, 44:14; Isla Kim, 7, third place, 44:14. For males, age

1-9: Aydin Power, 7, first place, 27:50; Austin Leon, 9, second, 53:43; Carlos Lawless, 7, third, 56:02.

Medals for age group 10-14, female: Claire Morales, 12, first place, 27:24; Cassidy St. Germain, 13, second; Kora Tetteh, 12, third. Males, age 10-14, Kai Kim, 13, first place, 25:35; Lucas Mason, 13, second; Sam Price, 13, third.

Medalists for age group 15-19, female: Livia Mason, 16, first place, 23:30; Mylee Miladinovich, 17, second; Satrina Lesan, 17, third place. Males, age 10-14: Patrick Leiby, 16, first, 17:18; Paul Hermann, 15, second; Marcus Merin, 16, third.

Medalists for age group 20-29, female: Bryn Johnson, 22, first place, 24:51; Valeria Caripintero, 25, second place; Alicia Kosin, 29, third place. Male medalists in the 20-29 age category were: Spencer Handorf, 21, first place, 16:02; Julian Pedroza, 24, second; Ricardo Lobato, 20, third.

Medals for age group 30-39, female: Mila Hose, 35, first place, 22:24; Katie Hoagland, second; Amanda Kaesman, third. Males, age 30-39: TJ Oros, 30, first place, 20:24; Eddie Pimentel, 30, second; Michael Holden, 34, third.

In the 40-49 age category, female medalists were: Trisha Back, 49, first at 26:25; Arianah Fresques, 45, second;

Corina Hathiramani, 48, third. Male medalists were: James Wilbourn, 40, first at 21:10; Dainel Melendez, 45, second; James Gann, 47, third.

Medals for the 50-59 category, female went to: Jana Helms, 56, first at 24:14; Kelley Martinez, 51, second; Joelle Shoemaker, 56, third. Male finishers were Peter Martinez, 55, first at 23:51; Jason Lahmani, 50, second; Casey Mason, 51, third.

The medals for the 60-69 category, female, went to: Julie Payn, 69, first place with 26:55; Diana Correa, 64, second; Tina Catlin, 66, third. Male finishers were: Paul Shanley, 67, first place at 24:36; Huber Chew, 66, second; Steve Park, 67, third.

Medalists for the 70-79 category, female, were: Katherine McBride, 70, first, with a 42:19 time; Eva Wyszowski, 75, second; Peggy May, 71, third. Male medalists were: Stephen Tomassi, 73, first, at 27:10; Stanford Gertler, 74, second; Dennis Chang, 73, third.

In the 80-89 age category, female, medals went to: Pam Dunn, 81, first place with a time of 45:31; Veronica Noguera, 87, second; Judy Henderson, 83, third place. Male medalists were: William Akerboom, 90, first place with a 39:47; David Rusher, 86, second; and Roy Lofink, 85, third.



Racers line up for the start of the Villa Park 5K.



Dan Gray, right, takes a selfie as the racers line up.



Pam Dunn, 81, left, receives a medal for first place in the 80-89 category from Young Kim.



Spencer Handorf, 21, #4, crossed the finish line to take first place overall in the Villa Park 5K, with a time of 16:02.

Tales told of the "Pirates" of Orange County



By Guy Ball

You'll hear local pirate lore and the true story of the buccaneers' raid on San Juan Capistrano at the Annual Dinner of the Orange County Histori-

cal Society on Thursday, June 11.

Historian Eric Plunkett will share swashbuckling tales he uncovered for his book, "The Saga of Orange County's "Pirates": Hippolyte Bouchard's Attack on Mission San Juan Capistrano in 1818."

This raid even played a part in the Argentine War of Independence. And while not exactly like the pirates we know from Disneyland, tales of Bouchard and his crew's exploits provide a compelling and enlightening window into Alta California during the collapse of the Spanish Empire.

Plunkett is a teacher and holds a history degree from CSU Fullerton. He is the author of scholarly articles, his "Visions

of California" blog, and several other books.

The annual dinner will be held at the Alta Vista Country Club in Placentia. The social hour will begin at 5:30 p.m., prior to the dinner at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$72; \$67 for members. Dinner buffet includes tri-tip, chicken piccata, seasonal vegetables and more.

Pirate-like attire is encouraged, but not mandatory. The venue requests that no ripped or torn clothing, sleepwear, shorts, or immodest dresses be worn. This event is open to members and non-members alike.

Tickets are available at orangecountyhistory.org. Email any questions to OCHSAnnualDinner@gmail.com.