

# 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

JANUARY 2025

## North Tustin in line for its own Zip code

It's taking an act of Congress, but North Tustin is finally on track to get a dedicated Zip code.

North Tustin residents have shared a Zip code with Santa Ana since 1994. The code, 92705, was originally North Tustin only, but the postal service moved the northeast portion of Santa Ana into that Zip code because it believed the businesses in the expanded area would receive its mail faster. North Tustin residents and community leaders were not consulted about the change.

Since then, residents have been trying to get their own Zip code. They want a separate number because insurance companies determine rates via Zip code averages. Online statistics are reported based on Zip codes, and unincorporated North Tustin wants its own identity.

When Santa Ana voters approved a one percent city tax, residents in unincorporated North Tustin were often charged the additional levy. They had to jump through hoops to convince merchants (mostly online) that their address was not in the City of Santa Ana.

Foothill Communities Association President Rick Nelson got the attention of the community's Congressional Representative Young Kim. A bill that designated separate Zip codes for 31 communities nationwide was wending its way through the house. Kim joined the legislators who put it forward, and got North Tustin added to the list.

The bill, HR8753, passed the House on Dec. 11. It is awaiting passage by the Senate.

Before the new Zip code takes effect, the postal service must open a dedicated facility in North Tustin. When Villa Park got its own Zip code in 1996, the post office opened a satellite office in the rear of Villa Park Pharmacy in the city center. Villa Park mail is processed through the distribution center in Anaheim; North Tustin's will likely continue to be processed in Santa Ana.

## Civic leader Mark Murphy has died



Mark Murphy, an Orange civic leader for three decades, died at home, Dec. 16. He was 67 years old. A celebration of life will be held Feb. 1 at 11 a.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church. See obituary, page 10.



Photos by Tony Richards

The returning members of the Orange City Council were sworn into office Dec. 16, along with City Clerk Pamela Coleman and Treasurer Garrett Smith. Shown here, from left, Mayor Dan Slater; Ana Gutierrez, Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento, Jon Dumitru, Kathy Tavoularis, Smith and Coleman. Mayor Slater, Councilmembers Dumitru, Tavoularis, Gutierrez and City Clerk Coleman ran unopposed. Smith was elected to serve his first term as Orange treasurer. See photos, page 3.



Newly elected Orange Unified School District board members join their colleagues for a photo op. From left, Andrea Yamasaki, Sierra Vane, Ana Page, Matthew Thomas, Stephen Glass, Sara Pelly and Kris Erickson. The new board subsequently elected Erickson to serve as president, Yamasaki as vice president and Page as clerk. See photos, page 4.



Kelly McBride, with wife Katherine.

Two new city councilmen were sworn in, Dec. 10, by Villa Park City Manager Steve Franks. The new councilmembers, Kelly

McBride and Robert Frackelton, were elected for four-year terms on the five-person council. At the subsequent organizational meet-



Robert Frackelton, accompanied by his wife Madonna and parents John and Anne Frackelton

ing, Nicol Jones was elected mayor and Jordan Wu was named mayor pro tem. Crystal Miles is the fifth councilperson.

## NEWS INSIDE

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Artisans, crafters and culinarians outdid Santa's elves at Christmas in the Canyons.

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East Orange acreage, habitat for threatened birds, mammals and insects, is being bulldozed to accommodate a new housing tract.

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### BACK IN THE DAY

Tales of old time Tustin on tap at area's history museum.

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### TAKIN' IT TO THE STREETS

The Villa Park boat parade brought holiday lights and seasonal spirit to city thoroughfares.

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Female competitors are winners on the court, the field and in the pool.

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### Shopping carts unwelcome on Orange streets and sidewalks



By Carrie Graham

The City of Orange is hoping that unattended shopping carts left around town will become a thing of the past with the unanimous passage of ordinance 30-24, aimed at pushing stores to heighten efforts to prevent carts from leaving the premises.

The ordinance states that, "the City has received numerous complaints from members of the public regarding unattended or abandoned shopping carts throughout the city that significantly impact public health, safety, and the welfare of residents, visitors, and businesses, while also diminishing the City's aesthetic appeal, resources, and economic development."

In addition, a staff report delivered to the city council, described unattended shopping carts to be a contributing factor to properties becoming blighted. A blighted property is defined as "a physical space or structure that has lost its value to the community and is no longer fit for use."

The ordinance will require existing stores with more than 10 carts to have a plan in place that includes an inventory of all carts, plans for retrieval patrols and additional staffing hours or contracting with a retrieval service. This plan will need to be submitted to the city, along with a non-refundable fee. Each cart will need to have the name of the store, address, phone number and signage to warn against removal and must provide evidence that carts are locked up over night.

Businesses with more than 10 carts established after the ordinance goes into effect will also need to have a plan for a wheel locking system to prevent carts from leaving the premises.

### Orange Park Association Annual Meeting slated

The Orange Park Association Annual General Membership Meeting will be held Saturday, January 25 at Salem Church Multipurpose Room, 6500 Santiago Canyon Road.

The doors open at 8 a.m. for coffee and donuts. The meeting begins at 9 a.m., and the general election will be held at 10 a.m.

The meeting features a State of Orange Park Acres presentation, including updates on OPA's no fireworks zone; Waste Management's manure program; trail connections and the Colt Trail.

Each year, three board director terms end. At this time, members may nominate new directors. Those nominees introduce themselves to the audience before the vote is taken. Winners are announced at the close of the meeting.

### TPSF executive director announces retirement



Carol Burby-Garrett, second from left, is joined by former TPSF President Kristin Simpkins, current President Kate Kersten, Director of Development Andrea Dabrow and office manager Laura Spezza at one of the Foundation's signature events, Dino Dash.

Carol Burby-Garrett, the executive director of the Tustin Public Schools Foundation for 18 years, is retiring. She plans to stay with the Foundation until her replacement can be found, to ensure that its programs and operations continue to run smoothly.

"As I look back on my career," Burby told her colleagues, "the years with TPSF have been the

very best. Working alongside our board, staff members, volunteers, the school district and our community has been a pleasure and an honor. I am proud of the way we have impacted student learning, supported teachers and staff, and engaged the community."

The Foundation has assembled a team of board and community members to find a new director.

### The Replica Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall is coming to Orange

"The Wall That Heals," a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, along with a mobile Education Center, is coming to the City of Orange on Oct. 2-5 at the Orange Dog Park.

The Wall is a replica of the monument that stands in Washington, D.C. It honors the more than 3,000,000 Americans who served in the U.S. Armed Forces in the Vietnam War, and it bears the names of the 58,281 men and women who died there.

The Orange Dog Park Association was chosen to host the display out of several hundred contenders. It is the only Southern California location that will host the Wall this year.

Most of the preparatory work needed to bring the Wall to Orange was done by Orange Dog Park Association President James Kushon.

"This is the most consequential thing I have done in my life thus far," Kushon says. "It is an honor for our nonprofit, the other

groups with which we will partner, and for the City of Orange, on the whole."

The Wall That Heals is transported from community to community in a 53-foot trailer. When parked, the trailer opens with 140 panel exhibits built into its sides, allowing it to serve as a mobile Education Center, telling the story of the Vietnam War, The Wall, and the divisive era in American history.

The Wall replica is 375 feet in length and stands 7.5 feet high at its tallest point. Visitors will experience The Wall rising above them as they walk towards the apex, a key feature of the design of The Wall in D.C. Visitors are able to do name rubbings of individual service member's names on The Wall. It will be open 24 hours a day and is free to the public.

The Dog Park Association is seeking sponsors to help support The Wall's visit to Orange. Send inquiries to [info@orangedog-park.org](mailto:info@orangedog-park.org).

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### Elks hold annual Soccer/Hoop Shoot competition

The Orange Elks hosted one of the lodges' favorites events, the Soccer and Hoop Shoot competition.

Chairman Steve Baez organized the event and volunteers -- 22 Elks and seven kids -- kept it running.

A total of 21 boys and girls tested their skills in the soccer and basketball contests.

Soccer is one of the fastest growing youth activities in the City of Orange. In this contest, the participants attempted goal kicks.

The Hoop Shoot competition is a free throw contest where each participant is scored on how many baskets they make out of 25 shots. It is broken down by age U-8, U-10, U-12 & U-14 for boys and girls.

The winners will advance to the Orange Coast District competition.

Each of the Orange winners will receive their award at the Lodge's Youth Appreciation Ceremony in May.

In addition to the contest, there was a photo booth, Buccaneer pizza for lunch, and a prize for each participant. The prizes were either one of six bikes, or one of 15 gift cards. Each participant also received a free kid's meal from the Habit Burger.

### City of Orange officials sworn in



Mayor Dan Slater took the oath of office from former Ambassador Gaddi Vasquez, joined by Martin Daly.



Kathy Tavoularis, accompanied by Councilman John Gyllenhammer, was administered the oath by former Councilman Mike Spurgeon.



Jon Dumitru, with wife Terri, was sworn in by Gaddi Vasquez.



Ana Gutierrez, sworn in by Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento, was joined by her mother Consuelo Gutierrez, son Max Olivarez and husband Octavio Olivarez.



# COMMUNITY SHOWCASES



Early Learning Opportunities Starting at Birth  
Full-Day TK/K at Each Elementary Site  
Early College/Dual Enrollment at SCC  
WASC-Accredited Middle & High Schools  
TK-12 College & Career Readiness  
Dual Language Immersion Programs  
Award-Winning Programs & Sites Districtwide



January 22



January 29



February 5



February 19

[WWW.ORANGEUSD.ORG/SHOWCASES](http://WWW.ORANGEUSD.ORG/SHOWCASES)

### School board trustees sworn in



Sara Pelly took the oath from several OUSD retirees who had mentored her during her teaching career and service as Sycamore Elementary School principal.



Sierra Vane, right, was sworn in by Interim Superintendent Mike Christensen.



Photos by Tony Richards

Stephan Glass, right, was administered the oath by Robert McDonald, a longtime friend who is active in a number of veterans' organizations.

### Serrano Water District directors



Serrano Water District General Manager Jerry Vilander, left, swore in Greg Mills, center, Robert Pitts, and Jerry Haight, not shown, for four-year director terms. Mills, Division 3, and Haight, Division 5, were unopposed in the general election. Pitts defeated appointee Mike Pelly for the Division 2 board position.



Matthew Thomas, right, started his career in OUSD as a bus driver 30 years ago. He chose to be sworn in by Ellen Johnson, who served as the district's transportation manager before retiring in 2016.



Ana Page, right, was sworn in by Ruby Hewitt, a former student board member who graduated from El Modena High in 2023.

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### Sleigh bells ring in Silverado

The annual Christmas in the Canyons holiday fest, Dec. 14, offered homemade food, handmade crafts, artwork and stocking stuffers, raffle items and live music to all who attended.



Face painter Arianna Lynn sets the bar as Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.



Adalynn Hodges, 4, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus.



Mary Schrieber with yule wreath



Musicians serenaded the crowd with holiday tunes.



Olive the pot-bellied pig represented the animal kingdom, wearing holiday regalia.

Guest Commentary

The Irvine Company started habitat removal right before the holidays

By Joel Robinson

A 400-acre wildlife corridor and a Native American village site between Irvine and Peters Canyon Parks are being destroyed.

We were surprised to see The Irvine Company (TIC) removing wildlife habitat from the northwest corner of Jamboree and Santiago Canyon Road on Monday, Dec. 16. Tractors pulling mowers and hand crews with machetes and landscape equipment were removing above-ground vegetation on the 400 acres that TIC wants to blanket with 1,180 houses (Orange Heights).

TIC cleared approximately 35 acres of coastal sage scrub and grassland. This area supported white-tailed kite, coastal California gnatcatcher, grasshopper sparrow, western meadow lark, northern harrier, Belding's orange throated whiptail and countless other resident and migratory species. On Wednesday, the company cleared another 30-40 acres

on the southwest end along Jamboree at the Tustin border. White sage, sagebrush and other coastal sage scrub species were bulldozed from an entire hill.

After calling Steve Gibson, senior environmental scientist with the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), we learned that CDFW quietly approved The Irvine Company's Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for the Crotch's bumble bee last Friday without communicating to the public. We are shocked and dismayed by the lack of transparency of CDFW. For the past few months, they did not respond to our emails, calls or requests to be included in this discretionary California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process.

Prehistoric village threatened

The Irvine Co. plans to excavate CA-ORA-556, the prehistoric Native American village site that qualifies for the California Register of Historic Resources.

All of the recovered artifacts were of stone dated to the Late Millingstone Horizon, over 3,500 years ago. It was described as an extensive lithic scatter consisting of metates, manos, cores, flakes, projectiles and a bifacial knife. The original recorder reported that a "possible cemetery" was "likely" located approximately 100 meters east of the site. "It is estimated that 90% of archaeological sites in Orange County have been destroyed to make way for development. This makes the remaining archaeological sites of utmost importance, as they are the only tangible remains of California's 10,000 years of Juaneño/Acjachemen and Gabrielino/Tongva history," reports Pat Martz, emerita professor of Anthropology College of Natural and Social Sciences and president of the California Cultural Resources Preservation Alliance,

Winter King, our attorney with Shute, Mihaly and Weinberger LLP, is in the process of filing

a temporary restraining order, preliminary injunction and lawsuit challenging the ITP on the grounds that CDFW violated CEQA by issuing the permit without any subsequent or supplemental environmental review.

We need your help. The destruction of wildlife habitat, including coastal sage scrub and grassland, on the Orange Heights Project is threatening special status species, including Crotch's bumble bee, least Bell's vireo and mountain

lions, which is a violation of the Endangered Species Act. Please take action and donate to support our lawsuit by visiting [naturalist-for-you.org/noorangeheights](http://naturalist-for-you.org/noorangeheights).

*Naturalist-for-you Joel Robinson is leading No Orange Heights, a growing group of neighbors and residents of surrounding communities who oppose the housing development and hope to preserve the environmentally sensitive acreage.*



Joel Robinson prevents grubbing equipment from proceeding.

LETTERS to the EDITOR



Library services cut

Dear Editor:

The Orange Public Library and branches are teeming with activity.

Middle school, high school and college students arrive daily to do research or study for finals. Homework help is on the rise, as students encounter new concepts in science, technology and math.

Senior citizens arrive, morning, noon and night to meet friends

and share insights on books, local politics and the arts.

Moms and dads are searching resources to find housing, jobs, helpful hints for toddler education.

The library is an active and useful place.

The Orange Public Library staff is a dedicated group of professionals who stand ready to serve Orange and the greater community. They are creative, thoughtful, solution-oriented

individuals who deserve better from the Orange City Council.

In reviewing the budget cuts made by the Orange City Council on June 11, 2024, it is apparent that the library has been unduly burdened by these cuts.

The Council agreed to cut \$5,072,368 from the city's budget.

Of that \$5,072,368, the amount cut from the Orange Public Library budget was \$509,368, 10% of the total reportedly "city-wide" budget cuts, although the original library budget is just 4% of the City's total budget.

With the inability to hire for the 12 vacant positions, including the loss of the Director of Library Services position, the library's budget has been cut by a whopping \$1,509,368.

That is a 30% (approximately) cut of the total amount of reportedly "city-wide" budget cuts.

I understand the community's concern for the loss of the beloved Treats in the Streets and the Tree Lighting Ceremony. I am sure if the community truly understood how the council has decimated the library services budget, they would be up in arms over this as well.

The remaining very dedicated staff are doing the best they can under very difficult circumstances, doing their own jobs as well as taking on other position's responsibilities, including janitorial duties, both inside and outside the library building, assisting customers at the information desk, writing grant proposals, doing minimal purchasing of supplies. Yes, all regular library tasks, but with minimal staff to accomplish customer care. The community is feeling the pinch, and they need to know what the situation is.

I believe it is the Board of Trustees' role to speak clearly to the community about this situation. The concern of the Board of Trustees is echoed by the Friends of the Library Board and the Orange Public Library Foundation Board. These volunteer community leaders are committed to improving this difficult situation.

The Orange Public Library is an important community service, and the Orange Public Library staff is trained to deliver the highest quality service. That is now impossible.

I understand that cuts need to be made, but every department must be burdened equally.

Council needs to review the budget and restore the library staff's ability to do their jobs in the way the community and Council expect.

Rebecca Martinez, Chair, Orange Public Library Board of Trustees

Mary Galuska, President, Friends of the Orange Public Library

David Bustamante, President, Orange Public Library Foundation

Kim Nichols, Treasurer, OPLF  
Cathy Smith, Secretary, OPLF  
Michelle Hernandez, OPLF  
Victoria Owens, OPLF  
Priscilla Selman, OPLF  
Larry Cohn, OPLF  
Lynn-Marie Frediani, OPLF  
Executive Director



Shop with a Cop and the Orange Elks



Augie Rocha and Lecturing Knight Kevin Wagner

The Orange Elks supported their community partner, the Orange Police Department. Lecturing Knight Kevin Wagner presented a check in the amount of \$1475 to the City of Orange Police Association for their Shop with a Cop program. The children, selected from the Friendly Center and Youth Centers of Orange, get the opportunity to shop with a uniformed officer and spend \$100 for themselves and their family at Walmart in Orange.

OC Dems feature Supervisor Sarmiento

The Central Orange County Democratic Club will welcome Orange County Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento to its Wednesday, Jan. 22 meeting. Supervisor Sarmiento will discuss the outlook for Orange County in the new year and answer questions about local issues. Snacks and conversation begin at 6:30 p.m.; the general meeting starts at 7 p.m. Visit the club calendar, Mobilize.us, or the club Facebook link to access the link to RSVP.

Central OC Dems includes the communities of Tustin, Tustin Hills, Orange, Villa Park, and surrounding communities. Democrats from all communities in Orange County are welcome to join. Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month at St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 1221 Wass St. in Tustin. Central OC Dems is not affiliated with St. Paul's.

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Government bumbles?

When the increasingly rare Crotch's bumblebee was found near Jamboree and Santiago Canyon Road where The Irvine Company (TIC) wants to build over 1,000 houses, opponents of the proposed Orange Heights development reiterated their demand that the project's 2008 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) be reassessed.

TIC, though, applied for an "incidental take" permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). CDFW requires permittees to "fully mitigate the impacts of the project." Xerces Society experts called TIC's proposed mitigation inadequate.

On Dec. 16, naturalist Joel Robinson was shocked to discover workers "grubbing" TIC's land after CDFW, apparently with no public notice, approved the permit the previous Friday.

Robinson and others are considering next steps. He said that more information and a GoFundMe link for donations are at naturalist-for-you.org/noorangeheights.

Dean Brown

The longtime Modjeska resident and driving force behind the creation of the Silverado Children's Center died suddenly in

December. A January memorial service is planned. See Obituary, page 10.

Sportsball

Transcription of December 3 radio broadcast:

"Good evening, sports fans! Biff Bruiser here along with Max Manly in the Wally Ballou Memorial Press Box at Silverado Stadium."

"Biff, what makes tonight so special?"

"Max, as you know, both the park district, SMRPD, and the Inter-Canyon League (ICL) hold their monthly board meetings here, but until now, always on separate days. So that's why tonight's faceoff was christened Super World Monthly Board Meeting Series Bowl I."

"Sounds epic, Biff. But aren't Government League and Charity League rules slightly different?"

"You bet, Max. In fact, that's why they decided to have only one team on the field at a time. SMRPD elected to go first. Speaking of which, here they come now."

"I see, Biff ... Martz and Kuhn now in position around the table. Martz in for Wright as meeting chair, flanked by rookie Melissa Malpass and GM Dixon-Griggs. Wright and Tamara Beauchamp on Zoom ... First down, none

away, and ... Martz reads the oath of office to Malpass and Beauchamp, who successfully repeat it with right hands raised! And the new SMRPD board members are officially sworn in!"

"Terrific, Max. What's next on the agenda?"

"Not a lot, Biff. Approve this, file that. Question \$43.62 weed abatement bill in Modjeska. Oh, Silverado was restriped for two pickleball courts."

"Hmm. I guess we have some time on our hands. How are you doing with that new oboe?"

"OK. But you wouldn't believe some of the 'student' models these days. No low B flat key—just two little holes in the bell that you're supposed to cover with your knees while playing low B. Is this a joke? Marigaux's 'student' model has low B flat PLUS RESONANCE KEY, PLUS LEFT HAND F, PLUS THIRD OCTAVE KEY!"

"The world has changed, Max. I saw a guy on YouTube playing Goosens's oboe from 1911. It sounded fine, though it looked like just one of those ordinary ring system instruments you used to see all the time. Oh, SMRPD has adjourned and ICL is warming up now."

"Half the ICL board is getting seated now, Biff. Starting quarterback Sarkissian, with Breeden at shortstop, taking minutes ... Duff and Veerkamp in deep Zoom ... general announcements ... And now, nominations for ICL Board."

"Max, someone just nominated Breeden for another term! And someone else nominated Sarkissian! And ... that's all! So, no vote needed next month, and the

score is all tied up. What's next?"

"Let's see ... approve the usual stuff ... another \$10,000 grant from Edison International for gold spotted oak borer awareness. Good. Say, Biff, what do you use to keep the inside of your oboe from cracking?"

"Sweet almond oil, applied with a turkey feather. But there's a guy on the internet saying there's something better now. By the way, I can't seem to find my French reed knife."

"You can borrow one of my Marine Corps shoe knives. Want to get together tomorrow for some Telemann duets?"

"I dunno, Max. Sounds dangerous. You know what they say?"

"What do they say, Biff?"

"How do you get two oboists to play in tune?"

"I give up. How?"

"Shoot one of them."

Lunar New Year

Year of the Snake. Lion dancers at the library Jan. 25. Sorry, snakes suck at dancing—no left feet.

Weedology 101A

Arundo donax, also called giant reed, cane, or (locally) "bamboo," is a nasty invasive



Arundo donax

weed that's 20-foot-tall creekside clumps crowd out native plants. It spreads when a small bit breaks off, washes downstream, and takes root.

Arundo's one redeeming feature is that it is used to make oboe reeds. The best stuff comes from France, but extreme oboists here grow their own. It sounds illegal, but if those reed farmers keep their crop from escaping, they are allowed to raise cane.

Orange Chamber events on tap

Tickets are now on sale for the Miss Orange Scholarship Pageant, to be held Saturday, Jan. 18 at 6 p.m. The pageant is a scholarship program for women 17 to 24 who live, work full-time, or attend school in the City of Orange or OUSD.

Tickets are \$25 for general admission, \$15 for students with ID at the door. The event will be held at Chapman University Memorial Hall.

Tickets, sponsorships and applications for contestants are available for the 2025 Duke of Orange competition, slated for Saturday, Feb. 15. Any male, 21 or older, who lives, works, or attends school in Orange or the OUSD area is eligible to be a contestant. Contestant sponsorship fees are \$500; contestant and table sponsors are \$950; table sponsors are \$650; general admission is \$65; admission for Chamber members is \$50.

For information on these and all other Chamber events, see orangechamber.com



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## Covenant to present Women of the Civil War



Karen Frey

Covenant Women’s Fellowship will feature an encore performance by Karen Frey speaking on “Women of the Civil War, Part II” at its luncheon on Friday, Jan. 17.

Frey’s performance expands on an earlier presentation, and will feature more women from the North and the South who played important roles during the war years.

A retired elementary school teacher, Frey has been involved with Civil War re-enactment since 2001. In her talks about the roles women played, she wants people to know that the Civil War wasn’t only about battles, gener-

als and soldiers. Women played a large part, but little is said about their contributions as spies, nurses and messengers.

The luncheon is open to men and women in the community, and will be held in St. Andrew’s Hall on the church campus, 1855 N. Orange-Olive Road. Doors open at 11 a.m.; the program begins at 11:30 a.m.

The catered lunch is \$15 per person, payable in advance. Reservations are required by Saturday, Jan. 11, by calling Linda at (951) 237-9888. Reservations are also required to attend the presentation only at 12:30 p.m.; the cost is \$5, payable at the door.

## Locals participate in Wreaths Across America



“As long as there is a Vet, the Orange Elks will never forget.” Orange Elks Lodge 1475 members spoke to their motto, as they participated in the Wreaths Across America program at the Fairhaven Cemetery for the fifth year. The program commemorates veterans by placing a wreath in the cemetery in their honor during the holidays. The lodge donated \$4,200, and placed 372 wreaths on the veterans’ graves. Seen here from left, Clarke Balvanz, Janine Storm, John Smith, Brian Fitzpatrick, Richard Guerrero, Cheri Guerrero, Marilyn Dinger, Stephanie Fitzpatrick and Terri Schatz.



Volunteers from the Orange Emblem Club 418 laid wreaths on veterans’ graves, Dec. 14, as part of the Wreaths Across America program. Kim and John Raya, Irene Jones, Jan Genelle, Jolie Nuno and her children Marley and Jolinda, visited Santa Ana Cemetery to honor local veterans. Nuno, the niece of past club President Gloria Ramirez, is seen here, placing a wreath. “My son and daughter and I had an amazing time,” she said after the event. “We got to meet many Elks and American Legion members. Thank you Emblem Club for inviting us.”

## TAWC highlights Young Women of the Month

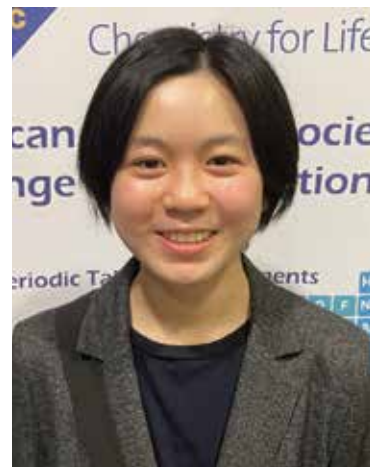


Kelly Jernigan

The December recipients of the Tustin Area Woman’s Club Young Women of the Month awards are Kelly Jernigan and Elise Tran.

Kelly Jernigan, from Foothill Hill School, is involved with the Tustin Assistance League. Her favorite philanthropy is “Sip and Stroll” because she gets to interact with members of the community. She is a member of the California Scholarship Federation and a straight-A student. Her hobbies include drawing, making jewelry and practicing for pole vault. Kelly hopes to attend UCLA and major in geology.

Elise Tran, from Tustin High School, has been teaching English to Vietnamese nuns over Zoom through a volunteer pro-



Elise Tran

gram since her freshman year. She also co-hosts an English podcast that is provided to her students. She is the founder and president of her school’s Comic Creators’ Club. In her free time, she enjoys sketching and playing Nintendo games. She was an intern at UC Irvine, where she assisted postdoctoral researchers and graduate students on their metabolism research projects. Elise plans to major in nutrition and become a dietician, focusing on eating disorder treatments, vitamin metabolism and prenatal nutrition.

Also honored in December were Katelyn Park from Beckman High and Kaelyn Ting from Legacy High School.

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### Tustin Area Museum features OC historical speakers



Chris Jepsen

By Guy Ball

The Tustin Area Museum is kicking off a new year of interesting speakers for its "Night at the Museum" program. The first three months have been announced and will showcase a continued look at intriguing local history.

The January meeting sees noted Orange County historian Chris Jepsen sharing the work of Rudy Boysen and his successful development of the boysenberry – along with his connection to Utt Juice based in Tustin.

Jepsen discusses his research into how Rudy worked to save the delicious boysenberry fruit from extinction through a mix of hard work and a bit of luck – right here in Orange County.

Orange County historian Chris Jepsen is the longtime president of the Orange County Historical Society. He's a frequent lecturer; has created museum exhibits and historical tours; and has written for historical journals, magazines, websites, and his own blog, "The OC History Roundup." He wrote the first significant article about Rudy Boysen and the boysenberry and continues to research the subject today.

Jepsen will speak on Friday, Jan. 31 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

In February, celebrate the Orange County Sheriff's Department as historian Ray Grimes shares the history of the Department on Friday, Feb. 28 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

In March, the story of pioneer-

ing rancher, Nellie Gail Moulton, will be shared by Scott Barnes, Nellie's great-grandson, who has written a new book on the family matriarch.

Nellie found great love with South County rancher Lewis Moulton, and they started a family, including daughters who grew into great cattle women. Once Lewis died, Nellie did not just inherit their ranch, she operated it.



He will be sharing Nellie Gail Moulton's story during the Night at the Museum meeting on Friday, March 28.

More information and tickets are available at TustinHistory.com or by calling the museum directly at (714) 731-5701. The museum is located at 395 El Camino Real.

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### Town & Gown asks why hate is so appealing

Town & Gown, a Chapman University support group, will feature a discussion, "Why is Hate so Appealing?" at its Feb. 6 speaker series, Lunch at the Forum.

Dr. Peter Simi, professor of sociology from the Wilkinson College of Chapman University, has spent years researching how specific ideas and emotions are used to justify horrific atrocities, including doing embedded

fieldwork with active members of anti-government and white supremacist groups. As part of this research, he has spent many hours on death row in prisons across the U.S., interviewing individuals convicted of murder, hate crimes, and domestic terrorism. He has testified before Congress about the threat of domestic terrorism and in criminal and civil court, helping judges and juries understand how the culture of hate pro-

vides motivation and the intent to commit violence.

Town & Gown has, since 1968, organized special events of interest to the public in order to integrate the campus into the community. This event will be held at 11:30 a.m. in the Bush Conference Center, Beckman Hall 404. For tickets, visit [tickets.chapman.edu](http://tickets.chapman.edu) or contact Erin Peltier at [epeltier@chapman.edu](mailto:epeltier@chapman.edu) for more information.

### Crescendo features Johnny Cash tribute singer

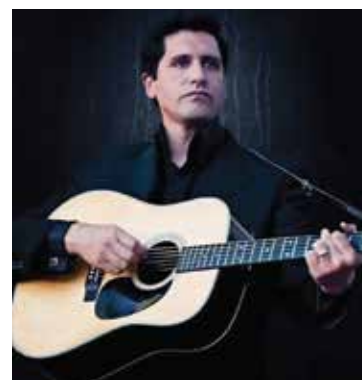
The Crescendo Chapter of the Guilds of Segerstrom Center presents Johnny Cash tribute singer James Garner at its Celebrity Speaker Series, Thursday, Jan. 16.

Garner and his three-piece band have been featured on PBS stations and performed at Folsom and San Quentin Prisons, where Cash recorded his biggest albums.

The show is set to his signature sound and will feature such fa-

avorites as "Ring of Fire," "I Walk the Line" and "Don't Take Your Gun to Town."

The presentation begins at 10 a.m. at the Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main Street, Santa Ana. Tickets are \$45. Bowers members may buy a ticket for \$35. For information about tickets, contact Barbara Hagen at (714) 272-1134 or [crescendoticketsbowers@gmail.com](mailto:crescendoticketsbowers@gmail.com). Additional tickets may be purchased at the door. Parking is \$6.99 at the museum.



James Garner

### Looking for love

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### "Snow Much Fun" in Villa Park

The annual Villa Park Boat Parade, themed "Snow Much Fun," took to the streets on Dec. 15 with lavishly decorated watercraft, four wheeled and two-wheeled transports. Costumed participants added to the spirit and festoons of holiday lights.



Grand Marshals Robbie Pitts, former VP mayor and city councilman, and wife Elizabeth Ussher.



Photos by Tony Richards

Villa Park Women's League with the group's first-ever entry in the parade



Paraders, from left, Cozette Petitt, Carrie Ware, Dana Armstrong, Erika Krohn and Lisa Bartley with Kiki, the holiday hound.



Sharing a ride with snowmen are, from left, Taylor Mortis, Corey Thibault, Hudson, Corey, Wesley and Katie Schultz.



The Grinch with grandson Wyatt Painier.



The Villa Park City Council rides aboard the Sheriff's Harbor Patrol boat. From left, Nicol Jones, Kelly McBride, Crystal Miles, Robert Frackelton and Jordon Wu.



A Yeti promises fun and frolic once the parade begins.



Villa Park High cheerleaders decked their halls with school colors instead of traditional holiday tones.



The Whiddon family, from left, Laurie, Olivia, Bennett and Lindsay, display pre-parade merriment.



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OBITUARIES



**William Dean Brown**  
1948 – 2024



Dean Brown, age 76, passed away on Dec. 5. He is survived by his daughters, Nicole and Natalie, his son-in-law Chris and grandchildren, Mia and Wittaker.

He grew up in Eagle Rock with a wonderful family.

He served in the Vietnam War as a Marine and a naval gunfire forward observer in the 9th Amphibious Brigade.

Two weeks after returning home from war, Dean married Renee LeClaire, the love of his life. They sent hundreds of letters to each other during the war, and he always said that's what kept him sane and alive.

He received his Bachelor of Science in Urban Planning at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Dean and Renee moved to

Modjeska Canyon in the early 1970s, and had Nicole and Natalie. He created his business, the Planning Consortium, and worked on thousands of land use projects over his lifetime. They traveled extensively throughout the United States in a VW bus and then an old camper school bus, the Red Arrow.

He went on many adventures with his friends in Mexico, fishing trips to Baja and Alaska, and had a few fantastic trips to Europe.

He loved the canyon life in Modjeska, living next to some of his best friends and enjoying quiet, beautiful nature.

Dean loved to golf, ski, hike, snorkel, waterski -- and he won every game of pingpong. He was an avid Dodger fan his whole life, thanks to his Dad Orval, and countless friends who attended games with him. His best friend and cousin Craig was a constant in his life. They had a lot of fun together. He was also a very talented artist in drawing, painting and photography.

He spent a lot of time on Maui these past 15 years with his daughters, sons-in-law and grandchildren.

On his 76th birthday, he hiked and swam to a beautiful Maui waterfall, surrounded by his kids, grandkids and their friends, splashing and playing and enjoying the best of nature and life.

He was a smart, industrious, fun, creative, exuberant, sweet man who was liked by all and loved by many. He was a fantastic friend, father and Grandpa, and will be forever missed.

**Mark Murphy**  
1957 – 2024



The community was saddened to learn that Mark Murphy, longtime champion of all things Orange, passed away at his home on Friday, Dec. 6, at the age of 67.

Mark was an Orange native and proud Orange High Panther, who served the city in a number of

capacities, as Planning Commission Chairman, Millennium Commission Chair and Community Video Advisory Board President. Mark was appointed to the city council in 1993 and subsequently elected mayor of Orange in 2018 and 2020. During his 30-year career in city government he served as a councilman for 17 years and mayor for 10, with two-year break in 2010-12.

Mark was instrumental in the completion of major community projects, including Grijalva Park, The Outlets at Orange, Main Orange Library expansion and History Center, and the design and build of at least six city parks, the preservation of Plaza Park, and the creation of the Paseo.

He was named "Citizen of the Year" and Orange County's "Local Elected Official of the Year."

He brought his business acumen to regional boards, including the Orange County Transportation Authority, the Foothill Eastern Transportation Corridor Agency and the Southern California Regional Rail Authority. Mark was active in community organizations, including the Orange Elks, where he was a member for over 30 years, the Friendly Center, the Orange Public Library Foundation and Community Foundation of Orange.

In 2023, Mark and his wife Vikki, married since 1997, were honored with the "Community Circle Award" by the Assistance League of Orange for their many contributions to the community.

A graduate of USC, Mark had a long career at Hewlett Packard. Mark is survived by his wife Vikki and mother Lois.

**Joseph Fortier**  
1940 – 2024



On Friday, November 15, Joseph August Fortier peacefully passed away at the age of 84, following a courageous battle with Alzheimer's. His enduring love for his family and deep faith in God were sources of strength and solace throughout his journey.

Joe was born on April 28, 1940, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, to Joseph and Emma Fortier. He grew up with his sister, Vickie Oaks, in a household that valued

education and service. Joe graduated from Franklin High School, earned a Bachelor's degree in Education from Clarion University, and later completed a Master of Education at the University of Southern California.

Joe dedicated 32 years to education, first as a teacher and later as an elementary school principal, where he became a beloved advocate for students and teachers alike. His passion for learning and leadership left an indelible mark on countless lives.

Beyond his career, Joe was deeply committed to service. As president of the Rotary Club of Orange, he led efforts to deliver hospital beds to a medical clinic in Zimbabwe and initiated a migrant program for teachers. He volunteered at Mary's Kitchen, involving his Rotary Club in donating supplies and starting a volunteer program. Active in his community, Joe served as a traffic commissioner for Orange, treasurer for the Santiago Community Foundation, and a board member for the Orange Education Board and the American Cancer Soci-

ety's fundraising board. In 2009, he was named Citizen of the Year for the City of Orange.

Joe also embraced adventure. He organized annual trips to Yosemite, where he enjoyed hiking, biking, and playing guitar by the campfire. A lifelong sports enthusiast, he cheered passionately for the Dodgers, USC Trojans, Rams, and Lakers. He loved golf, bridge, country music, and attending his grandchildren's events, finding joy in every moment with his family.

Joe married the love of his life, Jacqueline Bonfiglio, on June 18, 1966. Together, they shared 53 joyful years, raising two daughters, Lisa Britt (Steve) and Karen Dahler (Mark), and cherishing their four grandchildren, Logan, Brandon, Brooke, and Owen.

A devout Christian, Joe hosted weekly Bible studies at his home and found comfort in his faith. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jackie, and his parents.

Joe's warmth, faith, and adventurous spirit will be dearly missed, but his legacy of love and service lives on.



If it is the third Tuesday of the month, the Orange Elks will be raising and lowering the flag, at 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., at Plaza Park, reflecting their appreciation and support of veterans.



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### Centenarian celebrates life



Betty Schoeffler has accomplished a lot in her long life, and on Dec. 24, added a 100th birthday to the list.

Born on a cold December night in Ohio in 1924, Schoeffler had a tough entry to life. Her childhood was spent in the height of the Depression where at times her parents could not afford even a single birthday or Christmas present. At one point as a child, she nearly died from pneumonia as antibiotics did not yet exist. But Schoeff-

ler not only survived, she thrived, going on to be homecoming queen at her high school and eventually marrying her sweetheart Bob.

Shortly after getting married, Bob was called to fight in World War II, where he became a decorated B-21 pilot stationed in Italy, before ending up as a German POW. While Bob was away, Betty became one of many women to take to the factories, making airplane autopilot devices.

When Bob returned safe and sound, they used his military pay that she had saved during his absence to buy a home. One of the only female door-to-door sales people in Cleveland, she sometimes took her kids with her while he worked full time at a bank. She was also constantly on the lookout for real estate deals. In the 1960s they relocated to California, both for better career and better real estate opportunities.

When Bob passed away after a seven-year battle with Alzheimer's, Betty persevered and continued to show up for her family, even teaching three of her grandchildren how to drive.

What Betty's family will say are

her best attributes are her unwavering optimism and kindness. That remains true today as she celebrates her 100th birthday with her three children, nine grandchildren and eight great-grandkids. Happy birthday, Betty!



Kathy McCarthy, a member of Assistance League of Orange and a realtor, asked Curtis Wesseln and colleagues at Anaheim Hills First Team to join with Assistance League members to donate coats and warm clothing for the Veteran's Mental Health Association and the American Legion. More than 200 coats, plus warm shirts, scarves and gloves were donated.



Orange Emblem Club members gathered for a Christmas meeting at the Olive Garden on Dec. 1. There were 20 members and spouses in attendance. Newly initiated members joined with long-standing members to usher in the Christmas spirit, which included singing "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

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North Tustin Locations

## Elks turned elves give Christmas baskets



From left, Kelley Martinez, Lynn Butler, Seth Lawrence, El Roy (aka Alex Flores), Rose Cunningham, Linda Lawrence and Jennifer Weerheim

By Bill Neessen

The Orange Elks Lodge #1475 Christmas Basket Program aims to assist our community by donating Christmas Baskets to families in need. The goal, as in past years, is to hand out 200 Christmas Baskets (boxes) to families in need with young children, in hopes of making the season a little more magical.

The program begins a week prior, collecting food and toys. Then, on a Thursday, 14 members assembled the 200 boxes. The following day, the lodge prepared an Italian dinner for the 70 Elks and family members who helped pack the 200 boxes with food items. On Saturday morning, over 40 Or-

ange Elks, family members and friends handed out food boxes, toys, a \$25 gift card and dog and cat food/treats during the drive-through event.

The donations for this great event came from our Lodge members and our community partners Grocery Outlet, the OC Food Bank and SpoofDawgs to the Rescue, which provided bags for the pets. A total of 16 bikes, 4 tricycles and toys for each age group of boys and girls and coloring books and crayons were provided by our Drug Awareness Committee.

The Lodge extends a big “thank you” to the City of Orange for use of the city hall parking lot, and to the Orange Police Department who assisted with traffic control.

## Old guys on the block rock the golf course



David Knox, left, and Roger Egge

Usually, a club tournament at Tustin Ranch Golf Course isn't likely to make headlines, but this year's October event was won by a couple of guys who stand out, Roger Egge and Dave Knox.

What's special about these “Old Guys on the Block” as they call themselves, isn't necessarily their prowess with a club and ball, it's the friendship they rediscovered after decades away on their own life journeys.

The pair of North Tustin kids grew up across the street from each other, and although there was a two-year age difference, they bonded over street football, whiffle ball, basketball and every other sport they could play.

While Knox remained in Tustin, eventually graduating from Foothill High School, Egge and his family moved away after he completed middle school in 1975, seemingly ending the friendship.

However, several years ago, the pair were reintroduced through a mutual friend in the golfing community, giving them the opportunity to rekindle their friendship.

Back on the course, Egge and Knox, now 63 and 65 respectively, won the Member Guest title with a total of three under par for two days.

“Winning the tournament is a thrill, but winning together with someone you have known for so long is super special,” says Egge.

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## Learning Center provides community resources for family research



Vicki Gray, left, Learning Center team leader, showing Gretchen Whisler how to use the Center computer to discover new information about Tustin area family history.

By Guy Ball

The Vivien Owen Learning Center at the Tustin Area Museum provides a new community resource for family research and historical discovery. The Center is supported by donors and the Tustin Area Historical Society.

Created in honor of one of the founders of the Society, Vivien Owen, museum team leader Vicki Gray has been working with fellow historical researchers Tim Zierer and Tom Pulley to build a large inventory of data, including census records, business directories, school records, voter records, and more to allow families to research the history of recent ancestors as well as to learn more about the community as far back as the late 1800s.

“The purpose of the Learn-

ing Center is to preserve Tustin and North Tustin history,” noted Vicki Gray, “and we want to share it with today's and future generations.”

These volunteers have created over 90 files to date on early Tustin area families – with more on the way. Information on veterans has been collected into lists of Civil War, Spanish-American, and World War II veterans from Tustin. A WW I veteran list is currently being researched.

A “memory” folder includes autobiographical articles written or based on interviews about people's lives during the early days of Tustin. Information on existing historic homes in both the city and North Tustin is being researched and collected to be shared.

Agriculture, businesses, and

early developments, as Tustin moved from a rural to an urban environment, are being documented in their records.

Most recently, they added local historian Tom Pulley's stories of 21 packing houses serving the Tustin Area and have identified the crate labels they used – and have pictures of many.

Members and visitors will also be able to access Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com, to research their own family roots.

The Learning Center is located inside the Tustin Area Museum at 395 El Camino Real in Old Town Tustin.

Contact Vicki Gray via email at grayva@aol.com to set up an appointment. Or call the Tustin Area Museum at (714) 731-5701 to leave your contact information for Vicki.

## Fish were biting at Irvine Lake



Thomas Wright, left, with his 7.3-pound rainbow trout, was the grand prize winner at the Irvine Lake Fishing Derby sponsored by Supervisor Don Wagner, right, Dec. 7. This year's derby, with reportedly the largest turnout to date, featured blind bogey drawings, prizes and food trucks. The event was the third annual derby hosted by Wagner, with the assistance of OC Parks.

# COMMUNITY SPORTS

BY CLIFF ROBBINS AND CHAD CLINE

## Canyon paces All-League picks in Girls Flag Football

Canyon High School went undefeated, 8-0, and captured the Freeway League.

In Div. 1 CIF Girls Flag Football, Canyon edged JSerra 19-14 in round 1, then won 34-27 over Santa Margarita in round 2, to advance to the semi-finals, losing to Orange Lutheran. Canyon finished the season 18-1.

In Div. 1, presented by the LA84 Foundation, and selected by the Girls Flag Football Coaches Committee, the following were named All-CIF: from Orange Lutheran High School, senior Josie Anderson (SR/DB) and junior Julia Oberholtzer (WR/LB); from Canyon High School, juniors Ella Feldhaus (QB) and Caroline Hicks (WR/DB).

OLu's Kristen Sherman was named Div. 1 Coach of the Year and Orange Lutheran sophomore Makena Cook (QB) was named Player of the Year.

In Div. 2, El Modena captured third place.

In the Freeway League, named to the First Team were: Katelyn Cott, Caroline Hicks and Nickolette Morrelle from Canyon High; from El Modena, Kaitlyn Galasso, Kylie Tafua and Halle Calderon; from Villa Park, Kathleen Tighe; and from Foothill High, Charley McHale.

Named to the Freeway League Second Team were: from Canyon High, Ashlee Backoff and Baylee Backoff; Maddie Romo from El Modena; from Foothill, Caroline

O'Neal; and from Villa Park High, Alia Dadabhoy and Sage Samuel.

Foothill Team Awards were given: Caroline O'Neal, Knight of the Year; Charley McHale, Offensive Player of the Year; Maleah Paige, Defensive Player of the Year; Calla Nagler, Most Improved; Gigi Felizzari, Coaches Award; Brooklyn Austin, R.I.D.E.S Award; and Clara Williams, Tough as Nails Award.

The Canyon Team Awards were: Most Valuable Player, Ella Feldhaus; Most Valuable Player, Offensive, Caroline Hicks; Most Valuable Player, Defensive, Katy Cott; Coaches Award, Baylee Backoff and Nickolette Morrell; Most Inspirational, Madison Weber; Most Improved, Julia Fitzgerald.



Samantha Simmons, El Modena Vanguard, scored over the stretched Laguna Hills goalkeeper.



Zulema Andrade (in white) from El Modena takes control of the loose ball against Laguna Hills. El Modena won, 12-5.



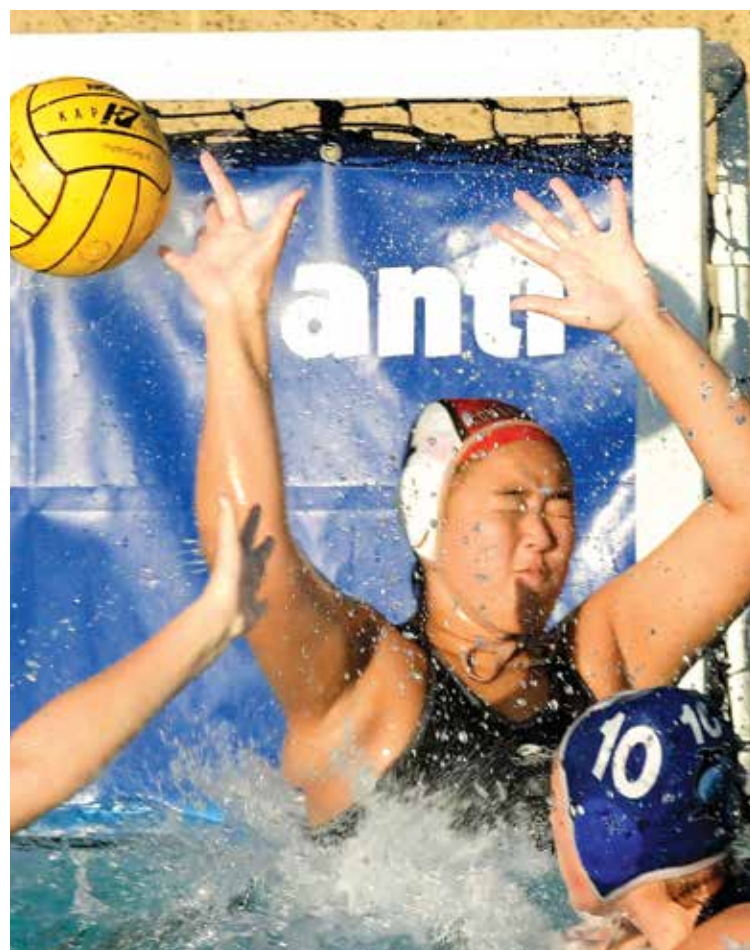
Jordan Simmons, left, and Carsyn Bulrice, center, take away the shooting lane. Canyon dropped a close one, 5-4, in preseason play.



Jordan Simmons from Canyon High School keeps the pressure on the Laguna Hills player.



Claire Vaughan from Canyon High School takes away the possible shot in the Laguna Hills game.



Canyon High goalkeeper Layla Vanasopa Canyon deflects a shot on goal in the game against Laguna Hills.

## Local athletes sign NCAA Letters of Intent

Villa Park High School held its fall signing party for six seniors, Nov. 13, who will be continuing their education in the fall of 2025: Aaron Keener will play ice hockey at Montana Technical; Greg Gamal, tennis, University of California, Irvine; Auddrey Lira, softball, University of California, San Diego; Jayden Boyer, soccer, Arizona Christian University; Shawn Romero, baseball, Pepperdine University; and Parker Vitioe, soccer at Biola University.

Canyon High School saw four seniors sign Letters of Intent to continue playing their sports and education: Brandon Benjamin will play basketball at University of San Diego; Jade Diaz, softball at University of California, Berkeley; Bella Settembro, softball, University of California, San Diego; and Irma Urincho, softball at Brigham Young University.

# COMMUNITY SPORTS

BY CLIFF ROBBINS AND CHAD CLINE



Mackenzie Brehm (24) teams up with Sam Rubio from El Modena High School to block the Garden Grove player.



Sienna Gamez, from El Modena High, brings the ball up court in pre-season girls basketball.



Camila Lubin from ElMo hauls down a rebound.



Mackenzie Brehm gets the easy bucket against Garden Grove. El Modena won, 85-5.

## Postseason awards honor SCC athletes

Two-time All-Orange Empire Conference volleyball player Chelsea Riedel, a former El Modena athlete, ended her sophomore season at Santiago Canyon College with 520 kills. Riedel had a career high 34 kills and 16 digs and one block in the final match against Irvine Valley College.

Peyton Speakman, a former Esperanza athlete, posted a career high 738 assists. Speakman posted 42 assists, a game high and finished with 20 or more in 17 matches.

Sophie Ziglinski, from Canyon High, finished her two years with 126 points and 110 kills.

Named to the First Team All-Orange Empire Womens Volleyball Team was Chelsea Riedel; Peyton Speakman was named to the second All-OEC Womens Volleyball Team.

Named to the First Team All-Orange Empire Womens Soccer Team was sophomore Jordyn Lamastra. Lamastra scored on 7 for 21 goal attempts.

Wrapping up the season, soph-

omore Samantha Aquila scored 11 goals on 20 attempts. Alyssa Marino, the former El Modena athlete, finished her two years at Santiago Canyon College, leading the Hawks with 19 goals on 21 attempts.

Named to the Second Team All-OEC were sophomores Gizelle Bruno and Grayton Normand.

Named to the Orange Empire Mens First Team Soccer Team were sophomores Hudson Dare and Andrew Marentes, a former Canyon High athlete.



Mia Lussier from Santiago Canyon College stops the ball mid-flight in the Saddleback game.



Scarlett Serpas from Santiago Canyon College blocks out the Saddleback College defender. Serpas scored the game-winning goal against Mt. San Antonio to advance into the CCCAA Womens Soccer playoffs.



Alyssa Marino (20) from Santiago Canyon College, an El Modena alum, controls the ball against Saddleback College in the So. Cal. Regional game.



Makayla Worcester, goalkeeper for Santiago Canyon College, climbs the ladder to take away a Saddleback goal. Worcester had three saves in the game. Santiago Canyon fell short in its bid for another run on the state title.

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