



Photographs by ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

SCIENCE-BASED efforts to protect ecosystems threatened by groundwater pumping have been paying off at the Kern River Preserve.

Underlying risk to vital ecosystems

California is recognized as one of the world's hot spots of biodiversity, with more species of plants and animals than any other state. And a significant number of the state's species, including frogs and birds, live in habitats that depend on groundwater.

These rich ecosystems — including spring-fed streams, wetlands, riparian forests and oak woodlands — are vulnerable to declines in groundwater levels. In areas where unchecked pumping from wells severely depletes aquifers, once-thriving wetlands and forests can dry up and die.

Spotting threats to vulnerable natural areas has become a mission for Melissa Rohde, a hydrologist who has spent years analyzing satellite data and water levels in wells to come up with strategies for preventing ecosystems from being left high and dry.

"Nature has been getting the short end of the stick. It basically gets whatever is left behind, which oftentimes is not enough," Rohde said. "How do we ensure that these ecosystems are protected?"

California is the only state with

Hydrologist focuses on groundwater levels, aiming to help save California habitats that could be pumped dry

By Ian James
REPORTING FROM WELDON, CALIF.



A RESTORED wetland at the preserve draws a variety of birds and recharges the aquifer so tree roots can reach its water.

a groundwater law that includes provisions intended to protect groundwater-dependent ecosystems. But the law, adopted in 2014, gives considerable leeway to local agencies in developing water management plans that prevent "significant and unreasonable adverse impacts."

When Rohde and other scientists examined the local-level plans for parts of the state that fall under regulation, they found only about 9% of groundwater-dependent ecosystems were adequately protected, while the remaining 91% were vulnerable.

Rohde has been focusing on finding ways to change that, in California and around the world.

Often working at home, she has pored over satellite data to spot decreases in vegetation greenness during drought, a telltale sign of die-off caused by declining aquifer levels. And she has analyzed how different types of trees, including willows, cottonwoods and oaks, fare when water levels fall, depending on the depth of their roots.

Rohde and other researchers [See Groundwater, A7]

Sheriff's Dept. cited for deadly blaze

State says neglected maintenance led to mobile shooting range fire that killed deputy.

BY KERI BLAKINGER

State regulators have accused the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department of skipping inspections, neglecting maintenance and committing an array of "willful" safety violations that led to a 2023 mobile shooting range fire that killed one deputy, according to records obtained by The Times.

Last month, the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health hit the department with just over \$300,000 in fines for a series of safety violations in a mobile range trailer parked outside the Castaic jail complex. Inspectors said the buildup of combustible dust — such as accumulated gunpowder — caused the deadly blaze.

"The employer failed to conduct daily, weekly, monthly, and bi-annual preventive maintenance on the indoor mobile shooting trailer," the agency wrote in a 19-page citation issued in April. "As a result on or about October 10, 2023, two employees suffered serious physical harm to their body when the indoor trailer exploded and caught on fire."

Both of the burned deputies were hospitalized, and last month one of them — Alfredo "Freddy" Flores, 51 — died. He was buried May 9 during a funeral in Sylmar.

"We now know that Freddy lost his life because mobile trailers like the one he was in had a known history of catching fire due to poor design and poor maintenance," said attorney John Carpenter, who is representing the Flores family.

The Assn. of Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs blamed county leaders on the Board of Supervisors for failing to "properly fund and equip" the Sheriff's Department, which has a \$4-billion budget.

[See Fire, A6]

Hollywood crews in crisis as 'action' calls drop in L.A.

Last year's strikes created a dry spell for everyone. Below-line workers still reeling.

BY KAITLYN HUAMANI

After more than two decades in the entertainment industry, Keith Dunkerley still loves nothing more than working on a set. The 47-year-old director of photography and camera operator, who's had consistent work since he moved to Los Angeles 23 years ago, said his is "the best job in the world."

Since the writers' and actors' strikes last year and the slow restart of production, though, Dunkerley said his work opportunities look quite different than in previous years: He has worked only 18 days during the first five months of 2024.

"People outside the business don't understand this is not a factory," he said. "It's not like, 'OK, the strike's over, go back to the factory, turn the lights on and get the

machines going.' A lot of us knew it's going to take some time to ramp things up."

While Dunkerley supported his family through savings and odd jobs as a handyman on TaskRabbit during the strikes, the sluggish rebound has been difficult for him. He's recently made more than 60 calls to friends and industry contacts to look for prospects.

What Dunkerley is experiencing is part of the massive ripple effect of strikes by the Writers Guild and the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. Tens of thousands of people working in entertainment and adjacent industries have been affected, with crew members especially hit hard.

"I am currently in the worst place I've ever been in my entire life financially," said Heather Fink, a boom operator and director. "The industry is in a crisis. It is not back to normal. We are in debt."

FilmLA, a nonprofit that tracks on-location permit-

[See Hollywood, A9]



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE David O. Carter, left, leads retired Judge Jay C. Gandhi on an early morning tour of downtown L.A.'s Skid Row in September 2023.

If not a czar, close enough

U.S. District Judge David O. Carter wields nearly unilateral power on homelessness policy in L.A.

BY DOUG SMITH

It's an idea that always beguiles but never delivers.

Why can't Los Angeles have a homelessness "czar," a single person with the power to corral and direct the hodgepodge of agencies, as well as bridge the political divides that stymie govern-

ment's best intentions?

Mayor Karen Bass has her deputy for homelessness and housing. The county has the Homeless Initiative, with its own executive director. Members of the Board of Supervisors and City Council act as mini-czars, implementing diverse homelessness strategies in their districts. An independ-

ent housing authority decides who gets rental subsidies. The joint-powers Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority has its chief executive officer who reports to both the city and county.

Now a judge has slammed his gavel over all of them. He's no young upstart but an 80-year-old who [See Judge, A12]

Closing remarks in Trump's trial

Prosecutor calls hush money payment a "cover-up"; lawyers assert ex-president's innocence. **NATION, A5**

More campus workers strike

The walkout over the treatment of protesters reaches UCLA and UC Davis. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

The crux of the Live Nation suit

The U.S. call for a breakup suggests that previous antitrust efforts have fallen short. **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather

Low clouds, then sun. L.A. Basin: 73/57 **B6**

For the latest news, go to latimes.com.

Printed with soy inks on partially recycled paper.



Get more of the news you need.

Download the app.



PERSPECTIVES

Feds' long struggle to get Live Nation to comply

MICHAEL HILTZIK

Is there a better example of arrogant corporate behavior than flouting a government decree — not once but multiple times? That's the question raised by the antitrust lawsuit against the giant concert and ticketing conglomerate Live Nation alleging a raft of monopolistic practices.



The lawsuit, filed Thursday by the Department of Justice, 29 states and the District of Columbia, draws a picture of a company that has ruthlessly exploited its multiple roles as a dominant concert promoter, dominant owner or controller of concert venues, and dominant ticketing manager.

The combination allows Live Nation to exercise "control over which artists perform on which dates at which venues," as well as "how fans are able to purchase tickets ... and what fees those fans will pay," according to the lawsuit.

The plaintiffs' goal is to break up Live Nation — specifically, to force it to divest Ticketmaster, the ticketing service it merged with in 2010. To the federal officials and the states, the Ticketmaster deal was the original sin allowing Live Nation to build itself a near-monopoly in the live music industry.

This was predictable: Mergers that brought together content producers and content distributors have been a persistent headache for antitrust enforcers — witness the mergers of NBCUniversal with the cable company Comcast and AT&T with Time Warner, the owner of CNN, HBO, Warner Bros. and much more.

Seeing anticompetitive problems on the horizon, the U.S. and 19 states originally sued to block the Live Nation-Ticketmaster deal in 2010. The case was settled



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

RAPPER Kanye West performs in March. Consent decrees have "failed to restrain Live Nation and Ticketmaster from violating" antitrust laws, the U.S. says.

with a consent decree in which Live Nation promised not to condition the provision of live shows to venues that chose not to use Ticketmaster as their ticketing agent, or to threaten or retaliate against any venues contracted with a rival ticketer, such as StubHub or SeatGeek.

By 2020, the government said it had compiled evidence that Live Nation had been violating the decree for years.

The government sued again, this time settling the case with a deal that extended the initial consent decree by more than five years (to Dec. 31, 2025), imposed an independent monitor on the company, and set a penalty of \$1 million for each violation.

Yet here we are again. Since the 2020 settlement, according to the new lawsuit, "Live Nation and Ticketmaster have committed additional, different, and more expansive violations of the antitrust laws." The consent decrees, the lawsuit

says, have "failed to restrain Live Nation and Ticketmaster from violating other antitrust laws in increasingly serious ways."

Live Nation has thumbed its nose at the authorities for more than 20 years, the lawsuit says. Live Nation and Ticketmaster got what they wanted in negotiations with the government in 2010 and "promptly consummated" their deal, but they "failed to live up to their end of the bargain."

What does Live Nation have to say about all this? Mostly huffing and puffing. The company attributes the case filing to "intense political pressure on DOJ to file a lawsuit, and a long-term lobbying campaign from rivals trying to limit competition." It calls itself "another casualty of this Administration's decision to turn over antitrust enforcement to a populist urge that simply rejects how antitrust law works."

The political pressure, the company says, derives in part from consumer frustration with high ticket prices and extortionate service fees; it warns that its divesting Ticketmaster won't do anything to reduce ticket prices or fees and that Ticketmaster's "commissions" as a share of total prices are much lower than those of other "digital marketplaces" such as Airbnb, Uber and PlaySta-

erful to beat.

The conflict, which was closely followed by my late colleague Chuck Phillips, ended with a loss for Pearl Jam, which eventually had to give up its plans to stage a concert tour without Ticketmaster's participation. Popular touring artists have regularly groused about Ticketmaster since then. Garth Brooks, Neil Young, R.E.M., the Grateful Dead and Aerosmith were among the acts that supported Pearl Jam in its fight. Most recently, technological glitches connected with Ticketmaster's handling of tickets for Taylor Swift's Eras tour infuriated fans and provoked another congressional hearing; Ticketmaster blamed the fiasco on scalpers and astronomical demand for the tour.

The most interesting passage in the new lawsuit concerns Live Nation's relationship with its one-time competitor, Oak View Group. That firm was founded in 2015 by Tim Leiweke, a former executive with Anschutz Entertainment Group, and agent and manager Irving Azoff. According to the lawsuit, the group's contracts with leading venues and artists quickly turned into a troubling rival to Live Nation. The two companies reached a cooperative arrangement in which Oak View avoided competing with Live Nation for artists and tours. The deal led to a "cozy relationship" in which Oak View has described itself as a "pimp" and a "hammer" for Live Nation.

Independent venues have learned that they thwart Live Nation at their peril, the governments allege. A 2021 episode involved the Brooklyn, N.Y., arena Barclays Center, which switched from Ticketmaster to SeatGeek, because the latter offered Barclays a higher percentage share of fees from resold tickets (the venue's name isn't mentioned in the lawsuit, but the facts match the case). A Live Nation executive warned the arena's CEO that the venue "should think about bigger relationship with LN not just who is writing a bigger sponsorship check."

Live Nation then switched several concerts to other venues, the lawsuit states. Within a year, Barclays returned to Ticketmaster. In another case, Live Nation threatened to deny

admission to any customer holding a ticket issued by StubHub for a concert at the Los Angeles Coliseum in 2021, where Ticketmaster claimed to hold an exclusive ticketing contract; hundreds of concertgoers were turned away.

I couldn't find a reference to any such concert, but the allegation matches an incident that involved a concert by the Black Keys at the Wiltern theater in 2019, when a dispute between Ticketmaster and StubHub and other ticketing services resulted in hundreds of customers being turned away at the door.

That was one case in which Ticketmaster's hardened competitive policies led to a wave of consumer discontent. There's more. In 2022, Ticketmaster inaugurated a policy in which purchased tickets can be transferred only between Ticketmaster account holders.

In other words, members of a party of concertgoers have to all sign up for accounts in order to receive the tickets from the purchaser. That's a boon for Ticketmaster's database. Splitting off Ticketmaster from the rest of Live Nation might be relatively easy, since the original merger was approved based on conditions that the government says have been relentlessly violated.

Theoretically, cleaving the company's interest in promoting concerts and filling venues from its interest in extracting the maximum in junk fees from powerless customers would do much to foster competition in the ticketing business.

But it's proper to note that there are multiple businesses that position themselves as stakeholders in live entertainment. Arena, amphitheater and stadium operators might not care about junk fees charged to patrons, as long as they get a cut of the action. Moreover, customers are always going to pay through the nose for tickets to high-profile, popular acts like Taylor Swift.

It may be true, as Live Nation says, that this lawsuit may not bring prices down even if it's successful. In the entertainment industry, there's always someone looking to take a cut of your dollar.

Hiltzik writes a blog on latimes.com. Follow him on Facebook or X, @hiltzikm, or email michael.hiltzik@latimes.com.

FOR THE RECORD

Beach Boys: The May 27 Calendar story about the documentary "The Beach Boys" said the movie "Love & Mercy" was released in 2004. It was released in 2014.

How to contact us

(800) LA TIMES

Home Delivery and Membership Program

For questions about delivery, billing and vacation holds, or for information about our Membership program, please contact us at (213) 283-2274 or memberships@latimes.com. You can also manage your account at myaccount.latimes.com.

Letters to the Editor

Want to write a letter to be published in the paper and online? E-mail letters@latimes.com. For submission guidelines, see latimes.com/letters.

Readers' Representative

If you believe we have made an error, or you have questions about our journalistic standards and practices, our readers' representative can be reached at readers.representative@latimes.com, (877) 554-4000 or online at latimes.com/readersrep.

Advertising

For print and online advertising information, go to

latimes.com/mediakit or call (213) 237-6176.

Reprint Requests

For the rights to use articles, photos, graphics and page reproductions, e-mail reprint@latimes.com or call (213) 237-4565.

Times In Education

To get the digital Los Angeles Times at no cost (along with our newspaper-based teaching materials), contact us at latimes.com/te, or email Heidi.stauder@latimes.com

The Newsroom

Know something important we should cover? Send a secure tip at latimes.com/tips. To send a press release go to the newsroom directory at latimes.com/staff.

Media Relations

For outside media requests and inquiries, e-mail commsdept@latimes.com.

L.A. Times Store

Search archives, merchandise and front pages at latimes.com/store.

Los Angeles Times

A California Times Publication
Founded Dec. 4, 1881
Vol. CXLIII No. 178

LOS ANGELES TIMES (ISSN 0458-3035) is published by the Los Angeles Times, 2300 E. Imperial Highway, El Segundo, CA 90245. Periodicals postage is paid at Los Angeles, CA, and additional cities. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the above address.
Home Delivery Subscription Rates (all rates include applicable CA sales taxes and apply to most areas):
Print + unlimited digital rates:
Seven-day \$28/week, \$1,456 annually.
Thursday-Sunday \$16/week, \$832 annually.
Thursday & Sunday \$10/week, \$520 annually.
Saturday & Sunday \$9/week, \$468 annually.
Sunday \$8.50/week, \$442 annually.

Monday-Saturday \$18/week, \$936 annually (also includes Sundays, except 3/31, 5/26, 9/1 and 10/23). Monday-Friday \$16/week, \$832 annually.
All subscriptions may include up to eight Premium issues per year. For each Premium issue, your account balance will be charged an additional fee up to \$4.49, in the billing period when the section publishes. This will result in shortening the length of your billing period. Future Premium issues may include: Shobei Ohtani's Journey 3/17/24, Books in Hollywood / Festival of Books 4/14/24, 101 Best West Coast Experiences 5/19/24, Our Queerest Century 6/23/24, The Best Tacos of LA 7/28/24, Climate 9/15/24, Holiday Gift Guide 11/3/24, and 101 Best Restaurants 12/8/24.

Printed with soy-based ink on recycled newsprint from wood byproducts.

South Africa election could be turning point

Voters have expressed frustration with the African National Congress, in power since apartheid's end.

BY GERALD IMRAY

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — South Africa's election will determine how weary the country has become of the ruling African National Congress party, which has been in power since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule 30 years ago.

President Cyril Ramaphosa and the ANC are struggling to keep their parliamentary majority and several opinion polls have put the party's support at less than 50% ahead of Wednesday's election.

That doesn't mean that the beleaguered ANC will be out of power in Africa's most advanced economy.

Even as the famous organization once led by Nelson Mandela has seen a decline in its popularity, no one has risen to a position to replace it. Instead, South Africans who have turned away from the ANC have gone looking for answers among an array of opposition parties.

The ANC is still expected to gain the largest share of votes. But without an outright majority, it would need to form a coalition to stay in government and keep Ramaphosa for a second and final term as president. For a key country on the African continent, that might bring new complications.

Some recent coalitions at the local level have been spectacular failures.

While most South Africans may be ready to register their disgruntlement with the ANC in a defining moment, a coalition government may not easily solve the country's big problems, which include some of the world's highest levels of unemployment and inequality.

How does the election work?

South Africans don't vote directly for their president, but rather decide the makeup of the parliament, which is called the National Assembly. They do that by choosing parties, and those parties get seats in the parliament according to their share of the national vote. The 400-member National Assembly then elects the president, meaning whichever party has a majority chooses the head of state.

That has been the ANC since the first all-race elections in 1994, but this time it may need to strike agreements with other parties to get the required 201 votes from lawmakers to reelect the 71-year-old Ramaphosa and form a government.

The main election day is Wednesday and people will vote in all nine provinces. It will decide the makeup of both the national and provincial legislatures. Some who were granted special permission voted earlier in the week. Results are expected within days.

Nearly 28 million of the population of 62 million are registered to vote in what is only the country's seventh

fully democratic national election since apartheid was dismantled.

Who is running?

There are more than 50 political parties registered for the national election, the most ever, and even more for the provincial legislatures. Independent candidates will be allowed to stand for the first time.

The ANC's fate is the headline story: Ramaphosa is the party's leader and the face of its campaign.

The main opposition is the centrist Democratic Alliance, or DA. It has entered into an agreement with some smaller parties in the hope that their combined vote might force the ANC out of the government completely, but that's not seen as likely to happen.

The far-left Economic Freedom Fighters, or EFF, is the third-biggest party and is led by Julius Malema, a fiery former ANC youth leader.

The DA won around 20% in the last national election and the EFF 10% to the ANC's 57.5%. Neither opposition party appears to have significantly increased in popularity.

That's largely because of the dozens of other parties, many of them new, that have captured small shares. While 80% of South Africa's population is Black, it is a multiracial society, with many ethnicities and 12 official languages. An equally diverse political picture is beginning to appear.

Of the new parties, the MK Party or uMkhonto weSizwe (which means Spear of the Nation) has

gained the most attention because it is led by former South African President Jacob Zuma, who has turned his back on the ANC he once led in a bitter battle with Ramaphosa, the man who replaced him.

Zuma has been disqualified from standing as a candidate for parliament but can still campaign for his party.

What are the big issues?

Unemployment and poverty stand out as the most pressing issues for the majority of people. While South Africa is regarded as Africa's most advanced country, its contradictions are stark. It also has an unemployment rate of 32% — ranked the highest in the world — and more than half of South Africans are living in poverty, according to the World Bank.

That has driven most of the discontent as millions of the poor Black majority feel the ANC has not improved their lives sufficiently three decades after apartheid, which brutally oppressed Black people in favor of the white minority.

Other issues that are seen as pushing voters away from the ANC are the high rate of violent crime, multiple government corruption scandals over the years, the failure of some basic government services and a crisis within the state-owned electricity supplier that has led to nationwide blackouts at regular intervals to conserve power. The blackouts have eased, but they angered people.

Imray writes for the Associated Press.



Download the app.
Discover more.

Los Angeles Times

THE WORLD

Palestinians struggle for the basics of survival

Israel's offensive in Rafah has displaced nearly 1 million, while the number of aid convoys has plunged.

By WAFSA SHURAF, SAMY MAGDY AND LEE KEATH

DEIR AL BALAH, Gaza Strip — The tent camps stretch more than 10 miles along Gaza's coast, filling the beach and spilling into empty lots, fields and streets.

Families dig trenches to use as toilets. Fathers search for food and water. Children dig through garbage and wrecked buildings looking for wood or cardboard their mothers can burn for cooking.

Over the last three weeks, Israel's offensive in Rafah has sent nearly a million Palestinians fleeing the city in the southern Gaza Strip and scattering across a wide area. Most have been displaced multiple times during Israel's nearly eight-month-long war in Gaza, which is aimed at destroying Hamas but has devastated the territory and caused what the United Nations says is a near famine.

Israeli shelling and airstrikes Monday night and Tuesday killed at least 37 people outside of Rafah, most of them sheltering in tents — pummeling the same area where strikes days earlier triggered a deadly fire in the camp, according to witnesses, emergency workers and hospital officials.

The situation has been worsened by a dramatic plunge in the amount of food, fuel and other supplies reaching the U.N. and other aid groups for distribution. Palestinians have largely been on their own to find the basics for survival.

"The situation is tragic. You have 20 people in the



DISPLACED Palestinians survey tents destroyed by Israeli bombardment west of Rafah in the Gaza Strip. Dozens were killed in strikes Monday night and Tuesday.

tent, with no clean water, no electricity. We have nothing," said Mohammad Abu Radwan, a schoolteacher. He shares a tent with his wife, six children and other family members.

"I can't explain what it feels like living through constant displacement, losing your loved ones," he said. "All of this destroys us mentally."

Abu Radwan fled Rafah soon after the Israeli assault on the city began May 6 as bombardment neared the house where he was sheltering. He and three other families paid \$1,000 for donkey carts to take them to the outskirts of Khan Yunis, less than 4 miles away, where it took a day living outdoors before they could assemble the materials for a makeshift tent. Next to the tent, they dug a toilet trench, hanging blankets and old clothes around it for privacy.

Families usually have to buy the wood and tarps for their tents, which can run up to \$500, not counting ropes, nails and the cost of transporting the material, the humanitarian group Mercy Corps said.

Israeli authorities controlling all entry points into Gaza have been letting

greater numbers of private commercial trucks into the territory, the U.N. and aid workers say. More fruits and vegetables can be found in markets, and prices on some have fallen, Palestinians say.

Still, most homeless Palestinians can't afford them. Many in Gaza have not received salaries for months, and their savings are being depleted. Even those who have money in the bank often can't withdraw it because there is so little cash in the territory. Many turn to black-market exchanges that charge up to 20% to give cash for transfers from bank accounts.

Meanwhile, humanitarian convoys with supplies for aid groups to distribute have fallen to nearly the lowest levels of the war, the U.N. says.

Previously, the U.N. was receiving several hundred trucks a day. Since May 6, the daily number has dropped to an average of 53, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA. Some 600 trucks a day are needed to stave off starvation, according to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

In the last three weeks, most of the incoming aid has entered through two crossings from Israel in northern Gaza and via a U.S.-built floating pier taking deliveries by sea. But that pier has suspended operations after sustaining damage from rough seas, three U.S. officials told the Associated Press on Tuesday.

The main crossings in the south, Rafah from Egypt and Kerem Shalom from Israel, are either not operating or are largely inaccessible to aid groups because of fighting. Israel says it has been letting hundreds of trucks through Kerem Shalom. But the U.N. has been able to collect only about 200 on the Gaza side over the last three weeks because of Israeli military restrictions and airstrikes and Hamas rocket launches, spokesperson Juliette Touma said Tuesday.

Entry of fuel has fallen to about a third of what it was before the Rafah offensive, according to OCHA. That amount has to keep hospitals, bakeries, water pumps and aid trucks working.

The U.S. humanitarian group American Near East Refugee Aid "is having diffi-

culty distributing what we are able to bring in to the people who need it, because there's so little fuel for trucks," spokesperson Steve Fake said.

Most of those fleeing Rafah have poured into a humanitarian zone declared by Israel that is centered on Muwasi, a largely barren strip of coastal land. The zone was expanded north and east to reach the edges of Khan Yunis and the central town of Deir al Balah, both of which have also filled with people.

"As we can see, there is nothing 'humanitarian' about these areas," said Suze van Meegeen, head of operations in Gaza for the Norwegian Refugee Council, which has staff operating in Muwasi.

Much of the humanitarian zone has no charity kitchens or food market; it has only a few field hospitals and smaller medical tents that can't handle emergencies but pass out painkillers and antibiotics if they have them, according to Mercy Corps.

"It's just a matter of time before people begin to suffer greatly from food insecurity," the group said.

The Muwasi area is mostly coastal dunes, with no water resources or sewage systems. With human waste deposited near tents and garbage piling up, many people are suffering from diarrhea and diseases such as hepatitis, as well as skin allergies and lice, Mercy Corps said.

Israel says its offensive in Rafah is vital to its aim of destroying Hamas in Gaza after the group's Oct. 7 attack, in which militants killed some 1,200 people and abducted around 250. Israel's retaliatory campaign in Gaza has killed some 36,000, according to the Health Ministry there.

Aid groups have warned for months that an attack on Rafah would worsen Gaza's humanitarian disaster. So far, Israel's operations have

been short of an all-out invasion, though fighting has expanded over the last three weeks from the eastern parts of Rafah to the central districts. A strike Sunday hit a tent camp in western Rafah, causing a large fire and killing at least 45 people, according to health officials.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu acknowledged that a "tragic mistake" had occurred.

Satellite photos shot Friday by Planet Labs PBC show dense new tent camps running the length of the coast from just north of Rafah to Deir al Balah. The ramshackle shelters are packed in mazes of corrugated metal and plastic sheets, blankets and bed-sheets draped over wooden sticks.

Tamer Saeed Abu'l Kheir said he goes out every day at 6 a.m. to find water, usually returning around noon to the tent outside Khan Yunis where he and nearly two dozen relatives live. His three children, all under 10, are always sick, but he has to send them out to collect wood for the cooking fire, he says. He worries they'll come across unexploded bombs in the wrecked houses.

His aging father has trouble moving so has to relieve himself in a bucket, and Abu'l Kheir has to regularly pay to transport him to the nearest hospital for kidney dialysis.

"Wood costs money, water costs money, everything costs money," said his wife, Leena Abu'l Kheir. She broke down in sobs. "I'm afraid I'll wake up one day and I've lost my children, my mother, my husband, my family."

Shurafa, Magdy and Keath write for the Associated Press. Magdy and Keath reported from Cairo. AP correspondents Sarah El Deeb in Beirut, Fatma Khaled in Cairo and Mohammed Jahjough in Muwasi, Gaza Strip, contributed to this report.

ON JULY 1, 2024

THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
MINIMUM WAGE IS

\$17.28

FOR ALL BUSINESSES

The minimum wage increases annually.
Check our website every February.

QUESTIONS?
We're here to help!

1-844-WAGESLA (924-3752)
<http://wagesla.lacity.org>
WagesLA@lacity.org

RAISE THE WAGE
LA



As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities.

Up to \$200 for VINTAGE ROYAL COPENHAGEN TALCUM POWDER BOTTLES

Bay Area Law Firm seeks to purchase:
ROYAL COPENHAGEN TALC POWDER



If you have a
used or unused
Royal Copenhagen
talc container
from the
1970s or 1980s

Please call
1-510-302-1095
and leave a message.

We will promptly
call you back.



**Kazan, McClain, Satterley
& Greenwood**
A Professional Law Corporation
KAZANLAW.COM

THE NATION

Trump defense attacks Cohen in closing remarks

Prosecutor calls hush money payment an illegal 'cover-up' as ex-president's lawyers assert his innocence.

BY MICHAEL R. SISAK,
JENNIFER PELTZ,
ERIC TUCKER
AND JILL COLVIN

NEW YORK — Donald Trump engaged in “a conspiracy and a cover-up,” a prosecutor told jurors during closing arguments Tuesday in the former president’s hush money trial, while a defense lawyer branded the star witness as the “greatest liar of all time” and pressed the panel for an across-the-board acquittal.

The lawyers’ dueling accounts, wildly divergent in their assessments of witness credibility and the strength of evidence, offered both sides one final chance to score points with the jury before it starts deliberating the first felony case against a former American president.

“This case, at its core, is about a conspiracy and a cover-up,” said prosecutor Joshua Steinglass.

The trial featured allegations that Trump and his allies conspired to stifle potentially embarrassing stories during the 2016 presidential campaign through hush money payments, including to a porn actor who alleged that she and Trump had sex a decade earlier. Trump has denied having sex with her or with another woman who said they’d had an affair. His lawyer Todd Blanche told jurors that neither the actor, Stormy Daniels, nor the Trump attorney who paid her can be trusted in their testimony.

“President Trump is innocent. He did not commit any crimes, and the district attorney has not met their burden of proof, period,” Blanche said.



DEFENSE LAWYER Todd Blanche makes the case Tuesday for the former president’s acquittal with an hours-long address to the jury in this courtroom sketch.

Following more than four weeks of testimony, the day-long summations teed up a momentous and historically unprecedented task for the jury as it decides whether to convict the presumptive Republican presidential nominee ahead of the November election. The political implications of the proceedings were unmistakable as President Biden’s campaign staged an event outside court with actor Robert De Niro while Blanche reminded jurors that the case was not a referendum on their views about Trump.

Steinglass sought to defray potential juror concerns about witness credibility. He acknowledged that Daniels’ account of an alleged 2006 encounter in a Lake Tahoe hotel suite was at times “cringeworthy,” but said the details she offered — including about the decor and what she said she saw when she snooped in Trump’s toiletry kit — were full of touchstones “that kind of ring true.”

The story matters, he said, because it “reinforces [Trump’s] incentive to buy her silence.”

“Her story is messy. It makes people uncomfortable to hear. It probably makes some of you uncomfortable to hear. But that’s kind of the point,” Steinglass said. He told jurors: “In the simplest terms, Stormy Daniels is the motive.”

He also tried to reassure jurors that the prosecution’s case did not rest solely on Michael Cohen, Trump’s former lawyer and personal fixer who paid Daniels \$130,000 to keep quiet. Cohen later pleaded guilty to federal charges for his role in the hush money payments, as well as to lying to Congress. He went to prison and was disbarred, but his direct involvement in the transactions made him a key witness at trial.

“It’s not about whether you like Michael Cohen. It’s not about whether you want to go into business with Michael Cohen. It’s whether

he has useful, reliable information to give you about what went down in this case, and the truth is that he was in the best position to know,” Steinglass said.

Trump faces 34 felony counts of falsifying business records, charges punishable by up to four years in prison. He has pleaded not guilty and denied wrongdoing. It’s unclear whether prosecutors would seek imprisonment in the event of a conviction, or whether the judge would impose that punishment.

Though the case featured steamy details about sex and tabloid industry practices, the charges turn on something more mundane: reimbursements Trump signed for Cohen for the hush money payments.

The reimbursements were recorded as being for legal expenses, which prosecutors say was a fraudulent label designed to conceal the purpose of the hush money transaction and to illicitly interfere in the 2016 election.

Blanche sought to unravel Cohen’s claim that he had spoken to Trump by phone on Oct. 24, 2016, about the Daniels arrangement.

Cohen said he had contacted Trump’s bodyguard in order to reach Trump, but Blanche asserted that at the time Cohen was dealing with a spate of harassing phone calls and was preoccupied with that problem.

“It was a lie,” Blanche said. “That was a lie, and he got caught red-handed.”

In his testimony, Cohen acknowledged a series of past lies, saying many were intended to protect Trump. But he said he had subsequently told the truth, at great cost.

“My entire life has been turned upside-down as a direct result,” he said.

Steinglass used a bit of stagecraft to challenge the defense’s assertion that Cohen was lying about the subject of that phone conversation, demonstrating a hypothetical version of the call to show jurors how Cohen and the bodyguard, Keith Schiller, could have covered multiple subjects in less than a minute.

Cohen’s actual call to Schiller’s phone number lasted 96 seconds, according to phone records. Steinglass showed, with his hypothetical, that Cohen could’ve spoken to Schiller about the prank calls, asked him to pass the phone to Trump and then discussed the Daniels deal with Trump, all in 49 seconds.

The New York prosecution is one of four criminal cases pending against Trump as he seeks to reclaim the White House from Biden. It’s unclear whether any of the others will reach trial before November’s election.

Sisak, Peltz, Tucker and Colvin write for the Associated Press. AP writer Michelle L. Price in New York contributed to this report.

Defense lawyers say Cohen actually did substantive legal work for Trump and his family.

In his own hours-long address to the jury, with sweeping denials echoing Trump’s “deny everything” approach, Blanche attacked the entire foundation of the case.

He said Cohen, not Trump, created the invoices that were submitted to the Trump Organization for reimbursement and that there was no proof that Trump knew what staffers were doing with the payments. He disputed the contention that Trump and Daniels had sex, and he rejected the idea that the alleged hush money scheme amounted to election interference.

“Every campaign in this country is a conspiracy to promote a candidate, a group of people who are working together to help somebody win,” Blanche said.

But as expected, he reserved his most animated attack for Cohen, with whom he’d tangled during a lengthy cross-examination.

Mimicking the term “GOAT,” used primarily in sports as an acronym for “greatest of all time,” Blanche labeled Cohen the “GLOAT” — greatest liar of all time. The lawyer also called Cohen “the human embodiment of reasonable doubt.” That language was intentional; to convict Trump, jurors must believe that prosecutors proved their case beyond a reasonable doubt.

“He lied to you repeatedly. He lied many, many times before you even met him. His financial and personal well-being depend on this case. He is biased and motivated to tell you a story that is not true,” Blanche said.

The attorney’s voice became even more impassioned as he revisited one of the more memorable moments of the trial: when

LEGAL NOTICE

CITY OF BURBANK

BID NOTICE

Sealed proposals for the **I-5 NORTHBOUND AVE. ONRAMP LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**, in the City of Burbank all in compliance with the City’s **Bid Schedule No. 1526**, via the City’s electronic platform, PlanetBids, at which time said proposals will be opened via PlanetBids by making the results public. The proposals will then be summarized on a bid tabulation and posted on PlanetBids within two (2) days after bid opening. Results on PlanetBids are preliminary and are not final until reviewed for responsiveness. All bids must be submitted no later than 2:00 P.M. the day of the proposal opening. Proposals submitted after 2:00 P.M. the day of the bid opening will not be accepted.

Complete sets of the Contract Documents must be obtained from the City via download from the City of Burbank online bid website <https://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=14210#>. Failure of the Contractor to download the Contract Documents from this website shall render their bid non-responsive.

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Project Location: Along, and in the vicinity of, I-5 Northbound Empire Ave. Onramp.

Project Description: The work under this contract shall be performed entirely within the City of Burbank and consists of furnishing all labor, tools, materials, equipment, services, and performing all work necessary for the Northbound San Fernando Boulevard Interstate 5 Onramp and Alley Improvement project, including but not limited to: removal and disposal of brick pavers, installation of Portland cement concrete (PCC) sidewalk, potable irrigation system and planting, in accordance with the Construction Plans and Special Provisions.

Bid Schedule No. 1526

LEGAL NOTICE

CITY OF BURBANK RFP NOTICE

Sealed proposals for the **Playground Equipment for Santa Anita Playlot**, in the City of Burbank all in compliance with the City’s **Bid Schedule No. 1524**, are due not later than **2:00 P.M., June 18, 2024**, via the City’s electronic platform, PlanetBids, at which time said proposals will be opened via PlanetBids by making the results public. Results on PlanetBids are preliminary and are not final until reviewed for responsiveness. All proposals must be submitted no later than 2:00 P.M. the day of the proposal opening. Proposals submitted after 2:00 P.M. the day of the opening will not be accepted.

Complete sets of the Contract Documents must be obtained from the City via download from the City of Burbank online bid website <https://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=14210#>. Failure of the Contractor to download the Contract Documents from this website shall render their bid non-responsive.

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Project Location: Santa Anita Playlot, 250 W. Santa Anita Ave., Burbank, CA 91502

Project Description: This Request for Proposals (“RFP”) is issued by the City of Burbank (“City”) to solicit Proposals for a Design-Build Team, led by a qualified and properly licensed contractor, construction manager or joint venture. The Project primarily consists of design, engineering, material procurement, construction, and construction management to remove and replace aging play equipment and related play equipment area improvements as more particularly described in the Design and Performance Criteria and Technical Specifications. Interested parties should be advised that this Project is partially funded by a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Bid Schedule No. 1524

Justin Hess
City Manager
City of Burbank

Lax maintenance alleged at shooting range

[Fire, from A1]

"The fire that caused Freddy's tragic death was foreseeable and avoidable," union President Richard Pippin wrote in an email.

The Sheriff's Department, meanwhile, said the blaze is still under investigation and declined to answer several specific questions about the incident, including whether the problems identified by the state have been fixed.

"We are working with County Counsel to evaluate the violations," the department wrote in an email, "but the safety of our personnel is paramount and our primary concern."

The agency did not say whether it appealed the citations, though Cal/OSHA officials confirmed that it had. They said the fines have not been paid as the appeal is pending.

::

Since the late 1980s, the Sheriff's Department has relied on mobile shooting ranges to ensure its roughly 10,000 deputies can test their firearms skills four times a year. The department can move the range from station to station each week instead of paying deputies overtime to spend a day driving to a fixed location.

The 50- to 53-foot mobile structures feature several shooting lanes overseen by a range master. The interior walls are covered with soundproofing foam, and a thick rubber or metal plate known as a bullet trap sits behind the target. As with other indoor ranges, shooting trailers require regular cleaning to prevent a dangerous buildup of lead and gunpowder.

"When you shoot a gun, there's gunpowder and explosives inside the cartridge," one former range deputy told The Times in October. "Not all of that gunpowder burns — sometimes it ends up on the floor in front of you, sometimes it ends up on your hands."

Multiple range experts told The Times last year that although mobile range fires appear to be rare, the buildup of unburned gunpowder at any range that isn't adequately cleaned and ventilated can lead to fires. Now, state regulators say, it has.

One of the violations described in the Cal/OSHA records — provided to The Times by the Flores family attorney — faulted the department for persistently failing to keep records of inspections dating to at least 2021, when the state hit the department with another citation for the same problem. It's unclear how much the 2021 violation cost the county in fees, but the recent record-keeping failures netted a \$1,000 fine.

In its April notice, the state fined the department \$25,000 for failing to implement procedures for identifying workplace hazards "including the hazard of allowing the accumulation of propellant throughout the surfaces of indoor mobile shooting ranges" and for failing to do regular inspections.

"The employer did not engage in scheduled periodic inspections to identify



THE CASKET of Sheriff's Deputy Alfredo Flores is moved into St. Didacus Catholic Church in Sylmar for his funeral Mass on May 9.

BRIAN VANDER BRUG Los Angeles Times



A MOBILE shooting range trailer caught fire in Marina del Rey in 2019 when sheriff's deputies were testing a nonexplosive flash-bang, or stun grenade.

STEVEN PROPSTER

unsafe work conditions in indoor mobile shooting ranges," the citation notice said. "Employer did not identify hazards related to indoor mobile shooting ranges after employer discovered a new hazard when mobile shooting ranges caught fire."

The department racked up another \$25,000 fine for failing to fix safety concerns in a timely manner. Specifically, the state accused the agency of knowing about the danger of "accumulated propellant" inside range trailers and failing to "take sufficient steps to prevent the re-occurrence of fires in its indoor mobile shooting ranges."

One of the costliest violations, which the state deemed "willful" and "serious," faulted the department for allegedly failing to conduct the regular inspections and preventive maintenance recommended by

the trailer manufacturer.

That violation netted a \$125,000 fine, as did another "willful" and "serious" violation for failing to clean the range trailer often enough and allowing "the accumulations of combustible dust on floors, ledges, beams, equipment, machines, or elsewhere which caused an explosion and fire."

Last year, department officials told The Times that the range trailer had been serviced and cleaned by an outside contractor in July and that the department's Facilities Services Bureau did its normal trailer maintenance in September. It's unclear how those statements square with the recent citations or whether that could factor into the pending appeal, and the department did not clarify.

In addition to the violations discovered last fall, the state's April notice also in-

cluded two pages of memos warning the department that a trailer outside Men's Central Jail had combustible acoustic foam inside and lacked adequate ventilation and dust collection mechanisms. Officials said the trailer is not in use.

::

As The Times reported last year, the blaze that killed Flores was at least the fourth range trailer fire in the last decade in the department. Though officials have released little information about some of the incidents, department records show at least one involved similar concerns about the buildup of gunpowder.

In 2019, deputies designing active shooter training in Marina del Rey accidentally started a fire while testing a flash-bang trainer, a nonexplosive version of a flash-

bang, or stun grenade.

Steven Propster, one of the deputies involved in that incident, told The Times in an interview last year that he wanted to test the loud device in a controlled setting, and that the soundproofed range trailer seemed ideal.

The first time, Propster said, the device went off without a hitch. The second time, a small flame popped up. One of the other deputies stomped it out with his foot. When two more flames popped up nearby, Propster shouted for another deputy to bring a fire extinguisher.

"He doused it — but two seconds later, flames went running up the wall," Propster said. "We ran toward the door, and the flame began to swirl and burn everything and chase us out."

According to internal affairs records Propster recently shared with The Times, the department's Arson and Explosives Detail determined the fire was accidental. Its report said that the flash-bang trainers were advertised as devices that would "not become so hot they start fires" and that the blaze started when sparks landed on "combustible foam insulation hanging" inside the trailer.

"This fire was likely accelerated by the presence of unburned gunpowder that is inevitably present in this environment," the arson report said, and it "could not be presumed that the act of throwing the flashbang trainer in the mobile range would present a substantial and unjustifiable risk of causing a fire."

In the end, internal affairs records show, Propster was disciplined with a five-day suspension for unauthorized use of the flash-bang trainer and for causing a fire that destroyed a \$150,000 trailer and "resulted in media coverage" and "community outcry with

concerns regarding possible damage to the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve."

Propster told The Times he came away from the incident worried about the department's continued use of range trailers.

"If you have one fire, it's a one-off," he said last year. "Two, OK, what's causing this?"

::

More than six months after the 2023 blaze, the department has still released few details about what happened. The blaze started around 9:30 a.m. Oct. 10 in the trailer, which was parked next to the men's jail at Pitchess Detention Center.

Two deputies were inside the 53-foot trailer when the fire broke out, sheriff's officials said. Flores was taking a department-mandated recertification test, and the other deputy was supervising. Both were transported to a hospital with third-degree burns. Flores, a 22-year veteran of the department, remained hospitalized until his death.

"Freddy Flores struggled to live for six months," said Carpenter, the family attorney. "We still don't know all the details of what happened. We just know that it should not have happened."

The department has not offered updates on the other deputy or released details about how the fire started. But immediately after the blaze, the department called in the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for help investigating and shut down all of its mobile shooting ranges.

The ATF recently confirmed that it provided assistance to the Sheriff's Department, but said it could not give any details because the investigation is continuing.

French Gates pledges \$1 billion to empower women

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN

Melinda French Gates says she will be donating \$1 billion over the next two years to individuals and organizations working on behalf of women and families globally, including on reproductive rights in the United States.

French Gates earlier this month announced she would step down from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and vowed to focus on women and families. As a part of leaving the Gates Foundation, French Gates received \$12 billion from Bill Gates for her philanthropy.

French Gates, one of the biggest philanthropic supporters of gender equity in the U.S., said Tuesday in a guest essay in the New York Times that she's been frustrated by people who say it's not the right time to talk about gender equality.

"Decades of research on economics, well-being and governance make it clear that investing in women and girls benefits everyone," she wrote.

French Gates said that over the last few weeks she's started directing new grants through her organization, Pivotal Ventures, to groups working in the U.S. to protect women's rights and advance their power and influence. The grants are for general operating support, meaning they are not earmarked for specific projects. The groups include the National Women's Law Center, the National Domestic Workers Alliance and the Center for Reproductive Rights.

Teresa Younger, the president and chief executive of the Ms. Foundation for Women, who also received a grant, has long called on donors to give unrestricted, multiyear funding to organizations. She praised French Gates' new commitment as a part of a larger trend of major women donors giving generously to nonprofits.

"If philanthropy took lessons from the way that women are moving money, we would see more money in the field having greater impact," Younger said.

Her organization learned



JOSE LUIS MAGANA Associated Press

THE PHILANTHROPIST Melinda French Gates has vowed to focus her giving on women and families.

of the grant, which is the first they've received from Pivotal Ventures, last week, and Younger said there was no application process. She declined to disclose the amount of the grant but said it would help expand their work with organizations in the South and Midwest.

In addition, French Gates also pledged to give 12 individuals \$20 million each to distribute to nonprofit organizations of their choice before the end of 2026. Those funds will be managed by the

National Philanthropic Trust, one of the largest public charities that offers donor-advised funds, a spokesperson for Pivotal Ventures said.

In total, French Gates announced \$690 million in commitments out of the promised \$1 billion, which also includes an "open call" for applications that the organization Lever for Change will administer this fall. French Gates said \$250 million will be awarded through that process to fund organi-

zations working to improve women's mental and physical health globally.

French Gates' Pivotal Ventures is a limited liability company that also manages investments for for-profit ventures, so there is little public information about its grantmaking or the assets it manages. Pivotal Ventures has focused on a number of avenues to increase women's economic and political participation and power, such as closing the wage gap, compensating care work often done by women, and encouraging women to run for political office.

In her essay Tuesday, French Gates touched on the high maternal mortality rates in the U.S., noting that Black and Native American mothers are at the highest risk.

"Women in 14 states have lost the right to terminate a pregnancy under almost any circumstances. We remain the only advanced economy without any form of national paid family leave. And the number of teenage girls experiencing suicidal thoughts and persistent

feelings of sadness and hopelessness is at a decade high," she said.

French Gates will be leaving the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation next week. She helped co-found the organization nearly 25 years ago.

The Associated Press receives financial support for news coverage in Africa from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and for news coverage of women in the workforce and state governments from Pivotal Ventures.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will change its name to the Gates Foundation. It is one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the world. As of December 2023, its endowment was \$75.2 billion, thanks to donations from Gates and billionaire investor Warren Buffett. While it works across many issues, global health remains its largest area of work, and most of its funding is meant to address issues internationally rather than in the U.S.

Chapman writes for the Associated Press.

Focus on groundwater for vital ecosystems

[Groundwater, from A1] recently published a study outlining how California can set targets for maintaining groundwater levels — based on a formula including the type of vegetation, local water data and satellite imagery — to ensure the plants that anchor each ecosystem will be able to reach water and survive during dry times.

“If we don’t have groundwater levels that are able to support these diverse native vegetation ecosystems, then basically we run the risk of losing that important habitat for a lot of our threatened and endangered species,” Rohde said. “When you play around with keeping groundwater levels too deep to support the habitat, then you could lose species, and then that’s irreversible. The consequences can be severe.”

In California’s Mediterranean climate, trees, shrubs and the species they support are naturally adapted to drought. But excessive pumping from wells can push habitats beyond ecological limits by depleting the sources that sustain them.

With humanity’s heating of the planet intensifying droughts, the strains on these ecosystems continue to grow.

Already, California has lost the vast majority of its original wetlands to development, water diversions and agriculture. To avoid losing what remains, Rohde said, the state needs “a precautionary and preventative approach that can ensure that these ecosystems can withstand the intensification of droughts in climate change.”

During a recent visit to Kern County, Rohde and several conservation specialists walked in the shade through a lush forest of cottonwood trees near the south fork of the Kern River, visiting a nature preserve she had previously seen only in satellite images.

At the edge of a clearing, she came upon the bare, sunbleached skeletons of dead trees.

She said satellite data had revealed that parts of the forest died along this part of the Kern River during the drought between 2012 and 2016.

“That’s because the groundwater levels rapidly declined,” Rohde said.

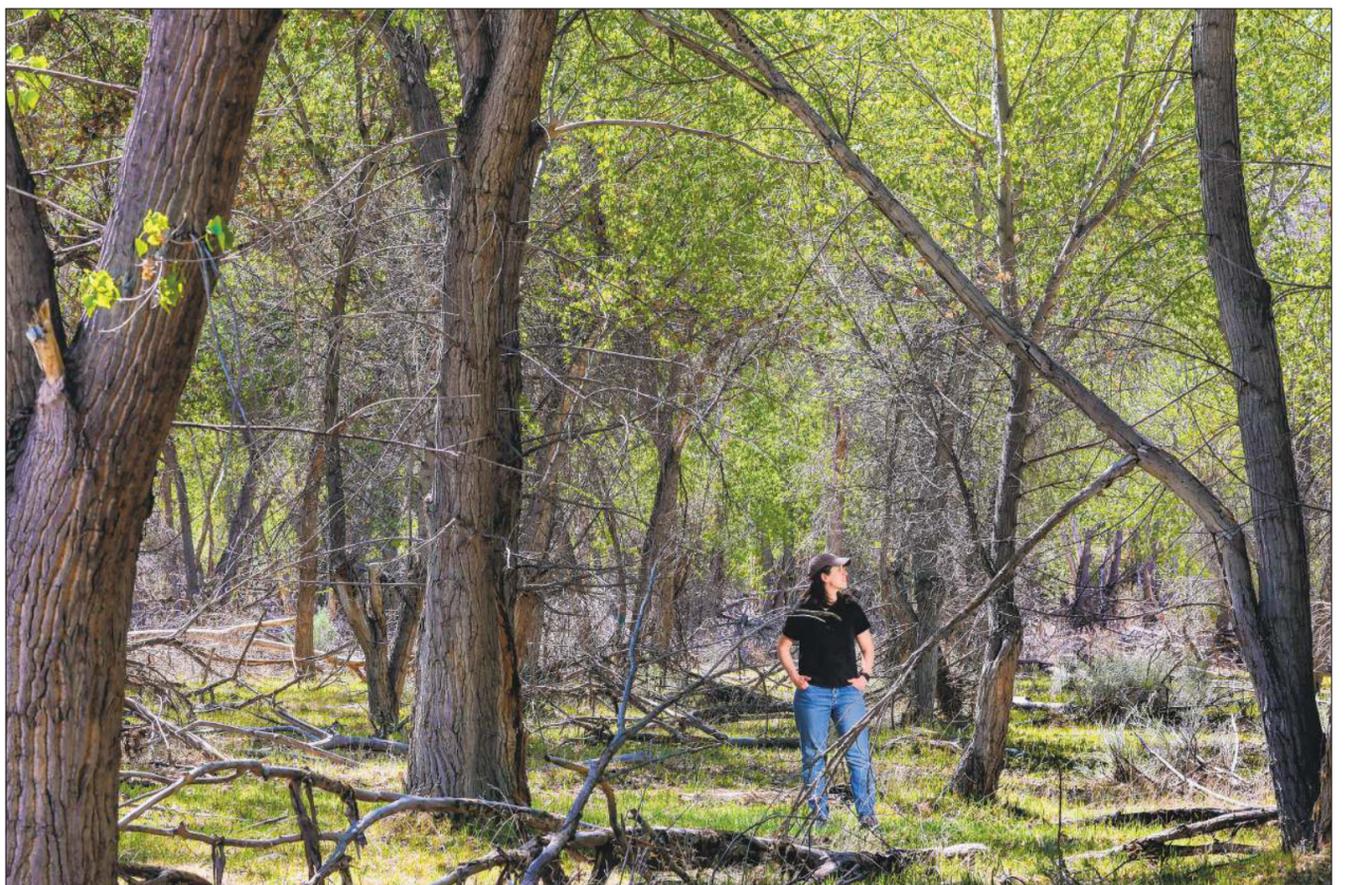
After that die-off, she said, groundwater levels rebounded in the area, and the native vegetation has been growing back.

It helps that this forest is protected as part of the Kern River Preserve, which is managed by the National Audubon Society, and that some nearby farmlands have been retired and converted to conservation lands over the years.

The preserve, working with the organization Ducks Unlimited, has also restored an expanded wetland by diverting water from the river and flooding a section of pastureland where cattle used to graze.

The wetland attracts birds, such as coots and tricolored blackbirds, and also recharges the aquifer that the roots of cottonwoods and willows tap into.

The 3,300-acre site has expanded with the purchase of adjacent alfalfa fields and as agricultural wells have been shut down, said Reed



MELISSA ROHDE sees the effects of declining groundwater levels in satellite images as well as on tours of California ecosystems. ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times



BRIAN VANDER BRUG Los Angeles Times

PRESERVES such as the Kern River’s help prevent the sort of habitat degradation that Rohde and others are finding in places like Ventura County’s Fillmore Basin, where dense stands of arundo have displaced native riparian species.

Tollefson, the preserve’s manager. These efforts have helped protect a refuge for birds including willow flycatchers and yellow-billed cuckoos.

As he pointed to several dead trees amid the living cottonwoods, Tollefson said protecting the forest from groundwater pumping and climate change will require additional effort.

“I think it’s tenuous,” he said. “We’ve got more work to do to try and really sustain this.”

The dead trees that have appeared here and elsewhere in California over the last decade represent the sort of die-off that water managers need to focus on preventing, Rohde said.

“It has to be an intentional practice of setting

thresholds, monitoring, using satellite data or other scalable means to measure the impacts, in order to make sure that we are not allowing this to happen on a wider scale,” she said. “From a biodiversity perspective, it’s absolutely critical.”

Rohde said she felt hopeful seeing the forest rebounding and much greener than it was several years ago,

with many young trees coming up.

Some other parts of California haven’t fared nearly as well.

One rainy day last month, Rohde visited an area along the Santa Clara River in Ventura County where several hundred acres of willows and cottonwoods dried up and died during the drought in the mid-2010s.

When groundwater pumping by farms and communities caused aquifer levels to fall, many trees died along the river near the city of Fillmore.

“We saw this catastrophic drop in groundwater at this site,” Rohde said.

She visited the area with a research colleague and two managers from the Nature Conservancy. They stood on a gravel road next to a lemon grove, checking on what remained of the forest.

Where native trees died, an explosion of invasive reeds has taken over. The nonnative reeds, called arundo, have grown into thickets more than 20 feet tall. And unlike willows, Rohde said, arundo offers little value as habitat for birds.

“When we had that massive die-off, and the groundwater levels remained deep, there was no way for the native vegetation to regenerate,” she said.

Rohde said efforts to prevent this sort of habitat degradation should be prioritized.

When managers of local agencies set goals for maintaining groundwater levels, she said, they can tailor targets to the type of vegetation — for example, whether there are cottonwood trees, with roots averaging about 9 feet long, or oaks, with roots that average nearly 30 feet but can grow much deeper.

“Often groundwater is out of sight, out of mind,” she said. “We don’t measure it, we don’t understand it and we misuse it. And we need to make sure that we are managing groundwater so that it is supporting us, and mak-

ing sure that we have a sustainable future.”

Rohde now works as an independent scientist. Previously, as a researcher for the Nature Conservancy, she helped write an atlas of threatened and endangered species that rely on groundwater.

California’s groundwater-dependent ecosystems lie not only along streams, but also in habitats such as mountain meadows, coastal redwood forests and mesquite bushes in desert sand dunes. The species they support range from tiger salamanders to desert pupfish, and from songbirds to mammals such as ground squirrels and bighorn sheep.

Rohde said state officials should give local water agencies clear direction to ensure they’re using science-based methods to safeguard ecosystems in their state-mandated plans. She said agencies can now use the approaches scientists have outlined to map strongholds of biodiversity and set targets for maintaining aquifer levels.

“It’s very attainable,” she said.

Walking in the rain at the Santa Clara River Preserve, Rohde followed her former Nature Conservancy colleagues Peter Dixon and E.J. Remson on a trail through a stand of healthy trees.

They stood on the banks of the fast-flowing river, watching the muddy water churn past.

In the summer and fall, this part of the river usually dwindles to a trickle.

And during the next drought, when the river dries up, the forest will depend on the same groundwater that nearby communities and farms also use.

If the water needs of this and other ecosystems aren’t prioritized, Rohde said, vital habitats will suffer.

“We need to be deliberate about the planning, and ensuring that they get their fair share,” she said. “Their existence is potentially imperiled if we don’t act.”

After deadly weekend, Texas again battered by storms

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Strong storms with damaging winds and baseball-sized hail pummeled Texas on Tuesday, leaving more than 1 million businesses and homes without power as much of the U.S. recovered from severe weather, including tornadoes, that killed at least 25 people over the Memorial Day weekend.

Widespread power outages were reported in the region, which includes Dallas and Fort Worth, where an oppressive, early-season heat wave reaching into the triple digits added to the misery. Nearly 800,000 customers lacked electricity Tuesday, according to PowerOutage.us.

Voters in the state’s runoff elections found some polling places without power. Roughly 100 voting sites in Dallas County were knocked offline. Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins

declared a disaster area and noted that some nursing homes were using generators. “This ultimately will be a multiday power outage situation,” Jenkins said Tuesday.

More rough weather and heavy rains were forecast for the Dallas area Tuesday night.

Destructive storms over the weekend caused deaths in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Kentucky, North Carolina and Virginia.

Seven people were killed in Cooke County, Texas, from a tornado that tore through a mobile home park Saturday, officials said, and eight deaths were reported across Arkansas.

Two people died in Mayes County, Okla., east of Tulsa, authorities said. The injured included guests at an outdoor wedding. A Missouri man died Sunday after a tree limb fell onto his tent as he was camping.

Kentucky Gov. Andy



ROBERT COHEN Associated Press

PATTI MANLEY, 69, recovers an American flag in Mehville, Mo., which was also hit by rough weather.

Beshear said at a news conference Monday that five people had died in his state.

A possible tornado damaged a high school and a half-dozen homes in Pennsylvania on Monday night. No injuries were reported,

but school was canceled in Mahanoy City, Pa., said David Truskowsky, spokesperson for the city’s fire department.

Roughly 160,000 homes and businesses lacked electricity Tuesday following the

weekend storms in Kentucky, Arkansas, West Virginia and Missouri.

It has been a grim month of tornadoes and severe weather in the nation’s midsection.

Tornadoes in Iowa last week left at least five people dead and dozens injured. Storms killed eight people in Houston this month. April had the second-highest number of tornadoes on record in the country. The storms come as climate change contributes in general to the severity of storms around the world.

Late May is the peak of tornado season, but the recent storms have been exceptionally violent, producing very strong tornadoes, said Victor Gensini, a meteorology professor at Northern Illinois University.

“Over the weekend, we’ve had a lot of hot and humid air, a lot of gasoline, a lot of fuel for these storms. And we’ve had a really strong jet

stream as well,” Gensini said. “That jet stream has been aiding in providing the wind shear necessary for these types of tornadoes.”

Harold Brooks, a senior scientist at the National Severe Storms Laboratory in Norman, Okla., said a persistent pattern of warm, moist air is to blame for the string of tornadoes over the last two months.

That air is at the northern edge of a heat dome bringing temperatures typically seen at the height of summer to late May.

The heat index — a combination of air temperature and humidity to indicate how the heat feels to the human body — neared triple digits in parts of south Texas on Monday. Extreme heat was also forecast for San Antonio and Dallas.

In Florida, Melbourne and Fort Pierce set new daily record highs Monday. Both hit 98 degrees. Miami set a record high of 96 on Sunday.

BUSINESS

THE WIDE SHOT

What the Live Nation lawsuit is really about

BY RYAN FAUGHNDER

The fees Ticketmaster charges concertgoers have long been among the most universally despised music industry practices, perhaps rivaled only by paltry streaming royalties, the overuse of autotune and, more recently, AI-generated music videos.

So it came with little surprise that the U.S. Department of Justice last week sued the ticketing giant's Beverly Hills-based parent, Live Nation, with the stated aim of breaking up the world's largest live entertainment company.

The Justice Department, joined by 29 states and the District of Columbia, accused the firm of maintaining illegal monopolies in both ticket selling and concert promotion, and said it had used its market power to stifle competition and pressure music artists into using only its services. The company had threatened rivals with retaliation, the Justice Department said in its 124-page complaint, filed Thursday, in which it seeks a jury trial.

The lawsuit has probably already provided the government with a political victory. Just about everyone has felt the annoyance of getting hit with a cascade of fees while trying to buy tickets for a favorite act. Ticketmaster is now also associated with the Taylor Swift Eras tour presale debacle, in which the ticketing system crashed due to an overload of fans and bots.

What's far less certain is whether the suit will achieve the goals the government has laid out. The Justice Department will have to prove its case in court, and the process is likely to take a long time, with a trial possibly not starting until 2026. The last time the government successfully broke up a vertically integrated company was in 1982, when AT&T agreed to dismember itself to settle a long antitrust battle.

Analysts at brokerage firm Cowen & Co. put the odds of a Live Nation breakup at "sub-50%." That's not a certainty by any means, but it represents a meaningful risk for the company. Live Nation's stock fell sharply after the suit was filed.

Working in the government's favor is the fact that



Los Angeles Times photo illustration; ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times; Getty Images

the combination of Live Nation and Ticketmaster has been controversial from the get-go. The Obama administration approved the merger of Live Nation and Ticketmaster in 2010, despite widespread opposition in the music industry, including from artists and particularly from rivals who feared being squeezed out.

The merger was approved on conditions laid out in a settlement agreement between Live Nation and the government. Those conditions were meant to prevent the company from punishing concert venues for using other ticketing options, among other actions. The consent decree was amended and extended in 2019, with Live Nation agreeing to the continuation of independent oversight.

By calling for a breakup, the government is, essentially, declaring that those strictures haven't been enough.

"What the Justice Department is saying is, 'Look, we made a mistake back in

2010,'" said Lawrence J. White, an economics professor and antitrust expert at New York University's Stern School of Business.

The Live Nation lawsuit is the latest example of the Biden administration taking more aggressive action than its predecessors when it comes to checking the power of companies, especially tech giants. In recent years, U.S. government entities have brought cases against Google, Amazon, Facebook parent Meta and Apple. The effort to break up Live Nation is, if anything, an even more populist calling card than taking on the behemoths of Silicon Valley.

Live Nation executives argue that they are not running a monopoly. They say that the government has inflated the company's share of the concert promotion business, for example, by focusing on the market of large venues, thereby making Live Nation seem more dominant than it actually is. In a conference call with Wall Street analysts last week, Live Na-

tion corporate bosses said that they'd tried to reach a settlement with the Justice Department but ultimately realized they were facing a "predetermined outcome."

Dan Wall, Live Nation's executive vice president of corporate and regulatory affairs, suggested that the bulk of the business practices the government is taking issue with could be addressed without breaking up the company. Many of the practices at issue, such as exclusivity arrangements between Ticketmaster and concert venues, predate the 2010 merger.

"However, we all know that that's what the most effective way to get the big headlines was and I think that that's why we're seeing that," Wall said. "It's very unfortunate."

Live Nation would prefer to deal with the government's complaints through "behavioral remedies," or fixes that don't lead to structural change at the company. But the view from Live Nation's longtime critics is

that such remedies have been tried already — and they haven't worked.

"Behavioral remedies as a general matter, especially in this kind of situation, are problematic, because all of the incentives for the entity are to find ways around the restrictions," White said. "They figure out ways to get around it."

To be clear, Ticketmaster is not the main reason it's so expensive to attend the Eras tour, which is the prime example of outrageous costs cited by Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) in a comment to Rolling Stone.

Taylor Swift concerts are a scarce resource, and her fans have an intense desire — sometimes bordering on desperation — to see her perform. Thus, Swift, the most popular music artist in the world, has an immense amount of pricing power.

As we've written before, concert tickets have increased in price, but that's largely because of supply and demand and a willingness among consumers to

do whatever it takes in a post-COVID-19 world to avoid the feeling of missing out. That dynamic plays out in more extreme cases on the resale market, the true hotbed of what some economists call "fun-flation."

Plus, artists, particularly mid-tier groups, need to charge more for live shows because that's increasingly how they make a living, given the fact that streaming royalties have not made up for the collapse of recorded music sales.

That said, while Ticketmaster isn't primarily responsible for the bulk of concert price inflation, the fees add up, leading to sticker shock.

Perhaps separating Ticketmaster from Live Nation won't result in lower ticket prices. That's certainly what the company's executives are arguing. It would, however, in the view of the government and Live Nation's critics, offer a long overdue corrective for a past error — the decision to allow the merger in the first place.

OpenAI committee to assess internal processes, safeguards

Group is created after several controversies, including a dust-up with actor Scarlett Johansson.

BY WENDY LEE

ChatGPT creator OpenAI on Tuesday said it formed a safety and security committee to evaluate the company's processes and safeguards as concerns mount over the use of rapidly developing artificial intelligence technology.

The committee is expected to take 90 days to finish its evaluation. After that, it will present the company's full board with recommendations on critical safety and security decisions for OpenAI projects and operations, the firm said in a blog



MICHAEL DWYER Associated Press

OPENAI is best known for ChatGPT and Sora, a text to video tool that could be useful for filmmakers.

post.

The announcement comes after two high-level leaders, co-founder Ilya Sutskever and fellow executive Jan Leike, resigned from the company. Their departures raised concerns about

the company's priorities, because both had been focused on the importance of ensuring a safe future for humanity amid the rise of AI.

Sutskever and Leike led OpenAI's so-called superalignment team, which was

meant to create systems to curb the technology's long-term risks. The group was tasked with "scientific and technical breakthroughs to steer and control AI systems much smarter than us." Upon his departure, Leike said OpenAI's "safety culture and processes have taken a backseat to shiny products."

OpenAI's new safety and security committee is led by board Chair Bret Taylor, directors Adam D'Angelo and Nicole Seligman and Chief Executive Sam Altman. Multiple OpenAI technical and policy leaders are on the committee as well. OpenAI said it will "retain and consult with other safety, security and technical experts to support this work."

The committee's formation arrives as the company begins work on training what it calls its "next frontier model" for artificial intelligence.

"While we are proud to build and release models that are industry-leading on both capabilities and safety, we welcome a robust debate at this important moment," OpenAI said in its blog post.

Controversies about use of AI have dogged the San Francisco-based company, including in the entertainment business, which is worried about the technology's implications for intellectual property and the potential displacement of workers.

Actor Scarlett Johansson criticized the company last week over its handling of a ChatGPT voice feature that she and others said sounded eerily like her. Johansson, who voiced an AI program in the Oscar-winning Spike Jonze movie "Her," said she was approached by Altman with a request to provide her voice, but she declined, only to later hear what sounded like her voice in an OpenAI

demo.

OpenAI said that the voice featured in the demo was not Johansson's but another actor's. After Johansson raised the alarm, OpenAI put a pause on its voice option, "Sky," one of many human voices available on the app. An OpenAI spokesperson said the formation of the safety committee was not related to the issues involving Johansson.

OpenAI is best known for ChatGPT and Sora, a text to video tool that has major potential ramifications for filmmakers and studios.

OpenAI and other tech companies have been holding discussions with Hollywood, as the entertainment industry grapples with the long-term effects of AI on employment and creativity.

Some film and TV directors have said AI allows them to think more boldly, testing ideas without having the constraints of limited visual effects and travel budgets. Others worry that increased efficiency through AI could whittle away jobs in areas such as makeup, production and animation.

As it faced safety questions, OpenAI's business, which is backed by Microsoft, also must deal with competition from other companies that are building their own artificial intelligence tools and funding.

San Francisco-based Anthropic has received billions of dollars from Amazon and Google. On Sunday, xAI, which is led by Elon Musk, announced it had closed on a \$6-billion funding round that goes toward research and development, building its infrastructure and bringing its products to market.

T-Mobile to acquire U.S. Cellular's wireless operations

The \$4.4-billion cash and debt deal also includes the purchase of about 30% of the firm's spectrum assets.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

T-Mobile is buying U.S. Cellular's wireless operations and certain spectrum assets in a deal valued at \$4.4 billion, further consolidating the industry.

As part of the agreement, T-Mobile will get U.S. Cellular's wireless operations and about 30% of spectrum assets across several spectrum bands.

T-Mobile will also enter into a new master license agreement on more than 2,000 towers and extend the lease term for the approximately 600 towers where T-Mobile is already a tenant.

"Bringing together US Cellular's network resources with ours will enable us to fill gaps in connectivity that will

create a better experience for all of our customers with more coverage and more capacity," T-Mobile Chief Executive Mike Sievert said in a statement.

T-Mobile said Tuesday that U.S. Cellular customers will gain access to its 5G network, giving them better coverage and speed.

"In the face of rising competition and increasing capital intensity required to keep pace with the latest technologies, and following our careful and deliberate strategic review, we are confi-

dent that continuing to deliver on our mission requires a level of scale and investment that is best achieved by integrating our wireless operations with those of T-Mobile," U.S. Cellular Chair LeRoy Carlson Jr. said in a statement.

The transaction includes a combination of cash and up to about \$2 billion of assumed debt.

Up to \$100 million of the cash component is contingent on hitting certain financial and operational metrics between the deal's signing

and its closing.

U.S. Cellular will keep about 70% of its spectrum portfolio across several spectrum bands.

The deal has been unanimously approved by the boards of United States Cellular Corp. and Telephone and Data Systems Inc., which is a majority shareholder of U.S. Cellular. It is expected to close in mid-2025.

Shares of U.S. Cellular rose 12% on Tuesday. Shares of T-Mobile closed 0.8% higher.

Hollywood crews in 'panic mode' after strikes

[Hollywood, from A1] ting in the city, released a report in April that revealed a slow bounce-back in production after the strikes. Local on-location filming in the first quarter of the year was down 8.7% from the same period of 2023. Television production was especially affected, with production falling 16.2% from last year.

Paul Audley, president of FilmLA, said these findings were startling when considering that movie and television production saw a "retraction" at the start of 2023 in anticipation of the looming writers' strike.

"What we're facing is a combination of effects of the studios, as well as the streamers, cutting back not only the number of series they produced but in some cases the number of episodes they're producing for shows," Audley said.

With scarce work opportunities, many crew members are concerned about maintaining their health insurance, which is often directly tied to the number of hours they work. Those who have coverage with the Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plans must work 400 hours in a six-month period to maintain their insurance.

Many veteran crew members, like hairstylist and department head Jason Orion, who's worked on shows including "Grey's Anatomy," said he has never been close to losing coverage until now.

Orion was able to keep his health insurance thanks to a job on "9-1-1." He said because he worked down to the wire before the 2007-08 writers' strike, he thought he'd be busy until the walkouts officially began.

In reality, he had "an almost nonexistent beginning of 2023." Even the shows and films shooting in L.A. now have slashed many departments, he added, noting sets that historically employed



HEATHER FINK, a boom operator and director, says she's "in the worst place" financially and fears for the future: "I'm so afraid that there isn't going to be a job to even be concerned [about] what the conditions are."

20 hairstylists now have just two or three.

Orion said "9-1-1" was a "very hard show," noting that crew member Rico Priem recently died in a car accident after pulling a 14-hour overnight shift.

"We were all tired; it was a very terrible thing," Orion said after noting that hours on sets were generally "brutal and relentless."

These tough conditions are one of the top concerns in ongoing talks between the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, which advocates for film and TV crew members, and

the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which represents Hollywood studios.

Much like the WGA and SAG-AFTRA talks, wage increases, residuals and the use of artificial intelligence also are issues on the table.

Some crew members said they're cautiously optimistic that negotiations will proceed smoothly and that work opportunities will ramp up once an agreement is reached, which members seem to believe will happen before their current contract expires on July 31.

For others, optimism

does not come easily after a year of struggle.

Fink said that working in sound for 14 years was "honestly one of the biggest mistakes I've ever made in my life," and that she felt uneasy about the future.

One of her primary concerns is the increasing number of productions moving away from L.A. and California to states or countries that offer better tax incentives for production—a phenomenon dubbed runaway production. "I'm so afraid that there isn't going to be a job to even be concerned [about] what the conditions

are," Fink said.

California offers \$330 million annually in film tax credits, but other states looking to build up their status as production hubs, like New York and Georgia, provide more attractive incentives and programs with higher or unlimited funding. New York's cap is \$700 million, and Georgia currently does not have a limit.

"California remains non-competitive with the rest of the world that is offering incentives and tax credits," Audley said.

"Everybody's aware that California is not an inexpen-

sive place to do business, and we have in the past been able to overcome that ... but it's just noncompetitive, and we don't have anywhere near enough money in those funds from the state to draw and keep production in L.A."

Outside the United States, several countries — the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia, among them — are offering cushy tax incentives for studios, where they can bypass unions and pay crews lower wages than in the U.S.

"For so long, American culture was the thing we exported. It is very strange to watch everyone be OK that it's getting imported," said Ian Barbella, a camera assistant who's worked on series and films including "Lessons in Chemistry" and "Wine Country."

"There's no context of [how] that's an American company not using American workers."

These compounding sources of stress — the fear of jobs moving away, the strenuous conditions faced on set and the lack of job opportunities — are affecting the mental health of many crew members.

Diego Mariscal, a dolly grip with 25-plus years of experience and credits including "Spider-Man: No Way Home" and "The Mandalorian," has been running a popular Facebook group called Crew Stories for the last five years.

Members of the online community of 90,000 share on-set experiences — both good and bad — and offer support through posts and fundraising for colleagues in need.

Mariscal said he has seen the toll this "weird limbo" has had on his peers.

"Everyone's just in panic mode, and they don't know what to do," he said.

Through his social media accounts, Mariscal said he has recently fielded multiple messages from crew members experiencing suicidal thoughts and severe mental distress.

Communities like Crew Stories and the friendships crew members have developed with co-workers have been a refuge for many.

Jennifer Rose Clasen, a still photographer for "The Flight Attendant" and "Big Little Lies," said members of her "film family" have been leaning on one another and sharing their mental health struggles as they muscle through the dry spell of work and the uncertainty that lies ahead.

"I constantly have to remind my friends this isn't their fault because there's a little trickle of work out there so there's just enough for people to feel like they're failing," Clasen said. "That, compounded over 10, 12, 14 months, truly takes a toll on people's well-being."

Amid the mental and financial challenges they're facing, some said those outside the industry expect them to seek out adjacent careers. Dunkerley said it's not that simple.

"I love what I do," he said. "You definitely question what you do, you wake up [and] it's kind of like, 'What am I doing? What am I supposed to do now? What's going to happen?' And you just hope that something will pop up. I'm really hopeful. Fingers crossed."

MARKET ROUNDUP

Tech gains offset broader declines on a quiet trading day

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Most U.S. stocks fell in a quiet day of trading Tuesday after a tick higher in bond yields tightened the screws a bit on Wall Street.

Nearly three out of every four stocks fell within the Standard & Poor's 500. But strength for a handful of highly influential tech stocks nevertheless helped the index hold up overall. It edged higher by 1.32 points, or less than 0.1%, to 5,306.04.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 216.73 points, or 0.6%, to 38,852.86. The Nasdaq composite rode the strength of tech stocks, rising 99.09 points, or 0.6%, to 17,019.88 and adding to its latest all-time high set Friday.

Nvidia led the way and jumped 7% to bring its gain for the year so far to a whopping 130%.

It's still riding a wave created by its latest blowout profit report from last week, which calmed some of the worries that Wall Street's frenzy around artificial intelligence technology has inflated expectations and

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	38,852.86	-216.73	-0.55	+3.09
S&P 500	5,306.04	+1.32	+0.02	+11.24
Nasdaq composite	17,019.88	+99.09	+0.59	+13.38
S&P 400	2,957.40	-19.27	-0.65	+6.32
Russell 2000	2,066.85	-2.82	-0.14	+1.96
EuroStoxx 50	5,030.35	-28.85	-0.57	+11.25
Nikkei (Japan)	38,855.37	-44.65	-0.11	+16.11
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	18,821.16	-6.19	-0.03	+10.40

Associated Press

prices beyond reasonable levels.

U.S. Cellular climbed 12% after T-Mobile said it would buy nearly all of the company. The deal is valued at \$4.4 billion and includes up to \$2 billion in assumed debt. Shares of T-Mobile US rose 0.8%.

GameStop jumped 25.2% after it said it raised \$933.4 million in cash through a previously announced sale of stock. The company, whose stock price has often moved more on investors' enthusiasm than any change to its profit prospects, said it could use the cash for acquisitions, investments or other general cor-

porate purposes.

Those gains helped offset drops for healthcare stocks, which had some of Wall Street's sharpest losses. Moderna fell 8%, Merck dropped 2.6% and Vertex Pharmaceuticals sank 2.2%.

The majority of other stocks on Wall Street also fell, feeling the effects of a modest rise in Treasury yields. Higher yields can help make payments for mortgages, credit cards and other debt more expensive, and they tend to put downward pressure on the economy.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury climbed to 4.54% from 4.47% late Friday. It

had been lower in the morning but began trimming its losses after a surprising report showed confidence among U.S. consumers is strengthening. Economists had been expecting it to show a drop in confidence.

Strong spending by U.S. consumers has been one of the main reasons the economy has managed to defy predictions of a recession, at least so far, but some cracks have begun to show. Lower-income households in particular have begun to buckle under the pressure of still-high inflation.

Analysts at Bank of America cut their price target for McDonald's on Tuesday, citing its struggles after raising its prices more than Wendy's and other competitors, among other challenges. McDonald's fell 1.8%.

Yields climbed further Tuesday afternoon after the auction of Treasuries by the U.S. government.

The day's gains cut into the recent easing of Treasury yields, which fell most of this month on hopes that a resumption in the cooldown for inflation will allow the Federal Reserve to cut its

main interest rates at least once later this year.

The Fed has been holding the federal funds rate at the highest level in more than two decades in hopes of grinding down on the economy and investment prices enough to get high inflation fully under control.

The danger is that if it leaves rates too high for too long, it could kneecap the job market and overall economy. But a premature cut to interest rates could allow inflation to reaccelerate and inflict even more pain on U.S. households.

This week will see several reports that could sway the Fed's thinking.

The week's highlight probably will arrive Friday when the government releases its latest monthly report on spending by households and the incomes that they earned. It will also include the measure of inflation for April that the Federal Reserve prefers to use.

In stock markets abroad, indexes fell modestly across much of Europe and Asia. London's FTSE 100 slipped 0.8%, and Tokyo's Nikkei 225 edged down 0.1%.

Los Angeles Times

The Wild

An outdoors newsletter.

Get inspired to explore everywhere from secret local parks to 10,000-foot peaks. There's a lot to do out there — we'll be your guide.

Sign up now.
latimes.com/the-wild

ADVERTISEMENT

rateSeeker.com
LA Times

Check rates daily at www.rateseeker.com/savings-rates

Deposit & Loan Guide

Institution	Int Chking Acct	Money Mkt Acct	3 mo CD	6 mo CD	12 mo CD	18 mo CD	24 mo CD	36 mo CD	60 mo CD	Phone / Website
COMMUNITY COMMERCE BANK	NA	NA	3.56	4.07	5.17	5.06	4.91	4.80	4.59	909-450-2050 www.ccombank.com
	NA	NA	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	
Community Commerce Bank	Equal Housing Lender - Member FDIC									
Tustin Community Bank	0.05	1.26	1.26	1.51	5.12	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	714-730-5662 www.tustincmbank.com
	100	50,000	2,500	2,500	100,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	
Tustin Community Bank	12 Month CD Available For New Money Only									

TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS FEATURE, CALL SALES DEPARTMENT @ 773-320-8492

Check rates at www.rateseeker.com/savings-rates

Rate Criteria: Rates effective as of 05/24/2024 and may change without notice. RateSeeker, LLC. does not guarantee the accuracy of the information appearing above or the availability of rates in this table. Banks, Thrifts and credit unions pay to advertise in this guide. NA means rates are not available or not offered at the time rates were surveyed. All institutions are FDIC or NCUA insured. Yields represent annual percentage yield (APY) paid by participating institutions. Rates may change after the account is opened. Fees may reduce the earnings on the account. A penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal. To appear in this table, call 773-320-8492.

OPINION

EDITORIAL

Metro's police 'surge' is fine, but not a long-term solution

HOPING TO END A RECENT SPIKE in violent and deadly assaults, Metro's governing board last week formally approved a "surge" of public safety personnel on buses and trains. The goal is to prevent crime and keep riders from abandoning trains and buses by flooding the system with more police officers and sheriff's deputies, along with Metro's own security officers and customer-service ambassadors.

It's worth a try. Metro cannot afford to lose passengers or public support if Los Angeles wants to have "car-free" Olympics in 2028.

But the surge is a temporary strategy to deal with the increase in violent crime, Mayor Karen Bass, who is the current chair of Metro, has said. What's next? Yes, there's been a frightening spate of assaults, stabblings and killings in the last month, but riders have been ditching transit for years because they felt unsafe — even when violent crime was low. The vast majority of safety concerns cited by riders are about comfort and cleanliness, as well as code of conduct violations.

Metro needs a long-term plan to make transit feel safer.

That should start with a hard look at the current policing contracts. Since 2017, Metro has spent nearly \$1 billion on law enforcement contracts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Los Angeles and Long Beach police departments to patrol the system. But it's unclear whether Metro is getting its money's worth from those contracts.

A 2022 audit by Metro's Office of Inspector General found that law enforcement

agencies had poor visibility in the system. For example, sheriff's deputies worked mostly from patrol cars outside stations and bus stops.

Metro's former chief safety officer, Gina Osborn, tracked law enforcement performance over two years and told Times' reporter Rachel Uranga that she became convinced the agencies were failing at basic patrols and not acting proactively to keep the system safer. Osborn said she was fired in March from Metro after reporting her concerns to the inspector general.

But her complaints were not new. Last year when Metro's governing board voted to extend the law enforcement contracts for up to three years, leaders said they were frustrated that the agency couldn't monitor or even direct where and how officers were deployed on the system. And again last week, Bass and other board members complained that Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins did not have authority to direct officer deployment.

As part of Bass' surge motion, the governing board ordered the creation of a unified command controlled by Metro's security team that will coordinate law enforcement, security and social services deployment. But even with the unified command, Metro will not have authority to direct law enforcement deployment. That's a huge problem. How can Metro effectively manage security when it cannot assign officers to patrol specific areas to prevent and respond to crime on the system?

Making sure Metro is getting its money's worth will be even more important this summer when its law enforcement costs rise. The cost of the contracts will increase



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES Mayor Karen Bass introduced a plan to increase police presence on buses and trains after a recent spate of crime and violence.

10% in the fiscal year that starts in July — and that was before the surge increased officer deployment. That prompted L.A. County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath to call for a cost comparison between law enforcement agencies, security officers and ambassadors "to figure out how we can achieve the most effective, visible presence with the dollars we have to spend."

Besides cost, Metro also has to grapple with how to maintain security and order on the system.

In the past, Metro tasked sworn officers with enforcing fare evasion and code of conduct violations, such as littering and playing loud music. But there were complaints and a federal investigation into racial bias in fare enforcement. During a code of conduct crackdown in 2018, an LAPD officer dragged a young woman off a subway train because

she refused to take her foot off the seat. (The city of L.A. paid her \$50,000 last year to settle the lawsuit against the LAPD, her lawyer told The Times.)

Metro transferred fare and conduct enforcement to civilian security in recent years to help address long-standing complaints of racial bias in the policing of the system. Sworn officers were focused on enforcing the penal code and responding to crime.

There's now a call from riders and local elected officials to ramp up fare and conduct enforcement, including by police officers. Metro leaders should tread carefully as they decide how to build a comprehensive public safety response that may include creating an in-house transit police force. In making the buses and trains safer today and into the future, they don't want to repeat the mistakes of the past.

LETTERS



AL SEIB For The Times

TRANSITIONAL kindergarten students clap with their teacher at Weemes Elementary in L.A. last August.

Give teachers more control

Re "How to actually show appreciation for teachers," Opinion, May 25

THE PIECE HONORING teachers was greatly appreciated by me and probably by most teachers who read it. Yes, teachers are mostly underpaid, and many would be encouraged to stay in the profession if they could afford basics such as housing.

However, many people enter the teaching profession knowing that they will likely never earn a better-than-average salary. Salaries for teachers have never been good (because it's a mostly female occupation?) and probably never will be.

There is one way to improve the profession while increasing the resources for children without additional tax money.

As it is now, teachers have little or no power when it comes to making decisions regarding instruction, curriculum and classroom resources. For example, few teachers would approve requiring 4-year-old transitional kindergartners to take the DIBELS standardized test, as the Los Angeles Unified School District did until recently. Teachers know that enormous amounts of money are wasted in this way every year.

Efforts to empower teachers and parents have largely failed for many reasons. If the state could find a way to put decision-making in the hands of teachers, I suspect we'd see a big improvement in job satisfaction, learning and money for classroom resources.

LINDA MELE JOHNSON, Long Beach

I'm a retired teacher. One of the many lessons my students taught me was that learning blossoms from relationships, be it with teachers or peers. That is what keeps teachers in the classroom despite the countless obstacles. Only another teacher can know how hard a job it is.

We teachers don't need superficial gestures, because we get daily satisfaction in ways large and small from our colleagues, our students and their parents. For lucky ones like me, that's sufficient.

As for affordable housing, perhaps developers

could be incentivized to set aside below-market units for new teachers. More and better ideas are needed.

If teacher morale is low, we all pay the price.

MICHELE HARRIS
PADRON
Santa Barbara

Trump's policies do not matter

Re "On key topics, Trump is slippery as an eel," column, May 27

Doyle McManus' latest column is an example of how

most of the media get this race all wrong. He and other commentators are treating this election as if it were between two elderly gentlemen with some policy differences.

But this election is not about, say, whether we should put more ethanol in jet fuel or whether we should even be able to control our own bodies. It is about whether we will have the ability to debate or vote on any of these issues ever again.

McManus complains that Trump is not clear on issues when evasiveness suits him. But Trump

doesn't have to deal with the issues, because that's not what this election is about. It is about whether we will have a democracy when the smoke clears.

We as readers and voters need to know about the not-so-secret plans to fill government positions with people whose primary qualification is that they are loyal to Trump. We need to know what this country will look like on the first day of the dictatorship.

If former Rep. Liz Cheney (R-Wyo.) is correct in stating that we are "sleepwalking" into a dictatorship — and I believe she is — the

media are not safeguarding us with truth, but are instead acting more like a sedative.

LARRY MARGO
Valley Village

::

McManus opines that Trump is slippery as an eel. This brings to mind "Slick Willy" Bill Clinton and the "Teflon" president, Ronald Reagan. Many call Gov. Gavin Newsom a slippery snake.

One of the truly bipartisan facts of our time is that politicians on both sides of the aisle are frequently slippery. Of course, it matters what your definition of the word "is" is.

DAVID WALDOWSKI
Laguna Woods

::

McManus nails it. Trump will not give his views on certain policies. He has no policy, and he says things that he thinks will resonate with his base — whether he believes it, whether it is his policy, or whether it is just a plain old lie.

Just as he will not admit to accepting the results of the 2024 election if he does not win.

For the life of me, I cannot understand how anyone could vote for that man. Trump will do things that are good for himself and his ego, forget about what is good for the country, the American people or the world.

God help us if he wins in November.

MATTHEW D. KERSTER
Gardena

Is it OK to mess with our masa?

Re "Why requiring folic acid in tortillas would be bad," column, May 25

Gustavo Arellano's support for culinary tradition over health just risks increasing inequality for Latino babies because they have a higher rate of neural tube defects.

In this case, nixtamalization (the traditional method of making tortillas) without adding folic acid is not promoting "older, tastier, healthy ways." It's risking the next generation so Arellanos' older relatives can

have tortillas "taste like they should."

VICTORIA I.
PATERNO, M.D.
Los Angeles

The writer is a retired pediatrician.

::

Some quick research reveals excellent sources of folic acid. Eating lime and corn (ingredients in tortillas), along with frijoles, avocados and bananas — all pretty common for Latino families — should be more than adequate to sustain good health.

Why the folic mandate? Don't mess with the masa.

ALLAN V. PEÑA
San Pedro

::

Arellano sounds like a constitutionalist arguing, "This is the way it was in the beginning, is now and ever should be." I seriously doubt it is the way he feels on other matters, but it sure does in respect to this one.

As someone who had never tasted a tortilla until I first came to California on a trip in 1951 and didn't taste another one until I moved here in 1966, I'd be the first to admit I know little to nothing about the qualities of a good one. And while I can't think of a good analogy of something I might have knowledge of — something in my own life I passionately love and would hate to see change — I think I can feel and understand Arellano's and others' feelings about it.

This still doesn't change the fact that things change for the better, regardless of whatever arguments we can make against it.

JOHN SNYDER
Newbury Park

::

The answer to this dilemma is straightforward. Taquerias and tortillerias that wish to exclude folic acid from their products should simply hand the customer a folic acid capsule with each order.

GLENN ROGERS
South Pasadena

HOW TO WRITE TO US

Please send letters to letters@latimes.com. For submission guidelines, see latimes.com/letters or call 1-800-LA TIMES, ext. 74511.



Los Angeles Times
FOUNDED DECEMBER 4, 1881
A California Times Publication

Executive Chairman Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong

News: Executive Editor Terry Tang • Managing Editor Hector Becerra • Editor at Large Scott Kraft • Deputy Managing Editors Shelby Grad, Amy King, Maria L. La Ganga • Assistant Managing Editors John Canalis, Steve Clow, Angel Jennings, Iliana Limón Romero, Samantha Melbourneweaver, Craig Nakano, Ruthanne Salido, B.J. Terhune • General Manager, Food Laurie Ochoa • Opinion: Editorials Editor Mariel Garza • Op-Ed Editor Susan Brenneeman • Business: President and Chief Operating Officer Chris Argentieri • Chief Human Resources Officer Nancy V. Antoniou • Chief of Staff, Head of Strategy and Revenue Anna Magzanyan • Chief Information Officer Ghalib Kassam • General Counsel Jeff Glasser • V.P., Communications Hillary Manning

OP-ED

Why Samuel Alito's ethical lapse is extraordinary

Like his colleague Clarence Thomas, the justice has been brazen and unapologetic

ROBIN ABCARIAN

ANOTHER DAY, another ethics crisis at the Supreme Court.

When I first read about the upside-down American flag that flew at the Virginia home of Supreme Court Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. in early 2021, I thought, "Boy, that's dumb."

When I later read about the "Appeal to Heaven" pine tree flag that flew at Alito's beach home in New Jersey, I thought, "Wow, how many election denier flags is too many for a Supreme Court justice to own and display?"

Shouldn't the answer be obvious?

A Supreme Court justice should never behave in a manner that can be interpreted as politically partisan. Alito has claimed that the upside-down flag, a distress signal adopted by those denying Donald Trump's 2020 election loss, was raised by his wife during a political dispute with neighbors. Tawdry as that sounds, it doesn't matter. It's his house, too.

"A Supreme Court justice appears to have embraced election denialism," Alicia Bannon of New York University's Brennan Center for Justice told Reuters. "That's a five-alarm fire."

A sitting federal judge even weighed in: "Flying those flags was

tantamount to sticking a 'Stop the steal' bumper sticker on your car," Massachusetts-based senior U.S. District Judge Michael Ponsor wrote in a New York Times essay chastising Alito. "You just don't do it."

You just don't do it.

The U.S. Supreme Court didn't even have an official code of ethics until late last year, unlike the rest of the federal judiciary. Imagine: lifetime tenure and no codified ethics rules.

The idea that justices can be expected to monitor themselves for conflicts of interest and ethical lapses is absurd. No one can fairly judge themselves.

And now all the court has is a toothless set of guidelines with no enforcement mechanism.

For those whose reflexive what-aboutism kicks in whenever MAGA world comes under fire, it's important to acknowledge that it was also wrong for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to criticize then-presidential candidate Trump in 2016.

"I can't imagine what this place would be — I can't imagine what the country would be — with Donald Trump as our president," RBG told the New York Times during an interview in her chambers four months before the election. "For the country, it could be four years. For the court, it could be — I don't even want to contemplate that."

(And it was improper for Justice Sonia Sotomayor to routinely ask her staff to prod libraries,



SUPREME COURT Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. at the White House in 2019. Flags used by Trump partisans flew at his homes.

universities and schools to buy her books ahead of speaking engagements. She also should have recused herself from a case involving her publisher.)

But when Ginsburg publicly let loose on Trump, hardly anyone thought the reality show billionaire was going to beat Hillary Clinton. Even *Trump* didn't think he would win.

Still, it was an inappropriate, incautious statement from a Supreme Court justice who should have known better.

And, days later, she confessed as much: "On reflection, my recent remarks in response to press inquiries were ill-advised, and I regret making them," she said in a written statement released by the court. "Judges should avoid commenting on a candidate for public office. In the future I will be more circumspect."

Ginsburg's self-flogging was not good enough for the Wall Street Journal's conservative

editorial board, which demanded that she resign or at the very least recuse herself from cases involving the presidential race and related matters. (She did not.)

But the Journal has made no such demand of Alito. Instead, right-wing media are awash with pieces about how the "left" is smearing the poor man.

This is the same defense trotted out by supporters of Justice Clarence Thomas, whose wealthy patrons have lavished him and his wife, Ginni, with a bonanza of hundreds of thousands of dollars in trips, private school tuition for a relative, an expensive RV and who knows what other blandishments. The Journal called ProPublica's bombshell investigation of Thomas a "phony ethics assault."

Unlike Ginsburg, Alito has not apologized for flying the flags nor, come to think of it, for failing to disclose that he accepted a 2008 trip to a luxury fishing lodge in Alaska from Republican donors,

one of whom had an interest in cases before the court.

Instead, like his much-criticized colleague Thomas, he has responded with petulance.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Richard Durbin of Illinois and member Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island last week asked Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. to direct Alito to recuse himself from any cases related to the 2020 presidential election and the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol, which of course include the question of whether former President Trump has immunity from prosecution.

"The Court's Code of Conduct has failed to redress or prevent any of these ethics violations, largely because it contains no enforcement mechanism," they wrote.

Last year, the committee advanced a bill, the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal and Transparency Act, that has yet to be taken up by the whole Senate and may never come to a vote given that body's antiquated rules. The bill would require the justices to adopt a strict code of ethics and create a process for investigating and addressing alleged violations.

The court, whose credibility is near an all-time low, should have taken this step without prodding.

I had a good chuckle when I read in the Journal that "the people undermining confidence in the Supreme Court are those acting as if Justice Alito is sending secret signals from the flagpole at his beach house."

You've got to be kidding, guys. There's nothing secret about it.

@robinkabcarian



SILVIA RAZGOVA For The Times

A CYCLIST crosses the 6th Street Viaduct in downtown Los Angeles. The state initiative that funds local support for biking and walking is under threat in the latest budget proposal.

Don't slash bike programs to fund highway expansion

By Michael Schneider

CALIFORNIA HAS AMBITIOUS climate goals: By 2045, the state wants to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 85%, drop gas consumption 94% and cut air pollution 71%. The largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in California is the transportation sector, with passenger vehicles making up the largest portion of that.

Curbing pollution from passenger vehicles won't be easy. And if the state invests in the wrong infrastructure, those goals could become impossible. Gov. Gavin Newsom's budget proposal would be a big swerve in the wrong direction.

The state is facing a huge budget shortfall and needs to close a deficit of about \$45 billion. The governor proposed to do that through broad cuts and reallocations, including shifting about \$600 million from the Active Transportation Program, which encourages biking and walking, toward future highway programs instead.

Why would we cut from the state's most climate-friendly transportation program and spend that money on highway projects that will make climate change and traffic congestion worse?

The state government spends about \$33 billion a year on transportation, more than ever before. More than half of that, \$18 billion, goes to the California Department of Transportation, which is spending billions of dollars to widen highways — a short-term strategy that we know from experience will only exacerbate traffic congestion and increase greenhouse gas emissions. Despite this, according to a recent Natural Resources Defense Council study, most transportation spending in the state still goes toward projects that increase greenhouse gas emissions, especially widening highways.

In addition to routinely approving new highway widenings, the California Transportation Commission also runs the state's most climate-friendly transportation initiative, the Active Transportation Program. It funds things like bike lanes and pedestrian safety improvements. A report from the program last year said it "remains oversubscribed and grows increasingly competitive each cycle." In other words,

cities are desperate for resources to make their streets safer and more suited to biking and walking — helping people leave their car at home for some trips — but local alternatives to driving increasingly have to compete with each other for resources from the state.

These climate-friendly, lifesaving, politically popular projects shouldn't have to scramble for scraps of the transportation budget.

We will not be able to achieve our climate goals solely by shifting gas powered vehicles to electric vehicles; we also must transition a significant number of daily trips in our cities to mass transit, biking or walking — precisely what the Active Transportation Program helps make possible. We also must do this to build safer streets. In Los Angeles, a pedestrian is injured every five hours and killed every two days, one of the highest rates in the nation.

Instead, we continue to fund highway expansion unabated. In February, the Transportation Commission approved hundreds of millions of dollars to expand the 15 Freeway, over the objection of some commissioners. This month, the commission approved the controversial expansion of Interstate 80 between Davis and Sacramento, which will also cost hundreds of millions of dollars —

equivalent to *all* funded active transportation projects in 2023. Why would we pump more money into projects that work against our climate goals?

The Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, under climate champion and Chair Sen. Scott Wiener, would most likely be amenable to rejecting the proposed cuts to active transportation. If so, it's critical that L.A.-area Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, who chairs the Assembly Committee on Budget, gets on board as well. It would take both the Senate and the Assembly to override the governor's proposal.

Earlier this month, the same week Newsom visited the Vatican, Pope Francis said: "Climate change at this moment is a road to death." In California, we seem hell-bent on making sure that that road has as much car capacity as possible before we hit the climate change wall.

MICHAEL SCHNEIDER is the founder of Streets for All.

What's convincing voters that the U.S. economy is worse?

Far too many Americans are objectively wrong. It's a huge problem for Biden.

JONAH GOLDBERG

ONE OF THE WORST things about democracy is the way we talk about it.

For instance, politicians love to talk about unity, but our constitutional system was set up to keep unity at bay, preferring a more adversarial approach, pitting faction against faction. Checks and balances, separation of powers and the divided authorities between the federal and state governments are predicated on the idea that unity will be rare and temporary. The Constitution places our most cherished liberties on a high shelf, hard to reach during moments of unifying populist passion.

The rhetorical mismatch doesn't just apply to the mechanisms of democracy but also to the culture of democracy. Democratic manners demand that politicians never say the voters are wrong. But competitive elections — essential to any workable definition of democracy — require some voters to be "wrong." I don't necessarily mean in their policy preferences (though that's frequently the case), I just mean elections create winners and losers. And yet, winning politicians, with barely half of the electorate on their side, routinely declare that the "America people have spoken" after every victory.

More to the point, voters are often simply wrong about basic facts going into an election. For instance, the Biden campaign is struggling with an electorate that believes the economy is far worse than it is. To be clear, I didn't say the economy is good, though that argument can be made. No, President Biden is struggling to convince the electorate that the economy isn't the worst ever.

A recent YouGov survey asked voters to say which decade, starting in the 1930s, had the worst economy. A third (32%) said the 2020s, our current decade, is the worst, worse even than the 1930s or 1970s. Only 23% said the '30s and a mere 5% named the '70s as the worst. This is, by any objective measure, wrong, spectacularly wrong.

Now, there's a lot of partisan bias at work here. Only 19% of Democrats said ours is the worst decade and 24% did say the 1930s were, but 45% of Republicans believe the 2020s are the worst. Still, when nearly 1 in 5 Democrats wrongly believe things are worse than during the Great Depression, Democrats have got a problem.

This is merely one facet of Biden's "vibes" problem. Large numbers of Americans (42%) think the 2020s are the worst

decade for crime, which is just wrong. Twenty-eight percent think the 1940s — World War II, duh — had the "most war." Only 4% named the 1970s and 6% cited the 2000s — when America fought, respectively, the Vietnam war and invaded Iraq and Afghanistan. But 19% said the current decade had the "most war" — and we're not at war, though events in Ukraine and Gaza do make the times seem bellicose. From scientific breakthroughs to family unhappiness to racial inequality, lots of Americans just think things have never been worse.

Now, subjectively, there are perfectly valid arguments that things are not going well or that they can or should be going better. But we're talking about objective judgments here, and objectively huge numbers of Americans are objectively wrong. And in fairness to them, I suspect many people don't think they're making objective judgments. When people say, "I'm having the worst day — or decade — ever!" they're not necessarily being literal. They're making a vibes declaration.

This is obviously a huge problem for Joe Biden. Thanks in part to the ravages of inflation and high interest rates and in part to his own shortcomings, he can't change minds about the economy. But the causality works both ways. Economic realities contribute to negative attitudes *and* negative attitudes shape how the economy is perceived. And on many fronts, particularly race, Biden is fueling those negative attitudes (see his commencement address at Morehouse College).

But that explanation is insufficient. Democracy depends on the promise of incremental, cumulative, progress. James Madison didn't want polls to be the measure of the voters' mood, but elections. Which is why we have them constantly, at every level of government. Democracy, for Madison, isn't about unity or agreement, but about argument and disagreement, and constant self-correction.

Thanks to that vision, we've made enormous strides. But now, both parties wallow in catastrophism and presentism. Donald Trump — who has the historical memory of a goldfish — falsely screeches that things have never been worse. Yet as cartoonish as his rhetoric is, he's making a right-wing version of a common left-wing argument. Indeed, every four years, partisans insist that this is the "most important election ever" and that catastrophe or salvation is on the ballot. Relentlessly crying wolf has fueled the mess we've found ourselves in, and perhaps the mess to come.

After all, when you constantly tell people we're in an existential crisis, the vibes can create the reality, whether it's warranted by the facts or not.

@jonahdispatch

As close as it gets to a homelessness czar

[Judge, from A1] projects by word and deed his conviction that homelessness is a moral outrage. Leveraging the powers of federal court, U.S. District Judge David O. Carter has elevated himself, metaphorically speaking, to that position above governmental boundaries that no political leader or bureaucrat can reach.

While overseeing two cases that challenge city, county and U.S. government practices on homelessness, Carter has summoned the mayor, several supervisors, council members and city and county department heads into his courtroom. He has grilled officials in Washington. And, in moments rich in symbolism, he has shown more deference in court to Skid Row residents he cultivates as confidants than to the lawyers and public officials appearing before him.

His rulings, and in some instances merely his bluster, have extracted commitments from city and county leaders to produce thousands more shelter beds and provide more treatment for mental health and substance abuse, and he is pushing them to hash out an agreement on who pays — in other words, to cooperate.

Carter has shaken up a homeless policy long marked by bureaucratic infighting, budgetary battles and competing strategies. But not everyone thinks Carter's decisions are the best path, and some have chafed over his power to demand change from the perch of his bench.

In his most recent move, motivated by a deep-seated feeling that millions of dollars in homelessness funds aren't trickling down to people who need them, Carter ordered the city to pay \$2.2 million, or more if necessary, for an independent audit of its spending.

Up next, Carter has set an Aug. 6 trial over demands that the Department of Veterans Affairs swiftly provide housing for all homeless veterans with serious mental illness or traumatic brain injuries who live in Los Angeles County.

Alternately solicitous and overbearing to the parties before him, flagrantly sloppy with proper names and syntax but somehow always crystal clear, Carter rebuffed the government's petition for a dismissal in December, backing his ruling with a string of passionate soliloquies.

"We're the homeless veteran capital of the world right now," he lectured a phalanx of government lawyers. "So I don't want to hear excuses about 'We can't afford it.' It's the opposite. We can't afford what's happening right now, folks. That's what we can't afford."

Carter, a Marine veteran who survived life-threatening injuries in Vietnam, chided the lawyers for a lack of urgency.

"Unless you move, you're going to lose a whole generation of Vietnam veterans," he said. "If we stall this out, there's a whole generation of people in their 70s and 80s who will just pass away without this issue being decided."

He added a barbed compliment for the U.S. secretary of Veterans Affairs, Denis McDonough, who came to L.A. to attend a housing dedication on the VA campus but didn't accept Carter's invitation to come to court.

"I thank him for coming out," Carter said. "But if he came out to dedicate 53 units, maybe he ought to be out here involved in the settlement discussion ... when we're talking about 4,000 units. I'm looking for that leadership coming from ... the secretary or from this administration."

In his latest ruling, Carter on May 3 granted class status to the case initially filed on behalf of seven veterans, meaning the VA could be held liable for providing housing for thousands.

Carter's ascension as "the homeless judge" in Los Angeles came by a quirk. He was assigned the two L.A. cases because of his experience in a related case in Orange County, where he is based.

That highly publicized case led to the opening of a 200-bed shelter in Santa Ana and a settlement in which the county agreed to improve conditions in shelters and offer homeless people access to county healthcare and social services before



AT THE HEIGHT of the pandemic, Judge David O. Carter began walking Skid Row to meet those at the heart of his homelessness cases.



CARTER'S rulings, and sometimes merely his bluster, have extracted commitments from county and city leaders to produce thousands more shelter beds.

deputy sheriffs could enforce anti-camping and anti-loitering laws.

Carter put his empathy on display, walking through the camps in the Santa Ana River several times, shaking hands, listening to stories and admonishing officials that any eviction must be handled "humanely and with dignity."

He brought that empathy to Los Angeles with added gusto in 2020, assigned to a case filed by a group of business owners and residents called the LA Alliance for Human Rights. It alleged that the city and county were neglecting their duty to get homeless people off the streets.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the federal courthouse closed, Carter held court in a ballroom of the Alexandria Hotel on Skid Row and began a routine of early-morning walks along area streets to personally meet those he saw as being at the heart of the case.

Over the years since, his connection to Skid Row acquired a spiritual tone in court.

"How many people die on the streets every day?" he asked the high-priced consultants who came before him to pitch their qualifications for the audit. It was a rhetorical question designed to impress on them his urgency and demand that part of the job would be walking the streets with him.

"When you come out of this, you're not going to be the same person you were — or you don't have a soul," he admonished the company that won the contract.

Carter's rulings have forced L.A. officials to change policies that long pursued a "housing first" orthodoxy that disparaged investment in temporary shelter as wasteful.

Early in the case, upon learning of the health hazards associated with living near freeways, he ordered the city and county to move thousands of homeless people out from under overpasses.

Ten days later, then-Mayor Eric Garcetti issued an executive order declaring shelter a basic need.

"While the City Council and I continue to implement policies to increase the City's

The appellate panel keyed on the judge's penchant for inserting his own ideas into decisions, saying he had deployed "novel" legal theories that no one had argued in his court and ruled on claims that no one had alleged and on evidence that was not before him.

"The district court undoubtedly has broad equitable power to remedy legal violations that have contributed to the complex problem of homelessness in Los Angeles," wrote Judge Jacqueline H. Nguyen. But "that power must be exercised consistent" with the law.

In reality, the myth of the all-powerful "czar" to tackle specific policies — drugs, terrorism, economic growth, homelessness — is largely a media creation that first took root in FDR's White House and spread to future administrations and to towns and counties across America.

Mark Ryavec, a onetime legislative analyst to the L.A. City Council and acerbic critic of homelessness orthodoxy, approves of Carter's methods but thinks of him more as a hammer, wielding power in narrow areas, than as an all-powerful czar.

"I believe Carter is one of the few bright spots on the horizon, but that he does not have the overall perspective nor power to really turn the situation around," Ryavec said in an email.

Ryavec provided a list of proposals he said the judge had neither the power nor the will to act on: restoring drug referral courts, disbanding the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, diverting funds to low-cost shared housing and tackling the high cost of city-financed housing.

The downside of czar-like power, to the extent Carter wields it, is that it is unilateral.

"The judge decides who he wants to listen to and the advice he gets," said Gary Blasi, a UCLA law professor emeritus who has litigated homelessness issues for decades. "He chooses the advice that seems most consistent with what he thinks should be done."

Blasi thinks Carter has given too much weight to the LA Alliance, a group whose interest he sees as clearing

up encampments.

"It's about reducing the visibility of homelessness, especially downtown, where their interests are," Blasi said. "It has nothing at all to do with reducing homelessness or making the life of homeless people better."

Blasi, who was on a team that battled the VA more than a decade ago over the same issues in the current case, is more sanguine about Carter's manhandling of that giant federal bureaucracy.

"If the problem is you need to hold people's feet to the fire, that may well be a case where a stern judge with life tenure and the contempt power could be a useful addition," Blasi said. "I don't think that describes the situation with our local government here now. I don't think there is anybody who needs to be prodded to move this issue up to the highest level of priority."

It is a measure of Carter's determination that he plunges ahead, inured to criticism or reversal.

A few months after his drubbing by the appeals court, Carter accepted a settlement agreement in which the city committed to creating more than 12,000 beds, including both shelter and permanent housing, and removing nearly 10,000 tents, makeshift shelters and vehicles from the streets.

But twice he turned down proposed settlements with the county, demanding more beds for mental health and substance abuse treatment. Having read a report from the former head of the Department of Mental Health that at least 3,000 new beds were needed, Carter insisted on that number.

The LA Alliance and county didn't get the message, proposing a settlement in October 2022 that provided for only 300 more beds. Carter said no. In April, the parties came back with a bigger number: 1,000. No again. The parties came back five months later with the number he wanted: 3,000.

With the city's and county's settlements accepted, it might have appeared the case was over. Not so. Carter was only beginning to exercise his power.

In February, lawyers for the LA Alliance asked Cart-

er to sanction the city for slow-walking its promises. He brushed aside a demand for a \$6.4-million penalty — later approving \$725,000 in legal fees for the firm — but the motion sparked his long-brewing skepticism about how the city was managing its homelessness money.

Even though the sanctions motion did not specifically demand an audit, Carter not only pounced on that idea but segued from it into an almost daily sermon before an audience of senior city and county officials on the need for them to be more transparent.

The crescendo came in the cavernous downtown courtroom, with the mayor sitting in the jury box; the city administrative officer and chief legislative analyst and the executive director of the county's Homeless Initiative huddled in the spectator seats; and the chief executive of LAHSA dialed in by phone.

In his characteristic manner, the judge mixed commendation, supplication and insinuation, mangling metaphors and whole sentences in service of cutting insights.

"Mayor Bass, you have this chance as the mayor to be the first entity in this state that steps up with transparency," he said. "And if you do, I commend you."

But he was skeptical. "I anticipate this argument," he said. "'Judge, all this money flows through LAHSA' ... But I would suggest to you it might be like punching the Pillsbury Doughboy. As you punch on the city's behalf, the arm flies up and the finger-pointing starts, and we're back in this convoluted system of trifurcation between city responsibility, county responsibility and LAHSA responsibility."

"But LAHSA in a sense acted as a shield for the city and the county not having responsibility."

Then he turned to LAHSA head Va Lecia Adams Kellum.

"You're responsible for much of the provider money. Are you willing or able to make the statement that within two weeks ... you would require or — I'm sorry — at least send notice to all of your providers that you're requiring the underlying documentation for the work or alleged work that they've performed?"

"Yes," she said. "We could meet those demands and requests within two weeks to require our providers to have that underlying documentation."

The case is now settled, but the drama of Carter's presence in Los Angeles will continue. By demanding court monitoring, he has assumed oversight of the city and county settlements with the LA Alliance for years to come.

Will the city come through on its commitment to create nearly 18,000 beds and remove more than 10,000 tents and vehicles from the streets? Will L.A. County get 3,000 more mental-health beds up and running?

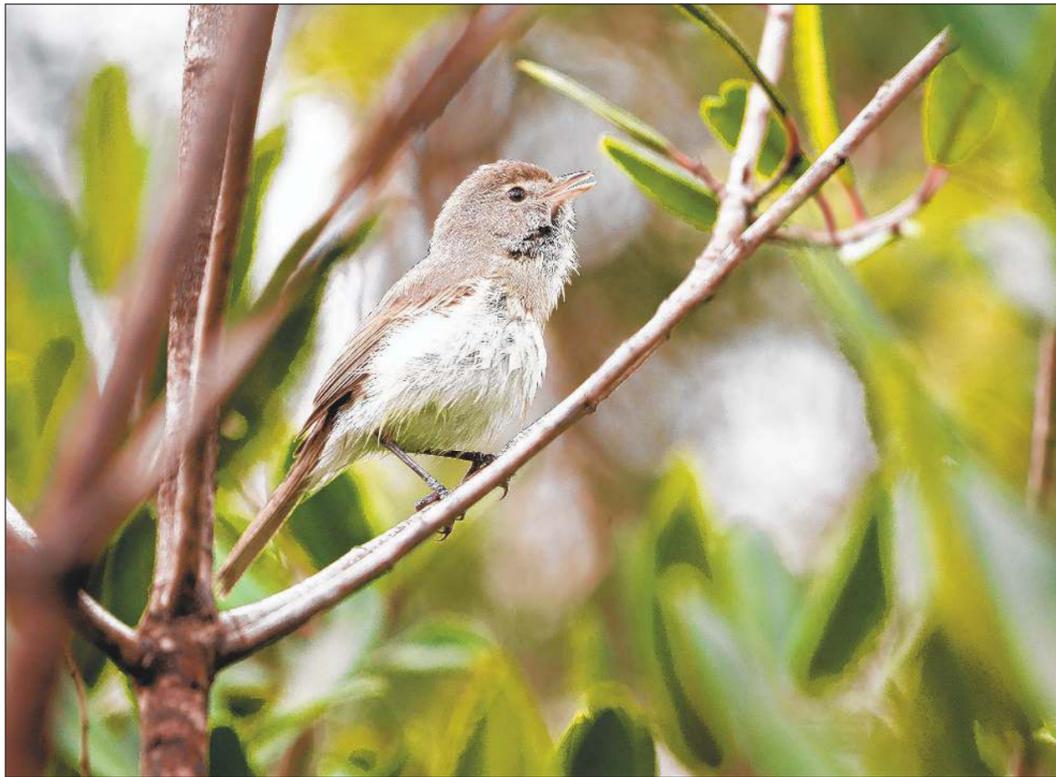
An 80-year-old-accounting judge with a strong sense of destiny will be watching.



IN COURT, Carter, center, has shown more deference to Skid Row residents he cultivates as confidants than to lawyers and public officials appearing before him.

CALIFORNIA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/CALIFORNIA



ALECIA SMITH

A LEAST BELL'S VIREO is spotted at Rio de Los Angeles State Park in the Glassell Park neighborhood.

A rare songbird makes a comeback at the L.A. River

Once teetering on extinction, the least Bell's vireo is back in town

BY LILA SEIDMAN

As visitors to a bustling park in northeast Los Angeles shot hoops, scrambled up play equipment and lounged in manicured grass, an endangered songbird covertly — but not quietly — did his part to stave off extinction.

The least Bell's vireo, a mostly gray songbird, was on the verge of nesting in Rio de Los Angeles State Park, a green respite that supplanted an abandoned railway along the L.A. River. The bird with a wingspan of just seven inches was singing passionately, an act that marked its territory as breeding season picked up



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

NICOLAS GONZALEZ of the National Audubon Society works on habitat restoration at the park. "It's persistent. It's a survivor," he said of the bird.

in mid-March. Its song rings out like a clinking question-and-answer: "Cheedle-cheedle-chee? Cheedle-cheedle-chew!"

"It's persistent. It's a survivor," said Nicolas Gonzalez, senior communications manager for migration science at the National Audubon Society, an avian conservation nonprofit, who helped identify the bird as it flitted between trees, blending into the muted spring sky.

Bird boosters, meanwhile, were hustling to get the grounds in order.

Evelyn Serrano enthusiastically instructed two volunteers at Rio de Los Angeles, which is in the Glassell [See Songbird, B2]

UCLA, UC Davis strikers target UC protest response

Campus crackdowns on pro-Palestinian encampments violated their rights, they say.

BY HANNAH FRY, GRACE TOOHEY, CAROLINE PETROW-COHEN AND JAWEED KALEEM

Carrying "On Strike" pickets and some wearing kaffiyehs, academic workers at UCLA and UC Davis walked off the job Tuesday, alleging their rights were violated by the University of California's actions during pro-Palestinian protests and encampment crackdowns.

United Auto Workers Local 4811, which represents 48,000 graduate student teaching assistants, researchers and others at the 10 UC campuses and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, launched the rolling strike last week at UC Santa Cruz. The walkouts unfold at a critical time in the academic year, as classes end and capstone projects, finals and grading are ahead — work in which union members play a key role.

At UCLA on Tuesday morning, a growing group of university workers marched in front of Royce Hall chanting, "Our university," and "Union power." Many held signs that read "UAW on

strike" and several wore kaffiyehs, traditional Middle Eastern headgear, to show solidarity with the pro-Palestinian movement.

Picketers temporarily blocked the entrance to at least one visitor parking structure, turning some cars away. A representative approached motorists attempting to turn in to the structure to request they respect the picket line and offered suggestions for other nearby parking lots.

As private security guards monitored the protest, the marchers continued to chant: "UC, UC, you're no good. Treat your workers like you should!" Some students walking to classes, paused briefly to watch the action or snap a photograph before going about their days.

UCLA union leaders said Tuesday afternoon they have not yet determined the number of members who walked out and did not have data on canceled classes. The UAW represents more than 6,200 workers at UCLA.

UCLA did not move classes online, as did UC Santa Cruz. On its website, UCLA officials said they expected the strike "may cause minor disruptions to campus operations as they picket this week and in the future." The strike was authorized until June 30.

Many classes at UCLA appeared to be continuing in [See Strike, B2]

LAPD disclosed the names of sex-hazing victims, lawyer says

Four officers are suing over assaults they say they endured while on police football team.

BY LIBOR JANY AND RICHARD WINTON

A group of Los Angeles police officers who are suing the city over allegations they endured sexual hazing on the LAPD's amateur football team risk facing retaliation, their attorney says, because the department revealed their identities during an internal investigation.

The attorney, Michael Morrison, said he was concerned that the internal affairs unit had disclosed the names to other officers during questioning about misconduct related to the Centurions, an LAPD squad with around 50 players that competes against other police agencies. His comments came as Los Angeles Police Department officials announced they lacked evidence to present a criminal case against any officers

"right now."

Morrison said officials should have known about the potential for backlash if his clients' names — which had been kept secret during the litigation — became known within the department. Like other police departments, Morrison said, the LAPD has an insular culture that punishes those who break ranks, even to call out possible wrongdoing.

"I can't see any other purpose for it, because you can ask all the questions that you want without disclosing their names," Morrison said.

An LAPD spokesman said Thursday that the department does not comment on pending litigation, and a call to the internal affairs unit was not immediately returned.

Morrison said one of the officers who came forward with hazing allegations was confronted last week at a Dodgers game by an LAPD colleague and former Centurion teammate, who demanded to know why the officer had "ratted us out." [See Centurions, B3]

Plea deal deepens water heist mystery

Central Valley official admits to a years-long conspiracy. But who else benefited?

BY JESSICA GARRISON

FRESNO — The former general manager of a San Joaquin Valley water district, accused by federal prosecutors of carrying out one of the most audacious and long-running water heists in California history, pleaded guilty Tuesday to a version of the crime far more muted than what prosecutors had laid out in their original indictment.

As part of a plea agreement negotiated with prosecutors, Dennis Falaschi, 78, former longtime head of the Panoche Water District, appeared in a Fresno federal courtroom and pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to steal water from the government and one count of filing a false tax return.

The plea deal is a jarring twist in a case that has captivated farmers in the San Joaquin Valley. In 2022, prosecutors accused Falaschi of masterminding the theft of more than \$25 million worth of water out of a federal irrigation canal over the course of two decades and selling it to farmers and other water districts. The water grab, as laid out in the indictment, happened cat-burglar-style, siphoned through a secret pipe, often after hours to [See Water, B5]



JOHN WALKER Fresno Bee

DENNIS FALASCHI, shown in an undated photo, was the general manager of the Panoche Water District. He admitted to stealing water from a federal canal.

What I got wrong about blowup over 'bad built' remark

Congresswoman used 'butch' as an insult — but it's not.

ANITA CHABRIA

Earlier this month, you may recall, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Green made a racist dog-whistle remark to her Black colleague Rep. Jasmine Crockett during a legislative hearing.



Crockett responded with the

clapback heard 'round the world, asking the committee's chairman whether he would also allow one panel member to describe another as having a "bleach blond, bad built, butch body."

I wrote about how younger legislators like Crockett (who is a millennial) are far quicker to engage than their older, stay-above-the-fray counterparts — and how younger voters want to see more of the fighting style that Crockett offered.

I still commend Crockett for not silently taking MTG's abuse.

But readers pointed out to me that the use of "butch" felt harmful to some in the lesbian community, and they're right.

"5 B's would have been sufficient," wrote one reader.

It "hurt my heart," wrote another, that I didn't call out the butch comment.

"As the mother of a little girl who identifies as bi, it's bad enough that she has to face insults from the boys that she beats in soccer on the playground [and] that she looks too butch with her chin length hair and muscular body."

"I hope the future of our politics isn't fighting racism with homophobia. Butch and luscious lashes are both beautiful."

I also spoke with Jennifer Rowray. Rowray goes by @cowboyjen on TikTok and is somewhat of a

butch influencer, living a farm life in Iowa and once serving as a delegate for Barack Obama in that state. I caught her while she was driving to the feed store.

She told me she thinks that butch means ugly and hard to straight folks. That just forces young women to internalize that if they feel butch, they can't ever be seen as beautiful.

"Like, instead of being powerful, we are aggressive," she said of the way some critique women. "Instead of being quiet, we are unapproachable. We are cold and distant and rough and tough and scary, even."

But Cowboy Jen says butch isn't [See Chabria, B4]

Workers at UCLA, UC Davis begin strike

[Strike, from B1] person Tuesday. However, a few undergraduate students told The Times that their discussion sections had been canceled.

Mary Osako, UCLA's vice chancellor of strategic communications, said in a statement that students are preparing for finals this week and the university is focusing on supporting them.

"They're paying tuition and fees to learn, and we're dismayed by deliberate outside disruptions that may get in the way of that. Students want to hear their professors teach, not the piercing sounds of trumpets, drums and slogans being shouted right outside their classroom windows," Osako said.

Anny Vilorio Winnett, academic student employee unit chair of UAW 4811 at UCLA, called for more than minor disruptions during the rally, saying the strike will continue until their demands are met.

"We need amnesty for our colleagues," Vilorio Winnett told the group. "If your boss is mad at you, good!"

The academic workers contend that their free speech rights were violated when university leaders called on police to forcibly remove pro-Palestinian encampments at several campuses and activists at UCLA were not protected from an attack on the camp by counterprotesters for hours. Police later dismantled the UCLA encampment, making about 200 arrests, including some members of the striking union.

The expanded strike is one of the biggest actions by an American labor union in support of Palestinians and comes as college leaders face scrutiny for calling in police in riot gear to clear pro-Palestinian encampments. The strike could include up to three more campuses as early as Friday, according to the union.

Sam Hunter, a UCLA teaching assistant, said it



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

UCLA ACADEMIC workers Tuesday joined in the second round of campus strikes alleging their rights were violated by University of California actions during pro-Palestinian protests and encampment crackdowns.

was "disgusting" how the university called in police during the protests.

"How the university chose to respond to that is why I'm out here today," he said into a megaphone, as union supporters cheered him on.

Among the crowd were about a dozen graduate worker guild members from USC, who shared concerns about what one, Maile McCann, called a "militarized response" to campus protests instead of negotiations and bargaining.

"We're at a total inflection point in the labor market right now," McCann, a USC civil engineering graduate student worker, said. "The fact that they're taking a stand to hold their university accountable is historic." The UC-AFT, the

union representing lecturers, who teach about a third of all undergraduate classes in the UC system, has asked its members not to do the work that would normally be done by those on strike.

"Doing this labor could diminish the impact and power of their strike, but also it sets a worrying precedent in accepting an increase to our own workload. It would signal that UC-AFT members, who are already overtaxed and overburdened, are able to pick up more work at a moment's notice," the union said.

At UC Davis, where the UAW represents more than 4,600 academic workers, a late-morning rally was scheduled to take place on the quad.

An Instagram post by Davis Popular University for

the Liberation of Palestine, a group behind the pro-Palestinian encampment at UC Davis, called Monday night for "No school while genocide is happening! We encourage everyone to skip classes and come show their support with the UAW workers for as long as the strike goes."

UC officials say the walkouts are illegal. However, their urgent request to the state labor board to immediately halt the strike was rejected by the panel, which ruled Thursday that UC's allegations did not meet the legal standard for intervention.

Rafael Jaime, the president of UAW 4811, was at the UCLA encampment during the attack in late April and witnessed the violence. He praised the labor board's de-

nial of UC's injunction request, saying it "proves that no employer gets to make up its own rules."

Demands of union leaders include the protection of free speech on campus; an amnesty for all academic employees, students, student groups, faculty and staff who face disciplinary action or arrest due to participation in protests; and divestment by the university from "weapons manufacturers, military contractors, and companies profiting from Israel's war on Gaza."

University officials have asserted the strike is unlawful because the goal is "to pressure the university to concede to a list of politically motivated demands closely linked to the protests occurring across California and the nation."

The union on May 10 filed charges with the state labor board related to the treatment, university discipline and arrests of union members at UCLA and other campuses, including UC San Diego and UC Irvine. The charge accuses the universities of retaliating against the workers and unlawfully changing workplace policies to suppress pro-Palestinian speech.

UC also filed an unfair labor practice charge with the labor board, alleging that the union's decision to walk out was in violation of the no-strike provision in its collective bargaining agreements. Both charges are pending.

The strike comes amid continuing upheaval on UCLA's campus. On Thursday, UCLA Chancellor Gene Block and two other university presidents testified in Washington before the Republican-led House Committee on Education and the Workforce, which is investigating antisemitism on campuses throughout the country. In his opening remarks to the panel, Block said that, "with the benefit of hindsight," the university should have acted to "immediately remove" the encampment that pro-Palestinian protesters established in late April "if and when the safety of our community was put at risk."

Block was also questioned about complaints that Jewish students were prevented from accessing parts of campus by pro-Palestinian protesters.

Later that day, more than two dozen officers in riot gear responded to the campus to remove a new, small encampment that protesters had erected.

The last strike by UC academic workers, at the end of 2022, resulted in an agreement for salary increases and improved benefits.

Times staff writer Howard Blume contributed to this report.

The endangered least Bell's vireo comes back singing

[Songbird, from B1] Park neighborhood, on how to create what looked like moats of soil around fledgling native plants.

Serrano, director of the Audubon Center at Debs Park, another urban oasis, explained that the berms would funnel water to the mule fat, black sage, golden currant, sycamore trees and other native foliage the least Bell's vireo needs to thrive. Certain plants provide cover and nest materials, while others attract yummy insects.

So far, the literal dirty work seems to be paying off. A lone least Bell's vireo was documented at the park when the habitat restoration effort targeting the species began about two years ago, Serrano said. Within a year, there were four — two nesting pairs. Last year, they counted three fledglings.

"Sometimes it takes a really long time to see the change," Serrano said. "It was really nice to see it happen so quickly."

Stakeholders see the migratory birds' rebound in the park and surrounding areas as a testament to what can happen when people come together to make positive change and natural environments are supported. It also suggests that people can live in harmony with nature — even in highly urbanized areas.

But significant legwork preceded the local triumph, and what can be seen as historic missteps were walked back. Meanwhile, there are new and old threats.

Once abundant in California's riverside woodlands, the silver-tongued, whitish-bellied least Bell's vireo had vanished from most of its range by the 1980s, remaining only in Southern California and northern Baja California, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. (The birds are the smallest of four subspecies of Bell's vireo.)

The ranks plummeted amid the extensive loss of their preferred riparian habitat. Dams went up and wetlands were drained, people encroached on wildlands, and agriculture expanded. In 1999, The Times reported that California had lost 97% of its riparian woodlands, more than any other state. Parasitism by brown-



Photographs by BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

EVELYN SERRANO of the Audubon Center at Debs Park hopes to create an ideal environment for the birds.



VOLUNTEERS head into Rio de Los Angeles State Park, where they work to shore up varieties of native foliage that the least Bell's vireo needs to thrive.

headed cowbirds, which lay eggs in vireo nests, contributed to the decline. California listed the least Bell's vireo as endangered in 1980, and federal officials followed suit in 1986.

About 20 years after the bird gained federal protection, the California population increased almost tenfold, from 291 to 2,968 pairs, according to federal wildlife officials.

Now the birds are popping up in areas where they haven't been seen in years,

sometimes decades.

The Rio de Los Angeles park site was once part of the floodplain of the Los Angeles River — prime vireo real estate.

Then came the concrete. Catastrophic floods, including one in 1938 that killed more than 100 people and delayed the Academy Awards ceremony, prompted the waterway to be paved over.

That ushered in a period of about 60 to 70 years "where you would never have seen a least Bell's vireo

anywhere near downtown," said Dan Cooper, deputy executive officer and senior conservation biologist for the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains.

A turning point arrived in the late 1990s and early 2000s, he said, when restoration work along the river began, and government agencies started clearing less habitat in the channel. Cooper, a San Gabriel Valley native, joined Friends of the L.A. River just as the non-

profit was launched by poet Lewis MacAdams.

Two years ago, Cooper was shocked to trace the birds to a pocket park lodged between the river and the roaring 5 Freeway. There was a youngster accompanying the adult making a begging call for food and attention.

"Its song is so distinctive, and it really cuts through all the din of the city noise," Cooper said. "I could hear it above the traffic."

On a podcast, Cooper calls it a "scratchy phrase that goes up and then goes down." He added: "It was described to me as, 'You take the ball, give it to me; I take the ball, give it to you.'"

The same year, he said, a territory cropped up at a picnic area in Elysian Park.

"Once they start kind of reclaiming their prior territory, they seem to be spreading out into places we don't necessarily expect to find them, like Elysian Park," he said.

Marcos Trinidad, senior director of forestry at TreePeople, remembers hearing the unmistakable tune while strolling through Rio de Los Angeles around 2015. Trinidad, who learned the call by listening to a CD he burned featuring classical music interspersed with birdsongs, recalled thinking,

"Whoa, wait, is that really happening here?"

At the time, he was director of the Audubon Center at Debs Park, and he was able to secure funding about two years later that allowed for consistent habitat restoration events.

A National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant funds the restoration work happening today, Serrano said. In addition to Audubon, the work is supported by California State Parks, Los Angeles River State Park Partners, Theodore Payne Foundation and Terremoto. Other groups, such as Friends of the L.A. River, carry out nearby restoration efforts that benefit the birds.

Gray-and-orange fencing now rises in parts of Rio de Los Angeles State Park, barriers between nesting activity and the public. As of mid-May, two nests were confirmed. Serrano, in an email, said "our bird friend" continued to sing "a whole lot."

Moses Goldfarb, 31, was unaware of the vireo when he arrived at the park on a sunny day in April to play tennis. The Seattle transplant, who works in the film industry, expressed surprise that the park was home to "anything other than just a standard city bird."

Ariana Martinez, 23, who was lounging on a grassy patch, was less thrown by the revelation that the songbird was near. Since discovering the more naturalistic side of the park a few months ago, she frequents it, along with her young nephew and elderly dog.

Given all the trees and ambient bird sounds, "I feel like it makes sense for them to be here," she said.

Candice Dickens-Russell, chief executive of Friends of the L.A. River, said nature is especially thriving in three areas of the river where those who paved it couldn't get the concrete to stick: near Long Beach, the Sepulveda Basin and Glendale Narrows. She said it's those places where the least Bell's vireo and other species are making a comeback.

"There is definitely a link between a lack of concrete and biodiversity," she said, adding that the nonprofit is advocating for strategic removal of concrete in areas of the river where it's safe to do so.

CITY & STATE



MARIO TAMA Getty Images

FLEETING VISIT

About 500 sailors from the USS Carl Vinson descended on the 6th Street Bridge in L.A. on Memorial Day as part of Fleet Week. There were speeches, entertainment and a moment of silence for the fallen.

After apology, DePape gets 30 years

'I'm sorry,' the man who attacked Paul Pelosi says before being resentenced.

By HANNAH WILEY

SAN FRANCISCO — The man convicted of attempting to kidnap former U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and violently attacking her husband with a hammer in an October 2022 assault issued an apology on Tuesday before a federal judge again sentenced him to 30 years in prison.

Wearing his orange jail jumpsuit and reading from a white sheet of paper while standing next to his attorneys, DePape said he felt "horrible for hurting Mr. Pelosi," and pledged to "never do anything violent like that to anyone ever again."

"I'm sorry for what I did, especially what I did to Paul Pelosi," DePape said. "I should have never hurt him."

DePape had already been sentenced to three decades in federal prison by Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley during a May 17 hearing that should have concluded a high-profile case of political extremism.

But Scott Corley agreed to reopen the sentencing hearing after federal prosecutors noted that she had forgotten to give DePape, 44, an opportunity to make a statement. Federal criminal rules of procedure require the court to "address the defendant personally in order to permit the defendant to speak or present any information to mitigate the sentence."

Scott Corley apologized to DePape, the attorneys and victims at the start of the Tuesday hearing, saying she was "truly sorry for my mistake."

"I want to apologize for you having to be here this morning," she said. "It's completely on me."

The judge pledged to set aside her original sentencing and consider DePape's statement in her new ruling, before ultimately reimposing the 30-year sentence.

Scott Corley called the crime "unprecedented" and said it was imperative to deter "copycats" and ensure they get the message that "you cannot go and break into the speaker of the House's home and hold her spouse hostage and then assault him. Or any politician for that matter."

"The message has to be out there that it is absolutely unacceptable to our democracy," she said.

The Pelosis' daughter, Christine Pelosi, had already read victim-impact statements by her parents during the original sentencing.

In her letter, Nancy Pelosi said her husband continues to suffer physically and emotionally from the attack, and that the violent incident "has had a devastating effect on three generations of our family."

DePape had traveled from his Richmond, Calif., home into San Francisco on Oct. 28, 2022, in a conspiracy-fueled plan to hold Nancy Pelosi hostage and "break her kneecaps" if she didn't admit to corruption and other bogus claims of human trafficking and child abuse.

He carried a backpack full of zip ties, tape, rope and a hammer, which he used along with his own body force to smash his way into the house. But instead of finding Nancy Pelosi, who was in Washington at the time, DePape wandered through the home before stumbling upon a sleeping Paul Pelosi in the couple's bedroom.

"The door opened and a very large man came in, with a hammer in one hand and some ties in the other hand," Paul Pelosi testified during the November 2023 trial. "And he said, 'Where's



MICHAEL SHORT Associated Press

DAVID DePAPE was found guilty of trying to kidnap Nancy Pelosi and brutally attacking her husband, Paul, in 2022.

Nancy?' And I think that's what woke me up."

Paul Pelosi, then 82, was able to stall DePape long enough to dial 911 on his cellphone that he kept in the bathroom. When police arrived, the two men were struggling over DePape's hammer. Prosecutors showed jurors graphic police body-camera video of DePape bludgeoning Paul Pelosi, fracturing his skull and seriously injuring his right arm and left hand.

A jury convicted DePape after a four-day trial on attempted kidnapping and assault charges that were narrowly focused on whether the federal crimes were directly tied to then-Speaker Pelosi's official duties in Congress. His federal public defenders, Jodi Linker and Angela Chuang, had attempted to argue their client was motivated not by Nancy Pelosi's legislative role in Congress, but by admittedly bizarre conspiracy theories that politicians and other public figures were engaged in child trafficking and sexual abuse.

In his statement to the court, DePape said he should have left the house immediately after realizing Nancy Pelosi was not at home, and added, "Looking

back, I can see I was not doing well."

DePape also faces several decades in state prison on separate, local charges of attempted murder, assault with a deadly weapon, elder abuse, burglary and threats to a public official and her family. A jury was selected in that case last week, and opening arguments are set to begin Wednesday in San Francisco.

Linker and Chuang asked for a more lenient 14-year federal prison term, saying their client has since been diagnosed with an undisclosed mental illness and that he was traumatized from a long-term romantic relationship with the mother of his two biological children.

Linker and Chuang immediately filed an appeal of the 30-year sentence and argued against the new hearing in a sharply worded court filing that claimed the sentencing issue should be resolved in the appeal process.

They also requested a new judge, accusing Scott Corley of bias against DePape when she expressed "strong views" on the crimes and their impact on the safety of public officials during the original hearing.

They also said the hearing was an unfair burden on DePape's attorneys in his state trial, and that the rescheduled sentencing hearing would cut into much-needed time for their client to consult with his new legal team.

DePape had faced a combined 50 years in federal prison: 30 years on the assault charge and 20 years for the attempted kidnapping. Scott Corley sentenced him to the maximum term on both counts, but ordered him to serve them concurrently for a total of 30 years. He will get credit for the roughly 19 months he has spent in state custody.

He faces deportation to Canada upon his release.

Advocates for safe streets blast meager funding as 'just nuts'

Amid a county budget deficit, programs aimed at ending traffic deaths are struggling.

By REBECCA ELLIS

It's time for belt-tightening in Los Angeles County.

Blame it on the state — and the bleak projections for this year's budget deficit.

With an estimated shortfall of nearly \$45 billion, the state government is going to shrink. And that means L.A. County, which relies on hundreds of millions of dollars in state funding, may have to contract alongside it.

"We're all feeling the pain," L.A. County Supervisor Janice Hahn said at a budget hearing last week, the morning after Gov. Gavin Newsom released the latest details on the shortfall.

County officials warn that this could mean a shrinking of the region's social safety net, forcing them to claw back support for indigent defendants, low-income families and teenagers aging out of foster care.

But there's one pot of money some budget scrutinizers say was far too small in the first place.

"The funding for L.A. County's Vision Zero Program as it currently stands is almost, to me, at an irreducible minimum," said Damian Kevitt, executive director of Streets Are for Everyone, which works to bring traffic fatalities across the region to zero. "It is just nuts."

This month, some of the loudest outcry over the county's budget proposal has come from pedestrian-minded Angelenos like Kevitt. In email blasts and at a recent board meeting, they have decried the funding for safe streets as peanuts, at a time when fatalities keep mounting.

This year's recommended budget allocates \$20 million to Vision Zero improvements aimed at ending traffic deaths in unincorporated L.A. County, according to the Department of Public Works, which initially asked for \$7.5 million more but didn't get it.

The department is responsible for the 3,300 miles of roads in unincorporated communities across the county — places like Marina del Rey, Hacienda Heights, East Los Angeles and Altadena.

"Deaths have climbed instead of gone down," said Michael Schneider, founder of Streets for All, a group pushing to make L.A. more navigable for pedestrians. "And the reason for that is we have lacked resources."

At the end of 2019, a year in which 79 people lost their

lives in crashes on county-maintained roadways, the county released its Vision Zero plan, which set an ambitious goal of zero traffic deaths by 2035. A few years earlier, then-Mayor Eric Garcetti had pledged to get to zero across the city of Los Angeles by 2025.

Advocates say neither the county nor the city is close.

In 2022, 125 people died due to traffic collisions on county-operated roads. Last year, 92 died. As of early March, 13 had died, according to county records.

The city, meanwhile, saw 336 people die last year in crashes — more than were killed in homicides.

"They're both failing," said Schneider.

The Department of Public Works said in a statement that it has spent more than \$50 million since 2020 to enhance street safety, putting in curb extensions at intersections and making crosswalks more visible, among other improvements. The agency said it "aggressively pursues grant funding" from state and federal agencies.

Still, the deaths keep coming. Last February, the county was awarded a \$21-million grant to address a particularly grim 3.5-square-mile area in the Florence-Firestone neighborhood of South Los Angeles where nearly 70 people have died in the last decade.

In the year since the county got the money, at least four more people have died in crashes in Florence-Firestone, according to data from UC Berkeley. Supervisor Holly Mitchell, who represents the area, recently put forward a motion to try to get the street improvements fast-tracked, saying the area was in the midst of a "traffic safety crisis."

Mitchell's district encompasses many of the county's so-called "collision concentration corridors" — considered some of the most dangerous streets for both pedestrians and drivers. That includes a perilous stretch of Avalon Boulevard where Raymond Olivares, a civil engineer with the city of Los Angeles, was fatally struck last February by a speeding driver as he was crossing with his fiancée.

Eight months after Olivares' death, a 41-year-old man was killed about half a mile away while crossing the same street.

"There's no sense of urgency," said Cindi Enamorado, Olivares' sister. "It's just an accident waiting to happen."

This article was originally published as part of the L.A. On the Record newsletter. To subscribe, go to latimes.com/newsletters.

Attorney says LAPD exposed sex-hazing victims' names

[Centurions, from B1]

The encounter left the officer shaken and worried about his future with the department, his attorney said.

Morrison said he called the internal affairs unit this week and spoke to a supervisor about his concerns. He said the supervisor became defensive and asked Morrison whether he knew how to conduct an investigation better than detectives.

A separate criminal investigation into the sexual assault allegations was carried out by the department's elite Robbery-Homicide Division, according to Capt. Scott Williams.

"We received no cooperation from the [victims], so we don't have enough evidence to present a criminal case right now," he said.

Morrison said he wasn't surprised by the decision, saying, "that's what happens when the department investigates itself."

"Our victims didn't talk to them, but our victims provided them with the tort

claims," which laid out all the allegations in the case, Morrison said.

"We also told them to hold off, that these people would be deposed as part of our civil case and that we would share the depositions with them."

The case centers on allegations — first reported by The Times last fall — by four officers who said in legal claims filed against the city that fellow Centurions players had sexually assaulted them as part of a hazing culture that department brass has long known about and failed to act on.

The officers are listed as John Does in court filings, and The Times is not identifying them in keeping with its policy on reporting about alleged victims of sexual assault.

The city — which is named as a co-defendant along with the Centurion Corp., a nonprofit associated with the team — has denied the claims in the officers' lawsuit.

In March, the city argued

in a court filing that it shouldn't be liable for any potential damages since the hazing alleged by the officers didn't occur "within the course and scope of their duties as employees of the city of Los Angeles, were not known to the city of Los Angeles and were not ratified by the city of Los Angeles."

An LAPD detective was the first to speak out, claiming he was sexually assaulted in early 2009 in front of 30 to 40 LAPD officers during a hazing ritual for Centurions rookies. Several of those present, he said, are now supervisors with the department.

In the months that followed his decision to blow the whistle last year, the detective's name circulated around the department, even reaching former officers who had long since retired.

The LAPD launched its own internal investigation last year to investigate the Centurions allegations, standard practice any time a claim or lawsuit is filed

against the department.

Such internal probes are typically carried out in secret, with the names of those involved and details about what was said in interviews kept under wraps outside of special hearings.

Morrison said he worried about the potential chilling effect of his clients' names being disclosed. The case is still under investigation, he said, and the internal affairs unit had sent out 150 or so letters to former Centurions players.

Mario Munoz, a former LAPD internal affairs lieutenant, said that in most cases investigators must disclose a complainant's identity to the accused officer, as required by the so-called Peace Officers Bill of Rights, a series of California laws that give law enforcement officers unique legal protections. This, he said, also applies to officers who may not have engaged in the alleged assaults, but who could still face discipline for failing to report the misconduct.

At the same time, the department has been the subject of numerous lawsuits in recent years alleging that the internal affairs process has been "weaponized" to silence whistleblowers who come forward with potentially embarrassing information, especially involving command staff, he said.

"Internal affairs has a lot of systems in place to make sure [retaliation] doesn't happen, but the problem is that when you control the process, you control the investigation," said Munoz, who retired in 2014.

The detective who made the allegations in the Centurions case previously told The Times he kept the assault secret for a long time because of the potential blowback. He initially told only a few family members and friends, until a chance run-in years later with one of the officers who was present during the hazing.

He reported the alleged assault to the L.A. Police Commission's inspector general's office in March

2023. He didn't get a response to his initial complaint and a month later sent the office a follow-up email that also went ignored, his claim said.

Two other officers who joined the detective's claim said they were sexually hazed in 2006 and 2009. Altogether, the four accusers contend that the abuse was an open secret among the department's leadership that was allowed to continue for "many years."

Morrison previously called out what he saw as a campaign by the department to "discredit" the detective and others associated with the case. Within days of the first claim's filing, several of the detective's relatives received letters "in a harassing fashion" from the department referencing an investigation into unspecified allegations, Morrison said.

The statute of limitations for criminal charges has expired, but officers remain able to pursue civil claims.

Obituaries

Place a paid notice latimes.com/placeobituary | Search obituary notice archives: legacy.com/obituaries/latimes

Jeffrey Kaufman, MD 1950 - 2024

Our much-loved Jeff passed away at home with his wife Linda at his side. He suffered from multisystem atrophy. He enjoyed lifelong friendships, a loving family and fulfilling career as a urologist, in which he was known and respected nationally. Jeff had a tremendous zest for life and was often hard to keep up with. He loved to ski, waterski and cycle, was a devoted and brilliant doctor and lifelong traveler.

He leaves behind his wife Linda of 47 years, daughters Jennifer (Aryeh) and Lindsay (Anders) and grandchildren Ezra, Aaron, Isla, Kaia, and Bodhi, who will miss their PopPop very much. This dear man, with such a passion for life, who did everything to the fullest extent, and had an impact on so many, will be deeply missed.



Donald Louis Crowder April 12, 1929 - May 13, 2024

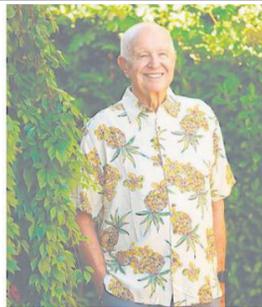
After enjoying lunch out with his wife and daughter, Don Crowder passed away at the great age of 95.

Born to William Lee and Helen Louise Crowder in Reseda, California, Don met Ingeborg Valeski at a party in 1952, where he learned that Inge was a bank teller. The next payday, Don waited patiently in her line to ask her out. At first Inge declined, saying he did not have enough money in his account to court her properly. Several months and deposits later, Inge relented. The pair celebrated their 70th anniversary in November.

An enthusiastic sailor, Don & Inge built two boats, "Gewitter" and "Teddy Bear", that they loved to sail with friends and family to the Channel Islands & Mexico. Don joined the Santa Barbara Power Squadron in 1956, serving as District Commander in 2012.

A master mechanic, Don worked for Santa Barbara County from 1973 until he retired in 1997. Don was honored to serve on the 2012 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury.

Don is survived by his wife Inge, daughter Ingrid Jeffries, son Fred, their spouses Steve and Erin, five grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, six nephews and countless lifelong friends from ports of call around the world. Ship Ahoy, Don, fair winds & following seas.



Bruce Charles Newlin July 21, 1934 - April 27, 2024

Dr. Bruce Newlin, 89, of Rancho Mirage, California, passed away on April 27, 2024.

He was surrounded by his wife and soulmate Karin, his two daughters, Heather and Amanda, and his three grandchildren, Rémy, Osa, and Sierra.

Bruce was born on July 21, 1934 in New Jersey to Henry and Annabelle. The family relocated to California early in Bruce's life, and he called Glendale home for his formative years. A Bruin through and through, he earned a Bachelors, a Masters, and a Doctorate in Education from UCLA. Years later, he returned as a faculty member for the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, and became the Founding Director of the Principal Leadership Institute.

Although Bruce's later years were defined by his contribution to the field of Education, his first love was baseball, and he pitched professionally for the Yankees organization.

After his career in sports ended, Bruce went into teaching, where his curiosity for both learning and people propelled him quickly into leadership roles. He served as the Superintendent of Schools for five school districts throughout California, receiving the California School Board Association (CSBA) Golden Bell Award for Leadership, and the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA): Administrator of the Year Award.

Bruce's passion for purpose took him through three "retirements" and drove him to contribute at the local, state, national, and international levels. Highlights of his career include serving as Chairman of California's State Curriculum Commission, the State Teacher Credentialing Commission, the Governor's Advisory Council for Education, and the Governor's Business Roundtable. He served on the National Advisory Board for the J. Paul Getty Trust in Education, IBM's National Advisory Board for Education, The International Network of Principals Centers, and the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST).

While his career enriched Bruce's life in many ways, the best gift it brought him was his wife Karin, whom he met one fateful afternoon in Lancaster, California, while touring classrooms as the new Assistant Superintendent. They were married on July 11, 1976 at the Wayfarers Chapel in Palos Verdes. Together, they enjoyed 47 happy years of marriage, and had two beautiful children. Despite his full career, Bruce somehow still managed to be a father who never missed a volleyball game, made breakfast every morning, read books in bed every night, played "HORSE" in the driveway, and showed kindness and love through the tiny gestures of parenthood that often go unnoticed.

With a deep love of history, Bruce would often be found reading historical non-fiction.

He was a sports fan who enjoyed great play, but didn't care much about the outcome unless his Bruins were on the court. Whenever possible, he made time for tennis matches, ski trips, and Hawaiian beaches, and often spent evenings at the theater and concerts.

A service will be held at 10am on May 31st at the Church of the Recessional at Forest Lawn in Glendale. A reception will follow. The family asks that those attending wear their best Hawaiian shirt in honor of Bruce. For more details, please visit the memorial page:

<https://www.eventcreate.com/e/brucenewlinmemorial>



Judith Lee Powers July 7, 1950 - May 17, 2024

Judith "Judy" L. Powers, historian, educator, and beloved mother of two, died May 17, 2024 at the age of 73. She was preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Anna "Violet" Powers, her brother John Powers, and her loyal companion Tazzie. She is survived by her children, Brian and Katherine O'Donnell, her brother Edward Powers, her sisters Mary Ann Anesi and Dorothy "Dixie" Muinch, and her many nephews and nieces.

The first in her family to attend university, Judy was awarded her Ph.D. in the History of Science from UCLA in 1981. She was a lifelong Dodgers fan, boasted an astonishing collection of ocean-themed knickknacks (the more impractical the better) and had a fondness for hopeless causes, such as teaching her kids how to pose for photos or 1984 presidential candidate Walter "Fritz" Mondale. Gone too soon, Judy will be missed by all those who loved her and by the many, many people who were touched by her kindness and humor over the years. A memorial service will be held at St. Monica's Church in Santa Monica at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 30. Special invitations are extended to the two great loves of her life: Canadian national treasure Martin Short and Mr. Darcy himself, Colin Firth.

Florence P. Chinskey

Mount Sinai Mem Parks -
H. Hills 800-600-0076
www.mountsinainparks.org

Jeffrey A. Daniels

Mount Sinai Mem Parks -
Simi Valley 800-600-0076
www.mountsinainparks.org

Julius Jortner

Mount Sinai Mem Parks -
H. Hills 800-600-0076
www.mountsinainparks.org

Nathan Pollak

Mount Sinai Mem Parks -
Simi Valley 800-600-0076
www.mountsinainparks.org

Ellen Sada Suzuki

(97) passed away peacefully on April 24, 2024. She is predeceased by her husband, Takashi Suzuki and daughter, Joyce Murai; survived by her children, Laurie (Kei) Teramoto and Andy (Keiko) Suzuki; grandchildren, Brian Murai, Beth (Adam Rickabus) Teramoto, Emily Teramoto, Megan (Miguel Vargas) Teramoto-Vargas, and Darin Suzuki; great-granddaughter, Miya Rickabus; sister, Ruby Honjio and sister-in-law Kaoru Suzuki. In lieu of koden, the family kindly asks that you fondly remember Ellen and keep her in your prayers. A private graveside service was held on May 11, 2024 at Inglewood Park Cemetery. www.kubotamortuary.com (213) 749-1449



Stories live on. Tell theirs.

placeand.latimes.com/obituaries

Los Angeles Times
In partnership with
Legacy.com

To place
an obituary ad
please go online to:

latimes.com/placeobituary

or call
1-800-234-4444

Los Angeles Times

Texas congresswoman said 'butch' like it's a bad thing

[Chabria, from B1] about looks or even attitude. It's just who she is, a woman who embraces her masculinity. And within the LGBTQ+ community, it's just a descriptor.

That's what she wants young lesbians to understand: that butch isn't ugly no matter what cis-world says, it's just a feeling about who you authentically are.

"You can't take it off with clothes; you can't take it off with makeup," she said. "Nothing I can do will take off my masculinity, and that is the butch experience."

It's somewhat ironic that I needed Cowboy Jen to tell me all this, since my own mom was a butch-ish lesbian, though she came out later in life. She was beautiful inside and out, and is now probably rolling in her grave. Sorry, Mom.

Cowboy Jen and the two readers I quoted told me they weren't angry with Crockett (or, graciously, me), and believed she had probably been speaking in the heat of the moment, rolling B words as fast as she could.

And Crockett has a long history of standing up for LGBTQ+ rights, which is especially hard to do in Texas, where she's from.

Rachel Gonzales was one of her constituents when Crockett was a Lone Star State legislator, and knows about it personally. Gonzales has a transgender daughter, Libby, and the family has vocally opposed anti-transgender legislation, including testifying at



JEN ROWRAY

'COWBOY JEN' ROWRAY wants younger generations to understand that "butch" doesn't mean ugly; it's just a feeling about who you authentically are.

hearings at the state Capitol.

Gonzales told me that at one such event, anti-trans activists began spitting at Libby and her friend and screaming obscenities. Crockett had the kids taken to her personal office to keep them safe.

"As far as I am concerned, there is no one else like her," Gonzales told me. "I never doubted the fighter she would be before that, but from that moment forward she has been personally dedicated to fighting for a safe and equitable world for all kids."

Of course, the far right is all over Crockett with accusations of being homophobic — though it seems like the GOP celebrates and promotes homophobia (there's little sense of irony among Republicans).

Not shockingly, the

pro-MTG crowd would love to blow up a story about how terrible Crockett's comeback really was.

Cowboy Jen would like Crockett to apologize — to help those younger lesbians see that change can happen, that we can all learn and do better.

It's one of those topics that, in the cesspool of our political times, is almost impossible to have a nuanced or respectful conversation about.

But I'll have it, because, like the mom who wrote to me, it hurts my heart that what I wrote could cause pain to any young person out there, as they seek to define who they are in this very crazy world. So feel free to give me your thoughts.

Honestly, I always thought the sixth B should have been another word, anyway.

RAUL PORTO SR., 1932 - 2024



BRIAN FEINZIMER Fein Image

A BELOVED FAMILY MAN

Raul Porto Sr. is pictured in 2017 in front of Porto's Bakery in Glendale.

L.A. institution loses its patriarch

Co-founder of the popular Porto's Bakery chain, a Cuban immigrant, dies at 92.

BY STEPHANIE BREIJO

If you've ever held a pastel-yellow box full of Cuban pastries in Los Angeles, you've most likely tasted the legacy of Raul Porto Sr. On May 22, the patriarch and co-founder of Porto's, one of the region's most popular bakery chains, died at the age of 92.

Porto's company shared the news in an Instagram post late Friday morning, adding that he died peacefully, surrounded by his family.

Porto and his late wife, baker and co-founder Rosa Porto, helped generations of Cuban immigrants find a taste of home and popularized regional specialties such as stuffed-and-fried potato balls, or papas rellenas; pressed Cuban sandwiches; and their "refugiados," or guava-and-cheese pastelitos. Their pastries are so popular, even a single variety can sell tens of thousands in a month.

"Porto's has become its own language, to the extent that its baked and hot foods no longer just represent Cuba — they've come to represent Los Angeles," former L.A. Times Food columnist Lucas Kwan Peterson wrote in a review last year.

Rosa Porto died in 2019 at 89. Rosa and Raul Sr. are survived by generations of Portos, including multiple grandchildren. Their three children — Beatriz, Raul Jr. and Margarita — all grew up helping out in their parents' bakery operation, then went

on to run the business themselves.

The Portos, from Manzanillo, Cuba, had hoped to move to the U.S. for years and placed themselves on a waiting list during Fidel Castro's rule — a period that saw Raul Porto Sr. sent to a labor camp as Rosa Porto lost her job. She began baking cakes and pastes to support the family, and carried those recipes with her when they immigrated in 1971 to build a better life for themselves.

The cake orders began immediately, and the couple sold her treats out of their home kitchen for years.

When the Portos arrived in Los Angeles, Raul Porto Sr. found work as a janitor and other jobs while his wife's underground bakery business took off, and together they built Porto's into an L.A. legend.

"Raul Sr. would assist whenever he could, even while working at another local bakery," the family shared on Instagram. "After several years, he was able to join Rosa full-time, dedicating himself to growing their business. Through their hard work, humility and dedication, they transformed a small family endeavor into a cherished community treasure. Known for his humble nature, Raul Sr. balanced his roles as a devoted husband, father, and businessman, inspiring all who knew him with his passion and commitment."

"He was a visionary who always looked toward the future, teaching us the value of hard work and the importance of keeping family at the forefront of everything we do," said Tony Salazar, Porto's Bakery's vice president of operations. "He had an incredible business mind, always focused on growing

the business for his family and giving back to the community. Beneath his tough exterior, he had a warm and tender heart, always humble and finding joy in life's smaller moments. Raul Sr. was an incredible mentor and role model; his impact has been felt not only by me but by all those who knew him and even those who didn't."

The Porto's empire began humbly with a first storefront of only 300 square feet in a Silver Lake strip mall in 1976, paid for with a bank loan.

In an effort to attract customers, they expanded beyond Cuban pastries to serve treats that appealed to a number of cultures — danishes, fruit tarts, muffins and more. That embrace of other items and cultures helped their bakery maintain its relevance, contributing to the chain's vast appeal.

In 1982 Porto's relocated to Glendale, and eventually expanded to Burbank, Downey, Buena Park, West Covina and Northridge. A location is slated for Downtown Disney in Anaheim.

"We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for the overwhelming outpouring of love and support we've received following the passing of our beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather," the family said in an email to The Times. "All the kind words and shared memories have been a great comfort to us during this time of loss."

"As we navigate through our grief, we are deeply touched by the affection we've received. Your tributes show the impact he had on so many lives, and for that, we are forever grateful. Thank you for honoring his legacy with us."

Guilty plea in water theft conspiracy

[Water, from B1] avoid detection.

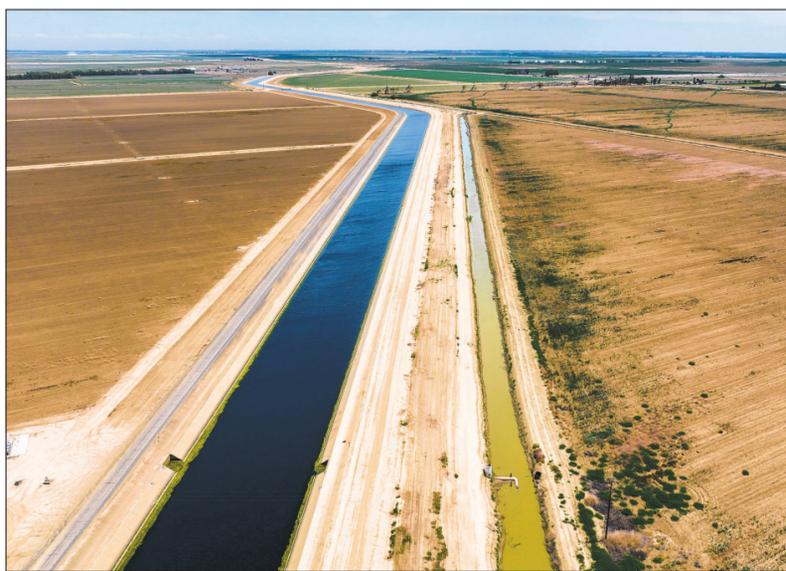
According to the indictment, proceeds that should have gone to the federal government instead were used to benefit Falaschi, his water district and a small group of co-conspirators, much of it funneled into exorbitant salaries and lavish fringe benefits.

But the plea agreement tells a more convoluted tale — one that downplays Falaschi's culpability and raises a host of questions about who, exactly, engineered the water theft, who benefited and how many others were involved.

From 1986 until 2017, Falaschi was general manager of the Panoche Water District, a public agency that supplies irrigation for 38,000 acres of farmland in Fresno and Merced counties on the parched western side of the San Joaquin Valley. The water district draws much of its supplies from the Delta-Mendota Canal, a major artery in the federal government's Central Valley Project, a system of dams and canals that moves water from Northern California to enable industrial-scale farming in the state's arid interior.

The federal government charges local irrigation districts for use of its water, albeit at reduced rates from those available on the open market. Each year, the government announces how much water local districts will get at those reduced rates. In drought years, the government generally shrinks its allocations, forcing farmers to pump groundwater, buy what they need on the open market or let fields go fallow.

According to a description of the crime laid out in the plea agreement, Falaschi learned "prior to 2000" that an old, abandoned standpipe on the Delta-Mendota Canal was leaking into a parallel local irrigation ditch, meaning the water flowing out was not subject to federal metering. The factual basis filed with the plea deal states



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

FOR YEARS, local officials and others stole water from the federal Delta-Mendota Canal, left, in the San Joaquin Valley, according to prosecutors.

that a farmer whose land was affected by the leak — who at the time was also president of Panoche's board of directors and thus Falaschi's de facto boss — told Falaschi not to report it to water authorities.

Panoche employees modified the leaking standpipe so it could be opened and closed, according to the plea agreement documents, allowing for water to be drawn from the Delta-Mendota Canal on demand and undetected.

In the years that followed, the agreement documents state: "Evidence obtained during the government's investigation further showed that Mr. Falaschi was just one of several individuals who were involved in the misconduct and the full extent of the misconduct was unknown to him."

Panoche "board members, supervisors and lower-level employees likely acted on their own accord and took federal water for their own use and benefit at times," the documents state. "For example, Farmer #1 likely took the water, or directed his or her ranch hands to take the water, ei-

ther on their own or by contacting PWD employees directly and not alerting Mr. Falaschi."

The plea agreement drops another bombshell, alleging that Panoche employees "also likely continued taking federal water from sites other than the old standpipe well after Mr. Falaschi left the district in 2017."

The government offered no details about this allegation, or whether officials believe the alleged theft has stopped.

Falaschi, the government now contends, was responsible for stealing less than \$3.5 million worth of water, a small portion of the \$25 million prosecutors alleged was stolen over the years in the original indictment. Moreover, despite what prosecutors alleged in the indictment, the plea deal stipulates that there is no evidence Falaschi directly profited from the misconduct, but instead that he used the purloined water to dilute salty and toxic farm runoff, "which helped protect farmland and improve water quality in the San Joaquin River."

The plea agreement does not name the Farmer #1 who allegedly conspired with Falaschi. And it is vague about the date when the leaky standpipe was discovered, making it difficult to pinpoint what years are in question as far as who was leading the Panoche band.

Whether the federal government intends to pursue charges against the unnamed alleged conspirators — or simply call the episode closed — remained unclear Tuesday. As part of the plea deal, Falaschi has agreed to cooperate with federal prosecutors in any further investigations. According to the court documents, that includes attending grand jury sessions and trials as requested by the government, responding truthfully to all questions and turning over any records requested by the government.

During Tuesday's hearing, Falaschi, wearing a charcoal suit and tennis shoes, spoke little except to tell U.S. District Judge Jennifer Thurston that he suffered from hypertension and diabetes. In response to a question from Thurston, he testified that he has a

County mishandled remains, tribe alleges

Kizh Nation is suing over 'desecration' of more than 100 graves at museum site in L.A.

By SUMMER LIN

The Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians, also known as the Kizh Nation, is suing Los Angeles County, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the nonprofit La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, saying that their ancestors' remains were mishandled when they built a Mexican American museum in downtown L.A.

The Kizh Nation alleges in the lawsuit filed this month in L.A. County Superior Court that the defendants pledged to transfer the human remains dug up from the First Cemetery of Los Angeles in 2010 to wooden boxes that would be placed in individual graves in accordance with Catholic rituals.

The remains were instead put in paper bags and into a single grave in the cemetery, in "direct viola-

tion of the express promises and assurances by defendants," according to the complaint.

The construction work at the plaza resulted in the "desecration" of more than 100 graves, the suit states.

L.A. County owns the land where the cemetery is and La Plaza de Cultura y Artes is also the name of the museum that opened in April 2011.

The plaza serves as a community hub where Latinx culture is celebrated through dance, music, exhibitions and more. The Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians are the Indigenous people of the Los Angeles Basin.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles said in a statement that they had told L.A. County that the "remains should be treated with the most utmost sensitivity and respect."

L.A. County told The Times in a statement that the county "engaged in a well-documented public process to respectfully reinter the remains uncovered" during the construction of the plaza.

high school education. He declined to speak with The Times after the hearing concluded.

His attorney, Marc Days, also declined to comment, as did the federal prosecutor, Assistant U.S. Atty. Joseph D. Barton.

Falaschi faces a maximum term of eight years in prison for the two counts included in the plea agreement, which also states the government "may recommend" he be sentenced to the low end of that term. A sentencing hearing was set for September. The agreement calls for no financial restitution, noting that the Panoche district in 2021 agreed to reimburse the Bureau of Reclamation nearly \$7.5 million for unauthorized diversions of water from the

Delta-Mendota Canal from 2009 to 2015.

Kevin Little, a Fresno attorney who has watched the case closely, said the agreement "likely marks a whimpering end to what started as a major case."

Little represents an employee at the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority who discovered the illicitly modified standpipe in 2015. Little said the plea agreement "reflects a recognition that someone who was never charged with a criminal offense was perhaps the moving force behind the water fraud scheme."

In the end, he said, prosecutors "exact[ed] the requisite pound of flesh from Mr. Falaschi. Or at least an ounce."

MARKETPLACE

JOBS · REAL ESTATE · MORE

latimes.com/placead | To place an ad call 1.800.234.4444

Los Angeles Times

Garage and Yard Sales

YARD SALE
6/01/24 9am-3pm
3313 W Chandler Blvd, Burbank, 91505
Household Items, Clothes, books, China Set

Los Angeles Times
Automotive Classified
To advertise,
call (800) 234-4444
Los Angeles Times

EMPLOYMENT 1500

Employment
Web Developer: f/t; develop & maintain website; \$55952-\$62400/yr; Mail resume: Kareway Product Inc, 2550 S Dominguez Hills Dr, Compton, CA 90220

You're connected.
Los Angeles Times
latimes.com

love is...



...in the cloud!

TM Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. — all rights reserved © 2024 Minkim Holland B.V.

You're connected.

Log on to latimes.com and you'll get breaking news, calendar live, business, sports, classified and travel. All brought to life with great photos and links to keep you moving.

More information. In a flash.

Los Angeles Times
latimes.com

Legal Notices

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

Case Number (Numero del Caso): 23TRCV0256

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): BEMAX TRANSPORT INC., a California corporation; BALMORE A. TORRES, an individual; and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): CONTINENTAL BANK

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefonica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y direccion de la corte es): Superior Court of California, Inglewood Courthouse One Regent Street Inglewood, CA 90301

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): Brett H. Ramsaur (SBN 281566), Ramsaur Law Office 3070 Bristol Street, Suite 640 Costa Mesa, CA 92626 949-200-9114

Date: (Fecha) 11/21/2023

David W. Slayton Clerk (Secretario)
M. Horan Deputy (Adjunto)

Los Angeles Times Classified
Los Angeles Times

For home delivery, call (800) 252-9141
Los Angeles Times

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

Case Number (Numero del Caso): 24STCV02743

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): LITT GLOBAL, INC.

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): THE ACCESS FUND I LP

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 dias, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la informacion a continuacion.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefonica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y direccion de la corte es): LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT 111 NORTH HILL STREET LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): Drake A. Mirsch 19800 MacArthur Blvd. Irvine, CA 92612 9492556433

Date: (Fecha) 02/02/24

David W. Slayton Clerk (Secretario)
S. Bolden Deputy (Adjunto)

Los Angeles Times Classified
To advertise, call (800) 234-4444
Los Angeles Times

You're connected.
Los Angeles Times
latimes.com

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

Case Number (Numero del Caso): CWSW2402505

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): YUNJUE GUO, doing business as MOON BAY SPA, a sole proprietorship; YUNJUE GUO, an individual; JEFFERSON PLAZA CENTER LLC, a California Limited Liability Company; and DOES 1-20, inclusive,

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): CITY OF TEMECULA, a municipal corporation, and the PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 dias, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la informacion a continuacion.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefonica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y direccion de la corte es): SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, SOUTHWEST JUSTICE CENTER 30755-D Auld Road Murrieta, CA 92563

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): Guido Toscano (SBN 266304)/ Emily C. Gifford (SBN 335035) Richards, Watson & Gershon 350 S. Grand Avenue, 37th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90071 (213) 626-8484

Date: (Fecha) 03/11/2024

Jason B. Galkin Clerk (Secretario)
Jennifer Smith Deputy (Adjunto)

Los Angeles Times Classified
To advertise, call (800) 234-4444
Los Angeles Times

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CRNUH
RXBEO
FGNSUU
TRGIYT

©2024 Tribune Content Agency, LLC All Rights Reserved.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Wow! It's working with barely any power!
I can see this replacing incandescent bulbs some day!

THE LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED) WAS INVENTED IN THE EARLY 1960S AND HAD A ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: GROUP WHISK CHOSEN INNING
Answer: They reached the summit of the mountain at exactly 12 p.m., which was — HIGH NOON

THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

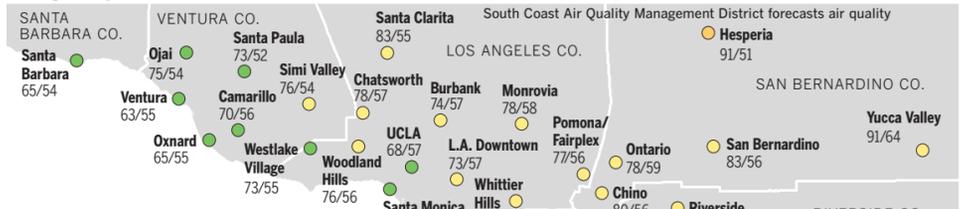
Low clouds at the coast, sunny inland: The pattern in place will continue to bring areas of low clouds to the coast through the morning hours before clearing by the afternoon.

5-day forecasts

High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

Table with 5 columns: L.A. Basin, Valleys, Beaches, Mountains, Deserts. Rows show Today, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday forecasts.

Air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO Inner waters: Wind variable 5-10 knots. Wind waves at 2-4 feet with a mixed swell west 3 feet at 7 seconds and south 2 feet at 15 seconds.

Table with 5 columns: County, Height, Period, Direction, Temp. Lists surf conditions for Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego.

Tides

Table with 4 columns: Time, Height, Direction, Temp. Shows tide times and heights for L.A. Outer Harbor.

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people. Las Vegas, 10 Phoenix, 10 Los Angeles, 10 San Francisco, 25

California cities*

Large table with 4 columns: City, Tue., Today, Thu. Provides temperature and precipitation forecasts for numerous California cities.

Sun and moon

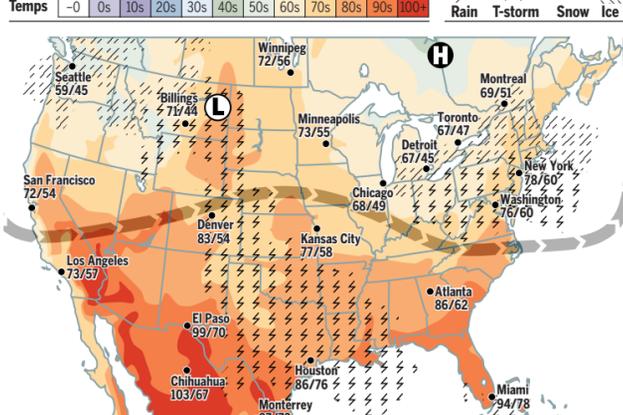
Table with 3 columns: City, Sun, Moon. Shows sunrise and moonset times for Los Angeles, Orange Co., and Ventura Co.

Almanac

Table with 4 columns: Temperature, Precipitation, Los Angeles, Fullerton, Ventura*. Shows weather data for Tuesday.

Today in North America

Severe weather in the central U.S.: Severe weather will stretch from eastern Montana into southern Texas. The main threats will be hail, downpours and localized damaging wind gusts.



U.S. cities

TUESDAY'S EXTREMES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES High 107 in Fort Stockton, Texas Low 24 in Daniel, Wyo.

Table with 4 columns: City, Tuesday, Today. Shows temperature extremes for various U.S. cities.

World

Table with 4 columns: City, Tuesday, Today. Shows temperature forecasts for various world cities.

Gonzalez is now UCLA's off-field cheat code

[UCLA, from B10]

Dodgers star Mookie Betts, Cubs shortstop Dansby Swanson and Tampa Bay Buccaneers receiver Chris Godwin, at the suggestion of a mutual friend.

Gonzalez was driving when Inouye-Perez called with her pitch. The team, seeded second in the NCAA tournament last year after its best regular-season since 2001, had experienced major trauma by being swept in the regional at home.

"They were," Inouye-Perez continued on the phone. "Frozen?" Gonzalez interjected.

Exactly. "Her whole thing was how do we get them to not feel so stuck in that," Gonzalez said sitting outside the UCLA clubhouse at Easton Stadium.

Gonzalez's work has helped the Bruins (42-10) become the hottest team in the country with 13 consecutive wins heading into the World Series, where they face No. 14 Alabama (38-18) in the first round Thursday at 9 a.m. PDT (ESPN) at Oklahoma City's Devon Park.



ARMANDO GONZALEZ, with UCLA's Maya Brady, helped the Bruins overcome a disappointing end to 2023.

Gonzalez said. A player's body can hold onto that traumatic memory by tightening up the next time on the field. With Gonzalez's guidance, players learn to work through difficult memories while listening to music and gazing into the distance.

"It's about this idea that traditional talking through it is only engaging the frontal lobe," Gonzalez said. "So we're just getting better at telling rehearsed stories

about what we're experiencing, but we haven't changed that we're still experiencing it."

Brainspotting engages the subconscious where memories are stored, Gonzalez said. It sounds weird, he acknowledged. The room can stay silent for several minutes during sessions.

"It's like there's this click that happens," Gonzalez said, "where this thing that was once distressing you — it's not gone, it happened to me — but my body doesn't sense it's about to happen

again." While the man players affectionately call "Dr. Mondo" was initially supposed to work directly with only Inouye-Perez and a small group of athletes, he learned all players were craving small bits of time.

Gonzalez knows what each one needs heading into game day. During the post-season, he's with the team in the hotel, then on the bus ride to the stadium. He scopes out how players look in the batting cages, stepping in with a quick pep talk or look of reassurance when needed.

ond super regional game with starting pitcher Taylor Tinsley guiding the sophomore through a meditative session.

After Tinsley pitched seven innings of one-run ball with six strikeouts to clinch UCLA's spot in the World Series, she shared a hug with Gonzalez on the field.

"We play a game that is 99% mental," Tinsley said. "I think it's hardly physical, especially with the competition that we play so he just definitely helped me lock in, level up."

With Gonzalez working with every player, Inouye-Perez said the Bruins have a deeper and more connected group than ever. He helped strengthen the team by be-

ginning with personal assessments of each player and coach. The results create a guide for them to better understand themselves, giving insight on their strengths, how they like to be spoken to and how they manage adversity.

"Coaches get into a single-mind focus: it's a physical preparation — if you just do this then it'll work," Inouye-Perez said. "But there's more to it. ... It's not just about great athletes, it's understanding how you're dealing with people and I wanted them to have those tools."

Gonzalez, who founded a mental health company called Cheatcode, saw players start shedding the trauma of last season's disappointment at different times. The Bruins slowly transformed into "a different type of beast," he said.

The biggest leap was when Palacios launched a tying grand slam in the bottom of the fifth against Arizona on Senior Day that helped UCLA overcome a seven-run deficit in a 11-7 win.

Gonzalez called it the "tectonic shift" of the season.

"As the wins were piling up, all the comeback wins, I just felt like that Arizona game was when it all just clicked," Gonzalez said. "They truly knew this is ours."

Unburdened by expectations of the past, the Bruins are now playing with joyful freedom. Gonzalez reminds them before games to enjoy the moment, for the outcome is beyond their control. Among the blue and gold in their dugout, players also sport black T-shirts with "it's already written" printed on the back.

That's their cheat code.

CRASH KAMON Softball America

Forecasts by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2024 AccuWeather Visit AccuWeather.com

NBA PLAYOFFS

Celtics head back to Finals seeking their 18th title

ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS — The Boston Celtics completed one quest Monday night by returning to the NBA Finals.

Now, they'll chase an even bigger goal, the one that's eluded this team for more than a decade — capturing the franchise's 18th championship.

Yes, despite the Celtics playing for six conference titles in eight seasons, this marks only the second time Boston has advanced to the Finals in that span. And the Celtics' 16-year drought is the second longest in franchise history.

Winning the title would be the crowning achievement to what already has been a remarkable season.

"Boston has a great team. They led the league from wire to wire," Indiana coach Rick Carlisle said after his team was swept 4-0 in its first conference finals appearance since 2014. "They didn't want this thing to go on any longer. They blocked shots, they got offensive rebounds, they made key shots."

Boston has excelled in seemingly every possible way in the playoffs. The Celtics have won seven straight games, they improved to 6-0 on the road with yet another comeback victory, 105-102 in



JAYLEN BROWN and the Celtics celebrate after completing a sweep of the Pacers in the Eastern Conference finals Monday night and advancing to the NBA Finals. Brown was chosen most valuable player of the series.

Game 4 against Indiana, and they are 3-0 in elimination games. They beat Indiana three times down the stretch, rallying in the last two games with decisive 13-2 and 7-0 closing spurts to end the Pacers' perfect home record in the playoffs — and

their season. Jayson Tatum garnered the usual headlines for two 36-point outings and a near triple-double in Game 4, 37-year-old Al Horford defied the odds by making seven threes in Game 3, Jrue Holiday overcame an illness to

deftly pick Andrew Nembhard's pocket at the end of that game, and Derrick White delivered the go-ahead three in Game 4, but everyone seemed genuinely happy it was Jaylen Brown who was chosen series most valuable player.

"I didn't expect that at all," Brown said before explaining the emotions of being left off the All-NBA teams. There's little doubt the Celtics understand where they would be — and where they wouldn't be — without Brown.

NBA PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

WESTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

5 Dallas vs. 3 Minnesota
Mavericks lead, 3-0

Gm 1	Dallas 108, Minnesota 105
Gm 2	Dallas 109, Minnesota 108
Gm 3	Dallas 116, Minnesota 107
Gm 4	at Dallas, late
Gm 5	Thursday at Minnesota, 5:30*
Gm 6	Saturday at Dallas, 5:30*
Gm 7	Monday at Minnesota, 5:30*

All games on TNT

EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

1 Boston vs. 6 Indiana
Celtics win, 4-0

Gm 1	Boston 133, Indiana 128 (OT)
Gm 2	Boston 126, Indiana 110
Gm 3	Boston 114, Indiana 111
Gm 4	Boston 105, Indiana 102

* if necessary | Times PDT, p.m.

He scored 29 points and grabbed six rebounds to help Boston erase an eight-point deficit in the final six minutes Monday night. And after the defense forced two late turnovers, Brown helped close it out with a brilliant block of Nembhard just before White's big shot.

"Obviously, we fell short of our ultimate goal last year, lost in the conference finals," Tatum said. "So I think we've just applied everything we learned to this season and this postseason and it's been working really well."



UCLA center Bill Walton goes to the basket in the 1973 NCAA tournament, won by the Bruins. Walton remembered his time growing up in San Diego and the sports memories that stayed with him a lifetime.

Walton embraced the joy in life

[Walton, from B10] about the Padres, the Chargers and his memories of growing up in La Mesa. He had deep affection for Los Angeles too, having won two national championships — and three national college player-of-the-year awards — with the Bruins.

What's more, his son, Luke, played for and coached the Lakers.

"I don't live in a qualitative, binary-decision-making world where you're one or the other," Walton said when asked which Southern California city he preferred. "I'm the luckiest guy in the world. I know all the Dodgers too."

Then again, Walton didn't mind sounding like a spokesman for the San Diego Chamber of Commerce.

"Don't try to drive from Los Angeles to San Diego at any time because everybody from up there is trying to get down here," he said with a laugh.

"We're very proud of San

Diego. Best beaches, best air, best bicycling, best water, fantastic airport. And everything you could possibly imagine. Incredible facilities, incredible nature, and bordered by the ocean, by Mexico, by Camp Pendleton, by the mountains, which lead to the desert. And it's all so easily accessible to San Diego."

Among his fondest childhood memories was watching the Padres, then of the Pacific Coast League, play their home games at Westgate Park, which is now Fashion Valley Mall.

He was a pro at chasing down baseballs that left the park. "When certain guys would come up, I'd say, well, this guy, he's a left-handed, pull hitter, so I'm going to get in the right-field bleachers along the first baseline," Walton said.

"But then when Tony Perez would come up, man, I'm going out into the outfield and I'm going to get that home run ball."

Foreshadowing a career of sacrificing his body for loose basketballs, he said: "I was quick to that baseball and I was 9 and 10 years old. I was not reluctant to jump over the chairs to get to the ball that was bouncing around in the bleachers."

Walton was 9 when the Chargers relocated to San Diego after their inaugural season in Los Angeles.

"I used to go to the old Balboa Stadium, which is just a half-mile from our house where we live now, where the Chargers used to play on the weekends," he said.

"And I'd go to those games, and when you're a little tiny boy with red hair and a buzz cut, man, the ushers and the ticket takers were always more than kind to little Billy."

He said his parents weren't sports fans, "but they were the greatest parents ever." And although he didn't grow up with a television in the home, he remembers tuning in to games on

his transistor radio and listening under the covers.

"I listened to Padre games," he said. "I listened to Dodger games with Vin Scully. I listened to Laker games with Chick Hearn. And then I was most fortunate to come to UCLA and get to know all these people personally."

"I found all these incredible sports heroes as a child. It's one thing to have a hero. It's another level to meet that hero, to get to know that hero, and to become friends with that hero and to discover that they're even better people than you imagined and hope for. And that has been the story of my life."

Many people might say the same about Walton.

"That's their choice," he said. "I try my best to be my best, and I understand the responsibility of the chosen hero to be kind, to be generous, to be open, to be willing. Because I was that guy who was looking. I was looking through that fence."

WNBA NOTES

Commissioner's Cup play opening with new format

BY DOUG FEINBERG

The WNBA's annual Commissioner's Cup gets underway this week using a new format for the in-season tournament.

The league tweaked the format and teams now will play five games against conference opponents over a two-week period. In the past, teams played a home-and-home set against each team in their conference.

The championship game will be played June 25 at the home of the team with the best record in the tournament.

New York beat Las Vegas for the tournament title last season. Both teams have a difficult road in front of them to get back to the championship game as they have to play the five games in a span of eight days. Washington also has to play its five tournament games during the same span.

Chicago, Dallas and Indiana play their five games in the span of 11 or 12 days.

Players on the winning team make around \$30,000 each with the championship game most valuable player getting an additional \$5,000. Each player on the runner-up team earns \$10,000.

There also will once again be a charity component with teams earning money for specific charities with each game they play. Teams will receive \$3,000 for their selected charities for each game they win and \$1,000 for each game they lose. The champion of the Commissioner's Cup will receive a \$10,000 donation from the league to the charity and the runner-up will get \$5,000.

AP poll

Connecticut moved into the top spot in this week's Associated Press poll, jumping ahead of Las Vegas and New York. The Sun entered this week as the only undefeated team in the league. The defending champion Aces fell one place to second. Minnesota moved up to third and the Liberty dropped to fourth. Dallas and Phoenix were next, followed by Chicago, Seattle and Atlanta. Indiana, the Sparks and Washington rounded out the poll. The last-place Mystics are the only winless team in the league.

Caitlin corner

Caitlin Clark got her first WNBA victory when Indiana edged the Sparks last Friday despite a rough shooting night. Clark, however, did hit two deep three-pointers in the final minutes to seal the win. Clark was averaging 15.4 points, 6.3 assists and 5.4 rebounds through the Fever's



JEFF LEWIS Associated Press

CAMERON BRINK has been good for the Sparks.

first seven games.

After playing five of their first seven games on the road, the Fever have three straight games at home, including Tuesday night's game with the Sparks that ended after this edition's deadline, and a matchup with Chicago on Saturday that will feature Clark and fellow first-round picks Angel Reese and Kamilla Cardoso. The 6-foot-7 Cardoso has been out because of a shoulder injury but said she's targeting the game for her debut.

Rookie watch

Cameron Brink had an impressive week for the Sparks, averaging 13.3 points, 6.3 rebounds and 3.0 blocks in three games. She entered Tuesday night's game leading in the league with 3.2 blocks a contest.

Reese also had another eventful stretch. While she had a strong week averaging 13 points and 7.0 rebounds in the Sky's two games, she also was taken down with a hard foul by Connecticut's Alyssa Thomas. The Sun forward was ejected after the play. Reese did not leave the game and thanked Thomas on social media. Reese also helped first-year coach Teresa Weather- spoon get a win against the New York Liberty — a team she starred for when the WNBA began.

Player of the week

Napheesa Collier continues to impress. The Minnesota forward averaged 22 points, 10.3 rebounds and five assists to help the Lynx go 2-1 on the week.

Game of the week

Las Vegas at Minnesota, Wednesday. The two-time defending champion Aces play their first road game when they visit the Lynx, who have gotten off to a great start winning four of their first five games. The Aces still are missing star guard Chelsea Gray, who has been sidelined because of a left foot injury she suffered in the Finals last year.

Feinberg writes for the Associated Press.

STANDINGS

Through Monday
NATIONAL LEAGUE
West W L Pct. GB L10
DODGERS 33 22 .600 - 4-6
San Diego 29 28 .509 5 6-4
San Francisco 28 27 .509 5 8-2
Arizona 25 28 .472 7 5-5
Colorado 19 34 .358 13 4-6
Central W L Pct. GB L10
Milwaukee 31 22 .585 - 5-5
Chicago 27 27 .500 4 1/2 2-8
St. Louis 25 27 .481 5 1/2 7-3
Pittsburgh 25 29 .463 6 1/2 6-4
Cincinnati 24 30 .444 7 1/2 5-5
East W L Pct. GB L10
Philadelphia 38 17 .691 - 7-3
Atlanta 30 21 .588 6 4-6
Washington 24 28 .462 12 1/2 4-6
New York 22 30 .423 14 1/2 3-7
Miami 19 36 .345 19 6-4

AMERICAN LEAGUE
West W L Pct. GB L10
Seattle 29 26 .527 - 5-5
Texas 25 29 .463 3 1/2 3-7
Houston 24 30 .444 4 1/2 5-5
Oakland 22 33 .400 7 3-7
ANGELS 20 33 .377 8 5-5
Central W L Pct. GB L10
Cleveland 36 18 .667 - 9-1
Kansas City 34 21 .618 2 1/2 8-2
Minnesota 29 24 .547 6 1/2 5-5
Detroit 26 27 .491 9 1/2 5-5
Chicago 15 40 .273 21 1/2 1-9
East W L Pct. GB L10
New York 37 18 .673 - 7-3
Baltimore 34 18 .654 1 1/2 6-4
Boston 27 27 .500 9 1/2 5-5
Tampa Bay 26 28 .481 10 1/2 4-6
Toronto 24 29 .453 12 5-5

Today's games
Dodgers at New York (NL) 1 p.m.
Angels vs. New York (AL) 6:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Detroit 10 a.m.
St. Louis at Cincinnati 10 a.m.
Arizona at Texas 11:30 a.m.
Philadelphia at San Francisco 12:45 p.m.
Miami at San Diego 1:45 p.m.
Boston at Baltimore 3:30 p.m.
Oakland at Tampa Bay 3:45 p.m.
Washington at Atlanta 4:15 p.m.
Chicago (NL) at Milwaukee 4:30 p.m.
Kansas City at Minnesota 4:30 p.m.
Toronto at Chicago (AL) 4:30 p.m.
Cleveland at Colorado 5:30 p.m.
Houston at Seattle 6:30 p.m.



FRANK FRANKLIN II Associated Press

FRANCISCO LINDOR connects for a two-run home run in the third inning. It was the only offense for the Mets, who had four hits.

Dodgers come alive late, win in 10

[Dodgers, from B10]
night because of rain — it looked as if the Mets were destined to win in a matchup between reeling clubs.

A two-run home run by Francisco Lindor in the third inning was the only early scoring.

And while Tyler Glasnow was solid in a seven-inning start for the Dodgers, giving up no other runs and striking out eight, Mets starter Tylor Megill was even better, blanking the Dodgers' scuffling bats in a seven-inning, three-hit, nine-strikeout gem.

A sixth straight loss, something the Dodgers haven't suffered since 2018, seemed likely.

But then, their offense finally managed to flip the script.

In the eighth inning, Freddie Freeman bounced a two-out RBI single the other way, cutting a 2-0 Mets lead in half.

In the ninth, the Dodgers put on a squeeze play with runners on the

corners and no outs, tying the score when Chris Taylor's bunt got away from Mets reliever Adam Ottavino.

The Mets missed a chance to end it in the bottom of the ninth, squandering a bases-loaded, one-out opportunity against Daniel Hudson.

Then, the Dodgers finally put a crooked number on the scoreboard in the 10th, getting an RBI single from Mookie Betts and a two-run homer from Freeman to halt their skid and change their frustrated fortunes — finding a unit less capable than their ultra-cold offense.

Ohtani sits Game 2

Shohhei Ohtani insisted Monday that his bruised hamstring is continuing to improve.

However, the slugger was only in the lineup for Game 1 of Tuesday's doubleheader, with the Dodgers opting for a more cautious ap-

proach with their \$700-million slugger.

Because of Ohtani's bruise — which he sustained by getting hit with a pickoff throw last week — the Dodgers didn't want him to have to get loose twice in one day. Instead, Roberts slotted catcher Will Smith as the designated hitter in Game 2, and said he wasn't planning to use Ohtani as a pinch-hitter.

"Cranking up [and] getting hot with the hamstring, then to cool down and get back going [for Game 2] doesn't make a whole lot of sense," Roberts said.

Injury update

Closer Evan Phillips is expected to rejoin the Dodgers on Friday, Roberts said. Phillips, who has been out since May 3 because of a hamstring strain, will make one more minor league rehabilitation appearance this week.

DODGERS 5, N.Y. METS 2

Table with columns: Player, AB, R, H, BI, Avg., New York, AB, R, H, BI, Avg.
Dodgers: Betts ss 5 1 2 .336, Lindor ss 5 1 1 2.209, Ohtani dh 5 0 0 0.329, Alonso 1b 5 0 0 0.236, Freeman 1b 5 1 3 3.291, 1-Marke if 0 0 0 0.259, Smith c 5 0 0 0.288, Nimmo if 2 0 0 0.214, T.Hernandez if 5 1 3 0.267, Martinez dh 4 0 1 0.275, Lux 2b 5 0 1 0.205, Steward f 2 0 0 0.202, C.Taylor 3b 4 0 1 1.110, Bader f 0 0 0 0.279, Heyward rf 3 0 1 0.189, T.Taylor cf-rf 4 0 0 0.236, Pages cf 4 2 0 0.225, Vientos 1b 0 0 0 0.344, Totals 41 5 11 5, Baty 3b 3 0 0 0.226, Nido c 4 1 0 0.214, Totals 32 4 2

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
Dodgers 000 000 011 3 = 5 11 0
New York 002 000 000 0 = 2 4 1

1-run for Alonso in the 9th.
Walks—Dodgers 1: Heyward 1, New York 5: Nimmo 2, Stewart 1, Bader 1, Baty 1.

Strikeouts—Dodgers 13: Betts 1, Ohtani 2, Smith 2, T.Hernandez 1, Lux 2, C.Taylor 3, Heyward 1, Pages 1, New York 12: Lindor 4, Alonso 1, Nimmo 2, Martinez 1, T.Taylor 2, Baty 1, Nido 1.

E-Baty (2), LOB—Dodgers 8, New York 6. 2B—T.Hernandez (1), HR—Freeman (8), off López; Lindor (8), off Glasnow. RBIs—Freeman 3 (3S), C.Taylor (8), Betts (3), Lindor (2).

Runners left in scoring position—Dodgers 3 (Smith, Heyward, Freeman); New York 3 (Lindor, McNeil 2), RISP—Dodgers 3 for 11; New York 0 for 6.

DP—Dodgers 2 (Betts, Lux, Freeman; Lux, Betts, Freeman); New York 1 (Lindor, McNeil, Alonso).

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
Dodgers: Glasnow 7.2 2 2 4 8 92 3.04, Hudson 1.0 0 0 0 1 9 5.60, Groves, W, 2-1 1 0 0 0 1 19 2.57, Treinen, S, 1-1 1 0 0 0 2 13 0.00, New York: Megill 7.0 3 0 0 1 9 98 1.69, Garcia 1.0 1 0 0 0 7 13 2.63, Diemand, H, 5 1 0 0 1 9 3.71, Ottavino, BS, 1-3 1 1 0 1 18 3.86, López, L, 1-2 1 3 2 0 2 15 3.12

Inherited runners scored—Diemand 1.
U—Jeremy Riggs, Alex Mackay, Adrian Johnson, Junior Valentine, T-242.

BASEBALL: MONDAY FLASHBACK

BALTIMORE 11, BOSTON 3
Boston AB R H BI Avg. Baltimore AB R H BI Avg.
Duran if 5 0 0 0.266, Hinds ss 3 1 0 0.260, Rofe 1b 5 0 2 0.238, Urias 3b 1 0 1 0.194, Wong c 3 1 0 0.326, Ritsch c 4 1 2 3.000, Devers 3b 3 0 1 0.273, O'Hara dh 5 1 2 0.280, Hamilton ss 1 1 1 0.263, Mtsie 1b 5 2 3 1.280, Cooper dh 4 1 1 0.192, Cowsr lf 4 2 0 0.241, Griz 3b/3b 4 0 1 3.273, Wong 3b 3 1 1 1.285, Grissom 2b 2 0 1 0.149, Stowers rf 4 1 3 4.375, Smith 1b 4 0 0 0.200, Mullins of 4 1 1 1.195, Rafaela cf 4 0 1 0.209, Mto 2b 3 1 1 1.250, Totals 35 8 3 8 3

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
Boston 000 000 030 - 3 8 1
Baltimore 011 500 40x - 11 13 0

Walks—Boston 7; Wong 2, Hamilton 1, Cooper 1, González 1, Grissom 2, Baltimore 2; Henderson 1, Westbrook 1. Strikeouts—Boston 10: Duran 3, Devers 2, Grissom 1, Smith 1, Biggio 1. RBIs—Boston 11: Duran 3, Devers 2, Hamilton 1, Westbrook 1, Mullins 1, E-Grissom (2), LOB—Boston 12, Mountcastle 1, Westbrook (1), Matteo (1), Mountcastle (1S), Stowers 2 (3), Butchman (8), 3B—González (1), Mullins (1), RBIs—González 3 (5), Westbrook (2), Butchman 2 (3), Stowers 1 (2), Matteo (1), Mountcastle (2), SF—Rutschman, Mateo. Runners left in scoring position—Boston 5 (Smith, Rafaela 2, González, Duran); Baltimore 3 (Mateo, Mountcastle, Mullins). RISP—Boston 1 for 10; Baltimore 5 for 14. Runners moved up—Stowers, Henderson, Cowser.

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
Boston: Criswell, L, 2-2 4 6 7 6 1 2 76 3.96, Keller 1 4 7 4 4 1 2 58 9.00, Baltimore: Irvin, W, 5-2 2 1 0 0 2 23 2.31, Webb 2 1 0 0 0 2 23 2.31, Vieira 0 1 3 3 4 0 26 Inf, Pérez 1 0 0 0 2 11 4.63, Tate 1 2 0 0 0 16 2.25

Vieira pitched to 5 batters in the 8th. Inherited runners scored—Pérez 2-0. WP—Vieira. U—Andy Fletcher, Mike Muchlinski, Scott Barry, Jansen Viscotti. T-231. Tickets sold—40,951 (45,971).

TORONTO 5, CHICAGO WHITE SOX 1

Toronto AB R H BI Avg. Chicago AB R H BI Avg.
Schneider lf 4 1 1 2.241, Pham cf 4 0 0 0.304, Kiermer cf 0 0 0 0.226, Lopez 2b 3 0 1 0.234, Jansen c 5 0 0 0.297, Ramos 1 0 0 0.225, Freeman 1b 3 0 0 0.297, Sheets dh 5 1 2 2.42, Bichette ss 4 1 1 1.247, Vaughn 1b 4 0 1 0.196, Vogelbe dh 2 0 0 0.167, Bertndi lf 4 0 3 0.193, Turner dh 2 0 0 0.219, Delong ss 4 0 0 0.232, Varsho cf-if 2 1 0 0.205, Julks if 4 0 2 3.20, Springer rf 3 2 2 1.196, Mendick 3b 4 0 0 0.203, Kinn-falls 3b 4 0 1 0.270, Madlndo c 3 0 0 0.283, Biggio 2b 3 0 1 0.212, Lee 1 1 0 1.275, Totals 32 5 6 5

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
Toronto 020 100 002 - 5 6 1
Chicago 000 000 010 - 1 10 0

Walks—Toronto 6; Schneider 1, Guerrero 1, Varsho 2, Springer 1, Biggio 1. Chicago 1. Strikeouts—Toronto 7: Schneider 1, Jansen 1, Guerrero 1, Bichette 1, Vogelbach 1, Turner 1, Biggio 1. Chicago 9: Pham 1, Vaughn 1, Benintendi 1, Delong 2, Mendick 2, Maldonado 2, E-Bichette (4), LOB—Toronto 6, Chicago 11. 2B—Kiner-Falela (5), Julks (3), HR—Springer (4), off Nastri; Bichette (4), off Nastri; Schneider (6), off Brehos; Sheets (4), off Swanson. RBIs—Springer 2 (1), Bichette (2), Schneider 2 (2), Sheets (1), Ramos 1, Jansen 1, Springer 1, Turner 1, Biggio 2, Vogelbe 1, Turner 1, Biggio 2, Sheets (1), Guerrero (1), Vaughn, Mendick 2, Delong 2, Sheets, RISP—Toronto 0 for 5; Chicago 1 for 7. Runners moved up—Jansen, Ramos.

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
Toronto: Bassitt, W, 5-6 5 0 0 0 7 81 4.03, Pearson, H, 1 2 1 0 0 2 32 4.66, Jansen 1 2 1 1 0 0 9 9.22, Pop, H, 5 1 1 0 0 0 15 3.65, Cabrera 1 1 1 0 0 3 12 8.84, Chicago: IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA, Nastri, L, 0-4 5 3 3 4 5 82 9.92, Shuster 3 1 0 0 2 1 38 2.70, Brebbia 1 2 2 2 0 1 24 7.75

U—Marvin Hudson, Nick Mahroy, Hunter Wendelstedt, John Tumpane. T-240. Tickets sold—14,993 (40,241).

WASHINGTON 8, ATLANTA 4

Wash. AB R H BI Avg. Atlanta AB R H BI Avg.
Abrams ss 4 1 2 0.266, Altibes 2b 4 0 1 0.269, Thomas cf 5 1 2 0.196, Riley 3b 4 0 0 0.238, Garcia 2b 5 0 0 0.284, Ozuna dh 4 1 1 0.310, Rosario if 4 2 1 1.174, Olson 1b 4 0 0 0.230, Ruiz c 4 1 2 0.210, Murphy c 4 0 1 1.143, Winker dh 4 2 2 1.235, Duvall cf 4 1 1 2.009, Sanello 3b 4 1 2 2.221, Harris cf 3 1 1 0.261, Ganzo 1b 4 0 1 0.138, Arcia ss 4 0 2 1.249, Young cf 4 0 3 1.275, Ketelns if 3 0 0 0.258, Totals 38 8 15 7

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
Washington 000 000 000 - 8 15 0
Atlanta 000 000 404 - 8 0

Walks—Washington 2; Rosario 1, Ruiz 1, Atlanta 2; Harris 1, Ketelns 1. Strikeouts—Washington 10: Abrams 1, Thomas 1, Garcia 1, Rosario 2, Winker 1, Senzel 1, Galo 3, Atlanta 10: Altibes 2, Riley 1, Ozuna 1, Olson 1, Duvall 1, Harris 1, Arcia 1, Ketelns 2, LOB—Washington 6, Atlanta 5. 2B—Thomas 2 (2), Rosario (6), Senzel (4), Olson (1), HR—Abrams (9), off Morton; Duvall (5), off Parker. RBIs—Rosario (19), Winker (23), Senzel (2 (3)), Abrams 2 (26), Young (12), Murphy (1), Duvall (2 (1)), Arcia (19), SB—Winker (1), Rosario (8), Young (16), Harris (8), CS—Ruiz (1), SF—Abrams. Runners left in scoring position—Washington 3 (Thomas, Galo 2, Ruiz 2), Atlanta 2 (Olson, Ketelns). RISP—Washington 4 for 13, Atlanta 2 for 7. Runners moved up—Riley, Jansen, Murphy. GDP—Thomas, Altibes. DP—Washington 1 (Garcia, Abrams, Gallo); Atlanta 1 (Riley, Altibes, Olson).

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
Washington: Park, W, 4-2 6 5 3 3 0 6 100 3.45, Lawrie 1 1 1 1 0 2 20 3.00, Harvey 1 0 0 0 0 1 12 2.33, Finnegan 1 2 0 0 0 3 15 1.71, Atlanta: IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA, Morton, L, 3-2 5 12 8 8 2 7 103 4.29, Chavez 1 1 0 0 0 1 20 1.69, Herget 2 1 2 0 0 2 25 0.00

Inherited runners scored—Chavez 1-0. U—Lance Berkstadt, Nic Lentz, Will Little, Quinn Wolcott. T-239. Tickets sold—38,859 (41,149).

COLORADO 8, CLEVELAND 6

Cleveland AB R H BI Avg. Colorado AB R H BI Avg.
Freeman cf 5 2 3 1.228, Blackmon rf 4 1 3 4.237, Gimenez 2b 5 1 1 0.269, Cave rf 0 0 0 0.257, Ramirez 3b 5 1 2 2.266, Tovar ss 4 0 0 0.283, J.Naylor 1b 5 0 0 0.229, McMahn 3b 4 0 0 0.288, Fry if 3 1 1 1.344, Diaz c 3 1 1 0.304, Manzardo dh 3 1 1 0.200, Bryant dh 4 0 0 0.169, Brennan rf 1 0 0 0.226, Rodgers 2b 4 1 1 0.265, Rodriguez if 1 0 1 0.188, Doyle cf 3 2 1 0.269, Fiorini lf 1 0 0 0.173, Boucher if 3 2 2 2.117, B.Naylor c 4 0 2 1.083, Montero 1b 3 1 1 1.221, Roccochio ss 2 0 0 0.199, Totals 32 8 8 8

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
Cleveland 121 000 101 - 6 10 1
Colorado 010 601 00x - 8 8 0

Walks—Cleveland 3; Manzardo 1, Brennan 1, Roccochio 1, Colorado 4; Diaz 1, Doyle 1, Bouchard 1, Montero 1. Strikeouts—Cleveland 4: Giménez 1, Ramirez 1, J.Naylor 1, Roccochio 1, Colorado 9: Tovar 4, Rodgers 2, Doyle 2, Montero 1, E-Giménez (5), LOB—Cleveland 7, Colorado 4. 2B—Freeman 2 (1), Ramirez 2 (1), Blackmon 2 (1), Bouchard (6), HR—Blackmon (2), off Curry. RBIs—Ramirez 2 (5), Freeman (2), Fry (2), Giménez (3), Bouchard 2 (5), Montero 2 (5), Blackmon 4 (2), SB—Bouchard (2). Runners left in scoring position—Cleveland 3 (Giménez, J.Naylor 2), Colorado 4 (McMahon 2, Montero, Diaz), RISP—Cleveland 4 for 12; Colorado 3 for 10. Runners moved up—Giménez, Ramirez, B.Naylor, GDP—Manzardo, B.Naylor, Bryant, DP—Cleveland 1 (Giménez, Roccochio, J.Naylor); Colorado 2 (Rodgers, Tovar, Montero; Tovar, Montero).

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
Cleveland: Curry, L, 0-1 3 6 7 6 2 3 74 5.86, Sandlin 1 1 0 0 0 1 15 2.19, Barlow 1 1 1 2 1 23 4.24, Avila 1 0 0 0 0 4 23 4.15, Colorado: IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA, Molina 1 2 3 3 0 0 45 8.35, Rogers, W, 4-0 5 4 2 0 2 71 3.60, Voth, H, 3 1 2 0 0 0 22 2.93, Beeks, S, 5-8 1 2 1 1 0 2 18 3.00

U—Mark Wegner, Bruce Drackman, Jeremie Rehak, Clint VonDrak. T-242. Tickets sold—35,122 (50,144).

CINCINNATI 3, ST. LOUIS 1

St. Louis AB R H BI Avg. Cincinnati AB R H BI Avg.
Winn ss 4 0 1 0.300, Hurtubise lf 3 0 0 1.250, Burleson rf-if 4 0 1 0.308, B-espinal 3b 1 0 0 0.195, Gidscoft 1b 4 1 1 1.222, DelaCruz ss 2 0 0 0.245, Herrera dh 4 0 1 0.261, Colino 3b/1b 3 1 1 1.222, Arenado 3b 4 0 0 0.258, Steer 1b-if 4 0 1 0.231, Carlson rf/cf 3 0 1 0.125, Freley rf 3 0 1 0.281, Gordon 2b 3 0 0 0.213, Stephenson c 4 0 0 0.250, Pagis c 3 0 0 0.056, Martini dh 3 1 0 0.186, Spiers cf 2 0 0 0.202, India 2b 2 1 1 0.223, C-Donovan if 1 0 0 0.228, Benson cf 2 0 0 1.194, Totals 32 1 5 1

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
St. Louis 100 000 000 - 1 5 0
Cincinnati 120 000 00x - 3 5 0

a-flied out for Benson in the 7th. b-lined out for Hurtubise in the 7th. c-struck out for Siani in the 8th.

Walks—Cincinnati 6; De La Cruz 2, Candelario 1, Freley 1, Marini 1, India 1. Strikeouts—St. Louis 12: Winn 1, Burleson 2, Golschmidt 1, Herrera 2, Arenado 1, Carlson 1, Gorman 1, Pagis 1, Siani 1, Donovan 1, Cincinnati 6: Hurtubise 1, De La Cruz 1, Steer 1, Freley 1, Stephenson 1, Benson 1, E-Arenado (4), Golschmidt (2), LOB—St. Louis 4, Cincinnati 7. HR—Golschmidt (2), Candelario (6), off Lynn. RBIs—Golschmidt (2), Candelario (20), Benson (16), Hurtubise (3), CS—Benson (6). Runners left in scoring position—St. Louis 1 (Gorman); Cincinnati 3 (Steer 2, Stephenson). RISP—St. Louis 0 for 1; Cincinnati 1 for 6.

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
St. Louis: Lynn, L, 2-3 6 5 3 1 3 5 92 3.45, Liberatore 1 0 0 0 0 2 13 5.27, Leahy 1 0 0 0 0 1 20 3.86, Cincinnati: IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA, Ludolo, W, 4-2 5 1 0 0 3 81 3.12, Cruz, H, 10 1 0 0 0 5 23 4.07, Moll, H, 2 1 0 0 0 2 13 3.00, Sims, S, 1-2 1 0 0 0 2 14 4.15

U—Lance Barrett, Mark Ripberger, Roberto Ortiz, Alfonso Marquez. T-215. Tickets sold—24,797 (43,891).

SAN FRANCISCO 8, PHILADELPHIA 4

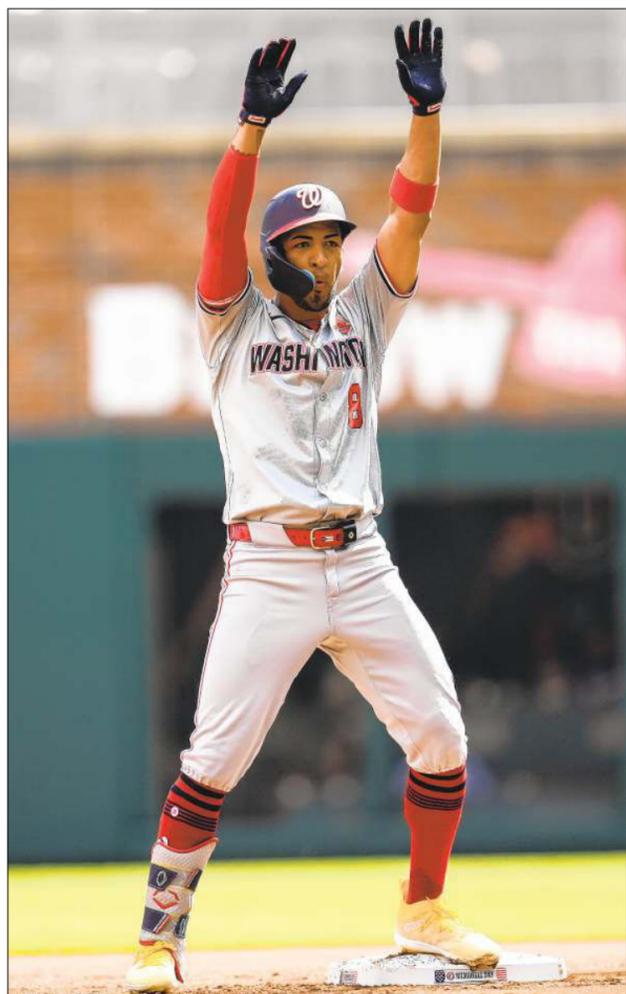
Phila. AB R H BI Avg. San Fran. AB R H BI Avg.
Schreiber dh 4 1 2 2.236, Matos cf 5 1 2 0.270, Realmuto c 4 0 1 0.287, Riley 1b 2 1 0 0.333, Harper 1b 3 0 0 0.272, 1-Flores 1b 2 1 0 0.214, Bohm 3b 3 0 0 0.311, Estrada 2b 5 1 2 2.238, Castellins cf 4 0 0 0.198, Chapman 3b 4 2 0 0.236, Sosa ss 4 1 1 0.316, Bailey c 4 0 0 0.212, Merrifield 2b 3 1 0 0.181, Sotler dh 4 0 0 0.212, a-Stott 1 0 0 0.250, Ystzmski rf 3 2 1 2.223, Pache lf 3 0 0 0.196, Ramos if 4 0 2 2.288, b-Marsh 1 0 1 0.267, Wisely ss 4 0 2 2.450, Rojas cf 3 1 2 1.224, Totals 37 8 12 8

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
San Francisco 002 200 000 - 4 7 3
Philadelphia 030 021 20x - 8 12 1

Walks—Philadelphia 3; Schwarber 1, Harper 1, Bohm 1, San Francisco 2; Chapman 1, Yastzmski 2, Sosa 1, Pache 2, San Francisco 7; Matos 1, Wade 1, Estrada 1, Chapman 1, Bailey 1, Ramos 2, E-Bohm 2 (9), Merrifield (2), Chapman (7), LOB—Philadelphia 6, San Francisco 8. 2B—Realmuto (7), Marsh (5), Yastzmski (4), Wade (6), Wisely (1), Estrada (1), 3B—Sosa (4), HR—Schwarber (10), off Snell. RBIs—Schwarber 2 (3), Rojas (16), Yastzmski 2 (2), Wisely 2 (6), Estrada (3), Bailey (9), Ramos 2 (12), SB—Merrifield (6), Rojas 2 (13), Schwarber (3), SF—Bailey. Runners left in scoring position—Philadelphia 5, San Francisco 4. RISP—Philadelphia 1 for 8; San Francisco 3 for 15.

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
Philadelphia: T.Walker, L, 3-1 6 9 6 5 2 4 98 5.51, Ruiz 1 2 2 2 0 0 18 6.66, Strahm 1 1 0 0 0 2 26 0.83, San Francisco: IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA, Snell 4 5 4 3 2 7 90 10.42, Rodríguez, W, 1-0 2 0 0 0 1 16 1.76, Miller, H, 9 1 1 0 0 0 14 4.38, Walker, W, 6 1 0 0 0 2 17 2.17, Duvall 1 1 0 0 0 0 19 2.78

WP—Snell. U—James Hoge, Rob Drake, D.J. Reytum, John Lika. T-244. Tickets sold—40,598 (41,915).



MIKE STEWART Associated Press

WAVING HELLO AGAIN

Washington's Eddie Rosario celebrates his RBI double in the first inning Monday in Atlanta. Rosario, who hit 21 homers for the Braves last year, received a warm ovation from fans.

SAN DIEGO 2, MIAMI 1

Miami AB R H BI Avg. San Diego AB R H BI Avg.
Chisholm cf 4 1 2 1.265, Arreaz 1b 4 0 1 0.385, Realmuto c 4 0 1 0.258, Tatis rf 4 0 1 0.344, Bell 1b 4 0 1 0.223, Profar lf 3 0 1 0.219, Sánchez cf 4 0 0 0.231, Acosta lf 0 0 0 0.259, Burger 3b 4 0 0 0.189, Machado 3b 4 0 1 0.235, Gordon if 2 0 0 0.229, Cronwhr 2b 3 0 1 1.271, a-Myers if 2 0 0 0.278, Solano dh 2 1 1 1.231, Anderson ss 2 0 0 0.203, b-Peralta dh 1 0 0 0.231, Lopez 2b 3 0 0 0.271, Campsno c 3 0 0 0.241, Bethanort c 3 0 1 0.169, Merrill cf 4 0 1 0.275, Kim ss 4 1 1 0.217, Totals 31 1 4 1

Table with columns: Team, Runs, Hits, Errors
Miami 001 000 000 - 1 4 2
San Diego 010 000 10x - 2 8 0

a popped out for Gordon in the 7th. b grounded out for Solano in the 7th.

Walks—Miami 2; De La Cruz 1, Anderson 1, San Diego 3; Profar 1, Cronenweth 1, Campsuno 1, Kim 1, E-Anderson 2 (6), LOB—Miami 5, San Diego 10. 2B—Bell (8), Bethancourt (3), Chisholm (1), Cronenweth (2), HR—Chisholm (8), off King; Solano (1), off Rogers. RBIs—Chisholm (17), Solano (2), Cronenweth (35), SB—Chisholm (10), CS—Tatis (2). Runners left in scoring position—Miami 3 (Bell, Chisholm, Gordon); San Diego 6 (O.Peralta 2, Machado, Merrill 3). RISP—Miami 0 for 6; San Diego 0 for 10.

Table with columns: Player, IP, H, R, ER, BB, SO, NP, ERA
Miami: Rogers 5 1 2 3 3 90 5.65, Cronin 3 0 0 0 0 1 11 1.42, Puk, L, 0-6 3 1 0 0 0 18 8.66, Bender 1 0 0 0 0 1 15 5.82, Smith 1 1 0 0 0 0 5 3.



DUSTIN SATLOFF/Getty Images

UMPIRE Ángel Hernández was often the subject of fans' ire over controversial calls during his tenure.

Controversial umpire Hernández retires after 30 years on the field

Decision comes from reported settlement with MLB, which he unsuccessfully sued.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Longtime umpire Ángel Hernández, who unsuccessfully sued Major League Baseball for racial discrimination, is retiring immediately.

During a career that lasted more than three decades, the 62-year-old Hernández was often scorned by players, managers and fans for missed calls and quick ejections — some in high-profile situations.

Hernández issued a statement through MLB on Monday night saying he had decided he wanted to spend more time with his family.

"Starting with my first major league game in 1991, I have had the very good expe-

rience of living out my childhood dream of umpiring in the major leagues. There is nothing better than working at a profession that you enjoy. I treasured the camaraderie of my colleagues and the friendships I have made along the way, including our locker room attendants in all the various cities," Hernández said.

"Needless to say, there have been many positive changes in the game of baseball since I first entered the profession. This includes the expansion and promotion of minorities. I am proud that I was able to be an active participant in that goal while being a major league umpire."

Last summer, Hernández lost for a second time in his racial discrimination lawsuit against MLB when a federal appeals court refused to reinstate his case.

The U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a 2021 District Court decision that

granted MLB a summary judgment.

Hernández sued in 2017. He alleged he was discriminated against because he had not been assigned to the World Series since 2005 and had been passed over for assignment as a crew chief. He served as an interim crew chief from 2011 to 2016.

"Hernández has failed to establish a statistically significant disparity between the promotion rates of white and minority umpires," the 2nd Circuit said in an 11-page decision. "MLB has provided persuasive expert evidence demonstrating that, during the years at issue, the difference in crew chief promotion rates between white and minority umpires was not statistically significant. Hernández offers no explanation as to why MLB's statistical evidence is unreliable."

Hernández was sidelined by a back injury last season until July 31. This year he was

behind the plate eight times, including for his final game May 9 between the Cleveland Guardians and Chicago White Sox.

USA Today and ESPN, each citing an anonymous source, reported Hernández reached a settlement to leave MLB.

USA Today reported the sides spent the last two weeks negotiating a financial settlement before coming to an agreement over the weekend.

Born in Cuba, Hernández was hired as a big league umpire in 1993. He worked two World Series (2002, 2005), three All-Star Games (1999, 2009, 2017) and eight League Championship Series, with his last LCS assignment coming in 2016.

In Game 3 of the 2018 AL Division Series between the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox, Hernández had three calls at first base overturned on video replay reviews.

PRO CALENDAR

	WED 29	THU 30	FRI 31	SAT 1	SUN 2
DODGERS	at N.Y. Mets 1 SNLA		COLORADO 7 SNLA	COLORADO 7 SNLA	COLORADO 1 SNLA
ANGELS	N.Y. YANKEES 6:30 BSW	N.Y. YANKEES 6:30 BSW	at Seattle 7 Apple TV	at Seattle 4:15 Ch.11	at Seattle 1 BSW
SPARKS		at Chicago 5 SpecSN			at Phoenix 3 SpecSN
GALAXY	DALLAS 7:30 Apple TV			at Chicago 5:30 Apple TV	
LAFC	MINNESOTA 7:45 FS1, Apple TV			DALLAS 7:30 Apple TV	
ANGEL CITY	NEXT: AT NJ/NY GOTHAM, JUNE 8, 9:30 A.M. PDT, CH. 2, PARAMOUNT+				

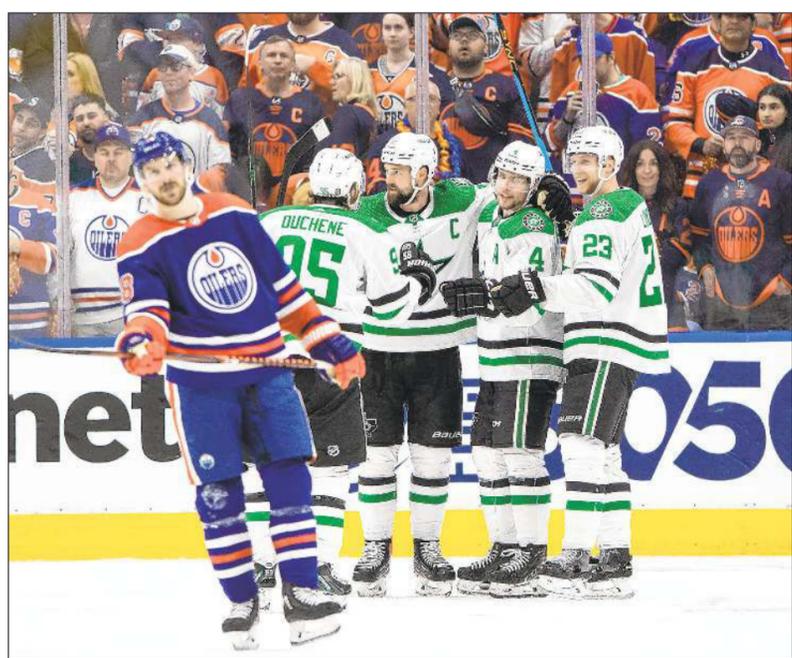
Shade denotes home game.

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL		
2:30 a.m. (Thurs.)	AFL, Port Adelaide vs. Carlton	TV: FS2
BASEBALL		
10 a.m.	Pittsburgh at Detroit	TV: MLB
1 p.m.	Dodgers at New York Mets	TV: SNLA R: 570, 1020
1 p.m.	Miami at San Diego	TV: MLB
4:15 p.m.	Washington at Atlanta	TV: ESPN+
6:30 p.m.	New York Yankees at Angels	TV: BSW R: 830
BASKETBALL: WNBA		
4 p.m.	Phoenix at New York	TV: CBSN
5 p.m.	Las Vegas at Minnesota	TV: NBA
COLLEGE GOLF		
3 p.m.	Men's NCAA championships, team match-play final	TV: Golf
HOCKEY: NHL		
5:30 p.m.	Western Conference finals, Game 4, Dallas at Edmonton	TV: TNT, TruTV, Max
SOCCER		
5:30 p.m.	MLS, Austin vs. Portland	TV: FS1, FOXD
7:30 p.m.	MLS, Galaxy vs. Dallas	TV: Apple TV R: Galaxy stream
7:45 p.m.	MLS, LAFC vs. Minnesota	TV: FS1, FOXD, Apple TV R: 710, 980
TENNIS		
6 a.m.	French Open, early rounds	TV: Tennis
2 a.m. (Thurs.)	French Open, early rounds	TV: Tennis

SPORTS EXTRA

For late coverage of Dodgers, Angels and Sparks games and more, see our daily digital eNewspaper. Subscribers get free access to an exclusive "Sports Extra." View it on your phone, tablet or computer at latimes.com/enewspaper.



JASON FRANSON/Associated Press

MATT DUCHENE and Dallas teammates, from left, Jamie Benn, Miro Heiskanen and Esa Lindell celebrate a goal as Edmonton's Zach Hyman skates past.

NHL NOTES

Kraken hire Bylsma as coach

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dan Bylsma was introduced as the second coach in the Seattle Kraken's history on Tuesday, putting him in charge of an NHL bench for the first time since 2017.

Bylsma, who won a Stanley Cup title, made the playoffs six times and won the Jack Adams Award as coach of the year in his first NHL job with Pittsburgh, has been the coach for the Coachella Valley Firebirds as the top affiliate for the Kraken.

"He's worked hard to get back to this level and earn this opportunity," Seattle general manager **Ron Francis** said. Francis said he interviewed five candidates before choosing Bylsma.

"Watching him work with Coachella Valley the last couple of years, seeing the relationships he had with his players, the effort he had with his players, the effort he got each and every night, the way his teams played... it became clear he was the guy we wanted," Francis said.

NHL PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

WESTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

1C Dallas vs. 2P Edmonton
Stars lead, 2-1

Gm 1	Edmonton 3, Dallas 2 (2OT)
Gm 2	Dallas 3, Edmonton 1
Gm 3	Dallas 5, Edmonton 3
Gm 4	Wed. at Edmonton, 5:30
Gm 5	Friday at Dallas, 5:30
Gm 6	Sunday at Edmonton, 5*
Gm 7	Tuesday at Dallas, 5:30*

All games on TNT

EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

1M N.Y. Rangers vs. 1A Florida
Rangers lead, 2-1

Gm 1	Florida 3, New York 0
Gm 2	New York 2, Florida 1 (OT)
Gm 3	New York 5, Florida 4 (OT)
Gm 4	at Florida, late
Gm 5	Thursday at N.Y., 5, ESPN
Gm 6	Saturday at Florida, 5, Ch. 7*
Gm 7	Monday at N.Y., 5, ESPN*

*if necessary | Times PDT, p.m.

Bylsma replaces **Dave Hakstol**, who was fired following his third season after the Kraken took a significant step backward and

struggled badly at the offensive end of the ice.

Monday's late game

With first-line center **Roope Hintz** in the lineup again, the Dallas Stars suddenly have one of their top goal scorers back in form: linemate **Jason Robertson**.

Hintz had an immediate impact Monday after sitting out four games because of a lower-body injury.

After 10 games without a goal, Robertson had a play-off hat track in Game 3 of the Western Conference finals against Edmonton. Hintz had the primary assists on the first two goals in a 2½-minute span that got the Stars even, and was also on the ice for Robertson's third that led to a 5-3 victory.

Also

San José signed prized prospect **Will Smith** to a three-year entry-level contract after one stellar season at Boston College. ... Columbus named **Don Waddell** as general manager and president of hockey operations.

THE DAY IN SPORTS

LPGA star Thompson says season will be last on tour

WIRE REPORTS

Golf is all **Lexi Thompson** has ever known, and one of the more popular players on the LPGA Tour decided Tuesday this will be her last year playing a full schedule.

Thompson chose the U.S. Women's Open — the major she first played when she was 12 — to announce that she will step away at the end of the year. The 29-year-old from Florida became emotional while talking about the work no one sees and the loneliness she has faced.

Thompson said she has contemplated semi-retirement the last few years — last LPGA win came nearly five years ago — and cited mental health as one of the factors that contributed to her decision.

"We all have our struggles, especially out here," she said. "Unfortunately in golf you lose more than you win, so it's an ongoing battle to continue to put yourself out there in front of the cameras and continuing to work hard and maybe not seeing the results you want and getting criticized for it. So it's hard. I will say, yes, I've struggled with it — I don't think there's somebody out here that hasn't. It's just a matter of how well you hide it, which is very sad."

Thompson is playing her 18th U.S. Women's Open before turning 30. She won the first of her 15 LPGA titles at 16. She is known as much for the majors she lost as the one she won at the Kraft Nabisco Championship in 2014 when she was 19.

"Being out here can be a lot. It can be lonely," she said as her voice began to crack and she wiped away tears. "I just think — especially with what's happened in golf, as of recent too — a lot of people don't realize a lot of what we go through as a professional athlete."

Georgia Tech sophomore

Hiroshi Tai survived a triple bogey on his 17th hole and shot a one-under 71, to win the NCAA men's golf title Monday at La Costa in Carlsbad. It also helped the Yellow Jackets narrowly join the eight teams that advanced to match play to compete for the team title.

ETC.

Stewart-Haas Racing to close

Stewart-Haas Racing, a two-time NASCAR championship team with 69 Cup Series wins since its 2009 formation, is closing at the end of this season.

Co-owners **Tony Stewart** and **Gene Haas** announced the decision after nearly a year of rumors that their four-car Cup team was looking to sell its charters and either scale back or exit the stock car series. The news was delivered to the nearly 300 SHR employees late Tuesday afternoon.

"It is a decision that did not come easily, nor was it made quickly," the owners said. "Racing is a labor-intensive, humbling sport. It requires unwavering commitment and vast resources, with a 365-day mind-set to be better than everyone else. It's part of what makes success so rewarding. But the commitment needed to extract maximum performance while providing sustainability is incredibly demanding, and we've reached a point in our respective personal and business lives where it's time to pass the torch."

SHR fields Cup cars for **Josh Berry**, **Chase Briscoe**, **Noah Gragson** and **Ryan Preece**. The move also will shutter the SHR Xfinity Series team, whose two cars are driven by **Cole Custer** and **Riley Herbst**.

Stewart in his 2009 debut season gave SHR its first

Cup win — he won four races that year — and its first Cup title in 2011. **Kevin Harvick** added a second championship in 2014. Stewart, Harvick and **Clint Bowyer** all retired from NASCAR driving and SHR since then has been in a grueling rebuild. The organization's last Cup Series win was in 2022 with Harvick a year before he retired. SHR didn't win a Cup race last season.

Novak Djokovic won his 69th consecutive match to open a Grand Slam event, 6-4, 7-6 (3), 6-4 over **Pierre-Hugues Herbert** in the French Open. Last year's runner-up, **Casper Ruud**, also advanced, as did **Aryna Sabalenka** and **Elena Rybakina**. **Alizé Cornet**, who holds the women's record for consecutive Grand Slam events at 69, played the final match of her career, a 6-2, 6-1 loss to **Zheng Qinwen**.

Two women filed a civil lawsuit accusing NFL kicker **Brandon McManus** of sexually harassing them as they worked as flight attendants on Jacksonville's trip to London last year. ... Houston and wide receiver **Nico Collins** agreed to a three-year, \$72.75-million extension.

USC forward **Kijani Wright** is transferring to Vanderbilt. Wright, a McDonald's All-American from Sierra Canyon, averaged 3.9 points and 2.6 rebounds in 28 games as a sophomore.

San Francisco Giants first baseman **LaMonte Wade Jr.** will miss at least four weeks because of a left hamstring strain. ... The Chicago White Sox put pitcher **Mike Clevinger** (elbow) on the 15-day injured list. ... Texas activated pitcher **Nathan Eovaldi**.

Olympic pole vault gold medalist **Thiago Braz** was banned 16 months for doping and will miss the Games.

SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/SPORTS

Bruins keeping an open mind

Gonzalez, UCLA's mental performance coach, puts softball team in spot to excel.

BY THUC NHI NGUYEN

After Jordan Woolery knocked in the tying RBI with a triple in the bottom of the seventh against Virginia Tech, UCLA players burst out of the dugout in celebration. The outcome in the second game of the NCAA regional semifinal wasn't sealed, but Thessa Malau'ulu already knew.

Standing at the top of the dugout stairs, the UCLA third baseman mimicked scribbling in the air and yelled toward Woolery: "It's already written."

The author of UCLA's new favorite phrase, wearing a gray and black Nike sweat-suit with his black cap turned upside down on his head, watched from the back of the dugout.

Armando Gonzalez is UCLA's cheat code. The mental performance coach is the secret behind UCLA's return to the Women's College World Series, helping players process the shocking end to last season and tap into their strengths to "level up" and bring the Bruins to their eighth World Series in nine years.

"He's really just a rock for all of us," shortstop Maya Brady said.

UCLA coach Kelly Inouye-Perez reached out to Gonzalez, who has worked with star athletes including [See UCLA, B6]



Photographs by FRANK FRANKLIN II Associated Press

FREDDIE FREEMAN watches his homer in the 10th inning to give the Dodgers a 5-2 lead. Freeman had three hits and three RBIs.

Dodgers ride their sudden burst

Slumping offense ties it late and scores three in 10th to win opener of a doubleheader.

BY JACK HARRIS

NEW YORK — An immovable object met an unstoppable force at Citi Field on Tuesday afternoon.

The Dodgers' slumping offense. And the New York Mets' balky late-game bullpen.

This time the offense triumphed. Barely.

After entering the ninth inning down a run — and on the verge of a sixth consecutive loss — in the first game of a doubleheader, the Dod-



METS PITCHER Adam Ottavino can't cleanly field a bunt by Chris Taylor as the Dodgers' Teoscar Hernández scores to tie the game in the ninth.

gers instead pushed the game to extra innings before completing a 5-2 comeback win with three runs in the 10th.

It was the kind of timely outburst that had eluded the Dodgers in recent weeks, when their struggling lineup had led to five straight losses and nine in 16 games overall.

And all it took, apparently, was a meeting with the Mets' unreliable cast of late-game relievers, who blew their 10th save in 22 opportunities this season.

When push came to shove, it was the Dodgers who prevailed.

For the first seven innings of Tuesday's opening game — which had been postponed from Monday [See Dodgers, B8]

Women's College World Series

At Oklahoma City
Thursday's first-round games

■ UCLA (42-10) vs. Alabama (38-18)
9 a.m., ESPN

■ Oklahoma (54-6) vs. Duke (52-7)
11:30 a.m., ESPN

■ Texas (52-8) vs. Stanford (48-15)
4 p.m., ESPN2

■ Florida (51-13) vs. Oklahoma State (49-10)
6:30 p.m., ESPN2



BILL WALTON, shown announcing at a Pac-12 basketball game in January, never lost his love for his native San Diego, even after adopting Los Angeles as a second home. "I'm the luckiest guy in the world," he said.

APPRECIATION

For Walton, joy was to be found in doing one's best

BY SAM FARMER

By every measure, Bill Walton was enormously successful, among the most decorated players in the history of college basketball and the NBA.

But Walton had a different definition for personal success, one derived from the teachings of John Wooden, his legendary coach at UCLA.

"The last lesson of life that John Wooden taught us was the measurement of success," Walton said three years ago, "which he described — and now I comprehend and buy into — is success is the peace of mind that comes with the self-satisfaction of knowing that

you've done your best. "It's really easy to say that, but incredibly hard to accept it, embrace it and believe it."

Walton, a three-time national college player of the year who went on to win two NBA championships, died of complications from cancer Monday at his home in San Diego. He was 71.

I was interviewing Walton as part of a 2021 story about the San Diego Padres and their hopes in emerging from the long shadow of the Dodgers. I spoke to a lot of San Diegans, among them Walton and filmmaker Cameron Crowe, about their love of the city and its sports teams.

Walton spoke at length [See Walton, B7]

Controversial umpire calls it quits

Hernández leaves with a legacy marked by lawsuits against MLB and calls that left fans fuming. **B9**

Celtics' ultimate goal in sight

Boston sweeps Indiana and reaches NBA Finals as it seeks to end its 16-year drought as champion. **B7**

WNBA in-season event to tip off

With tweak to tournament, teams now will play five games against conference opponents. **B7**

SPORTS EXTRA

A TIMES E-NEWSPAPER EXCLUSIVE :: WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2024



MICHAEL CONROY Associated Press

SPARKS guard Rae Burrell makes a pass in front of Indiana forward Aliyah Boston on Tuesday. Kia Nurse and Aari McDonald combined for 43 points for the Sparks.

Clark scores 30, but Sparks grab the win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS — Caitlin Clark sees the progress — even as the losses and frustration mount.

On Tuesday night, against the WNBA's only other one-win team, the Indiana Fever rookie strung together her most complete game yet by scoring a season-best 30 points, dishing out six assists and grabbing five rebounds despite losing 88-82 to the Sparks.

"I think I just played with an aggressive mind-set," she said. "I think that was the biggest thing — to play downhill the best I could. We did some good things and then we just kind of shot ourselves in the foot."

It's been that kind of season so far for the former Iowa star and her new teammates.

They've lost seven of eight, but part of the problem has been a brutal schedule in which the Fever

have played five games against last season's top three teams and eight regular-season contests in 14 days, leaving little time for practice — or rest.

And it's taken a toll even though Clark appears to be getting stronger by the game.

"Tonight she was able to get to the foul line a lot, which supplemented her offense, but I thought we did a pretty good job [defensively]," Sparks coach Curt Miller said after facing Clark for the second time in four days.

The game featured the top two picks in last month's WNBA draft, Clark and Sparks forward Cameron Brink, who finished with three points, three rebounds and two assists.

But it was veterans Kia Nurse and Aari McDonald who stole the show. Nurse scored 22 points while McDonald added a season-high 21 points and four assists to help the Sparks (2-4) rally for a victory two

days after losing to Indiana.

Clark has lost all three of her home games, though the impact she's had remains evident everywhere she goes.

The Fever drew a near sold-out crowd of 16,013, including current and former Indianapolis Colts players Nick Cross, Shaquille Leonard and T.Y. Hilton and Indiana Pacers players Tyrese Haliburton, Benedict Mathurin and Andrew Nembhard.

What they saw was a wide array of emotions.

Fans leapt to their feet on Clark's three-pointer from the right wing just 66 seconds into the game.

She wowed the crowd with nifty passes, crafty steals and even two first-half blocks.

She also made the home fans wince with three first-half turnovers and when a frustrated Clark drew a technical foul with 2.7 seconds left in the first quarter, coach

Christie Sides even pulled her star rookie toward the free-throw line for a discussion between quarters.

At times, the game was downright ugly. While the Fever shot just 38.2% from the field, the Sparks committed 19 turnovers, though they made 14 three-pointers.

Indiana erased a 37-32 halftime deficit by starting the third quarter on an 11-0 run to take a 43-37 lead. It didn't last. The Sparks eventually responded with a decisive 28-8 run that turned a 55-48 third-quarter deficit into a 76-63 lead in the fourth quarter and the Fever never recovered.

Dearica Hamby had 17 points, 10 rebounds and five assists for the Sparks.

"I think everybody's physical with me. They get away with things, you know, probably other people don't," Clark said. "It's tough, but it's a very physical game. That's just professional basketball."

NBA PLAYOFFS

Timberwolves stay alive, earn first win

Karl-Anthony Towns scored 20 of his 25 points in the second half and the Minnesota Timberwolves held off the host Dallas Mavericks 105-100 on Tuesday to avoid a sweep in the Western Conference finals.

Anthony Edwards had 29 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists as the Timberwolves stayed alive in their first trip to the conference finals in 20 years.

Luka Dončić had 28 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists, but he and co-star Kyrie Irving were just 13 for 39 from the field. Irving, who was 14-0 in his career in closeout games coming in, finished with 16 points.

Minnesota, down 3-1, has led in the final five minutes of the fourth quarter of every game in the series.

Dodgers double their pleasure with two victories over Mets

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Chris Taylor got down a bunt. Daniel Hudson hushed his lips. And, in a big sigh of relief for a team that finally delivered in a lot of little moments Tuesday, the Dodgers ended their five-game losing streak with a doubleheader sweep of the New York Mets.

"To get back to our winning ways was a good thing," manager Dave Roberts said. "Now, we have a chance to get greedy."

Over 19 innings of baseball, in a doubleheader necessitated by a Monday rainout in Queens, the Dodgers received plenty of help from their superstar core.

Freddie Freeman and Mookie Betts combined for nine hits and, in a 5-2 extra-innings win in Game 1, four key RBIs that helped the team come back from a late two-run deficit.

Tyler Glasnow and Gavin Stone were stellar starting pitchers, with Glasnow giving up two runs in seven innings in the opener, and Stone spinning seven scoreless innings with a career-high seven strikeouts in a 3-0 Game 2 win.

Will Smith and former top prospect Miguel Vargas hit home runs in the nightcap, helping the Dodgers clinch a series win against a reeling Mets team.

But to end a season-high five-

game losing streak during a 7-9 slide, the Dodgers needed a string of well-timed (and even better-executed) contributions from others on the roster.

Taylor produced the first turning point in the ninth inning of Game 1.

With runners on the corners, one out and the Dodgers trailing 2-1 while their struggling offense again looked out of sync, the dugout called for Taylor — the super-utility man with a woeful .101 batting average entering Tuesday — to put down a safety squeeze.

"Just trying to find something that can potentially put the pressure on," Roberts said. "Trying to be a little bit proactive and make something happen."

The bunt was far from perfect, hit in the air and almost back to the mound. But Mets right-hander Adam Ottavino — serving as the closer in New York's balky bullpen — couldn't catch it on the fly or snag the ball on its first hop.

Taylor reached first safely and the Dodgers tied the score at 2-2 when Teoscar Hernández crossed the plate. And in the 10th inning, their bats finally came alive, with Betts sneaking an RBI single through the infield and Freeman belting a two-run homer to put the game away.

Before the Dodgers pulled away in the 10th, the Mets had a chance



FRANK FRANKLIN II Associated Press

DODGERS OUTFIELDERS, from left, Teoscar Hernández, Andy Pages and Jason Heyward celebrate after the team completed a doubleheader sweep of the Mets at Citi Field with a 3-0 victory.

to walk it off in the ninth, loading the bases with one out in Hudson's first outing in more than a week.

Hudson managed to escape trouble by inducing a pair of lazy popups before hushing the crowd by putting a finger to his lips.

Blake Trienen closed out Game 1, earning his first save since September 2021.

Smith homered in the first inning of Game 2, giving the Dodgers a lead that Miguel Rojas and Vargas later extended with a second-inning RBI double and sixth-inning solo home run, respectively (the homer was Vargas' first in the majors since last June).

— JACK HARRIS

ANGELS

Ward's clutch hit knocks off Yankees

Taylor Ward's two-run double scored the go-ahead run in the eighth inning. Kevin Pillar had a two-run homer, and the Angels rallied for a 4-3 victory over the visiting New York Yankees to end a four-game losing streak.

Ward's double brought in Mickey Moniak and Luis Rengifo. It also marked just the second time in 29 games the Angels have won when trailing after seven innings.

NHL PLAYOFFS

Panthers power back with OT home win

Sam Reinhart scored a power-play goal 1:12 into overtime, and the host Florida Panthers topped the New York Rangers 3-2 to even the Eastern Conference final at two games apiece.

Blake Wheeler, playing his first game for the Rangers since mid-February, was called for hooking Aleksander Barkov 59 seconds into the extra session. And it didn't take long for the Panthers to cash in.

latimes.com/sports

BONUS COVERAGE

Go to our website for takeaways from The Times' staff on your favorite home teams at latimes.com/sports.

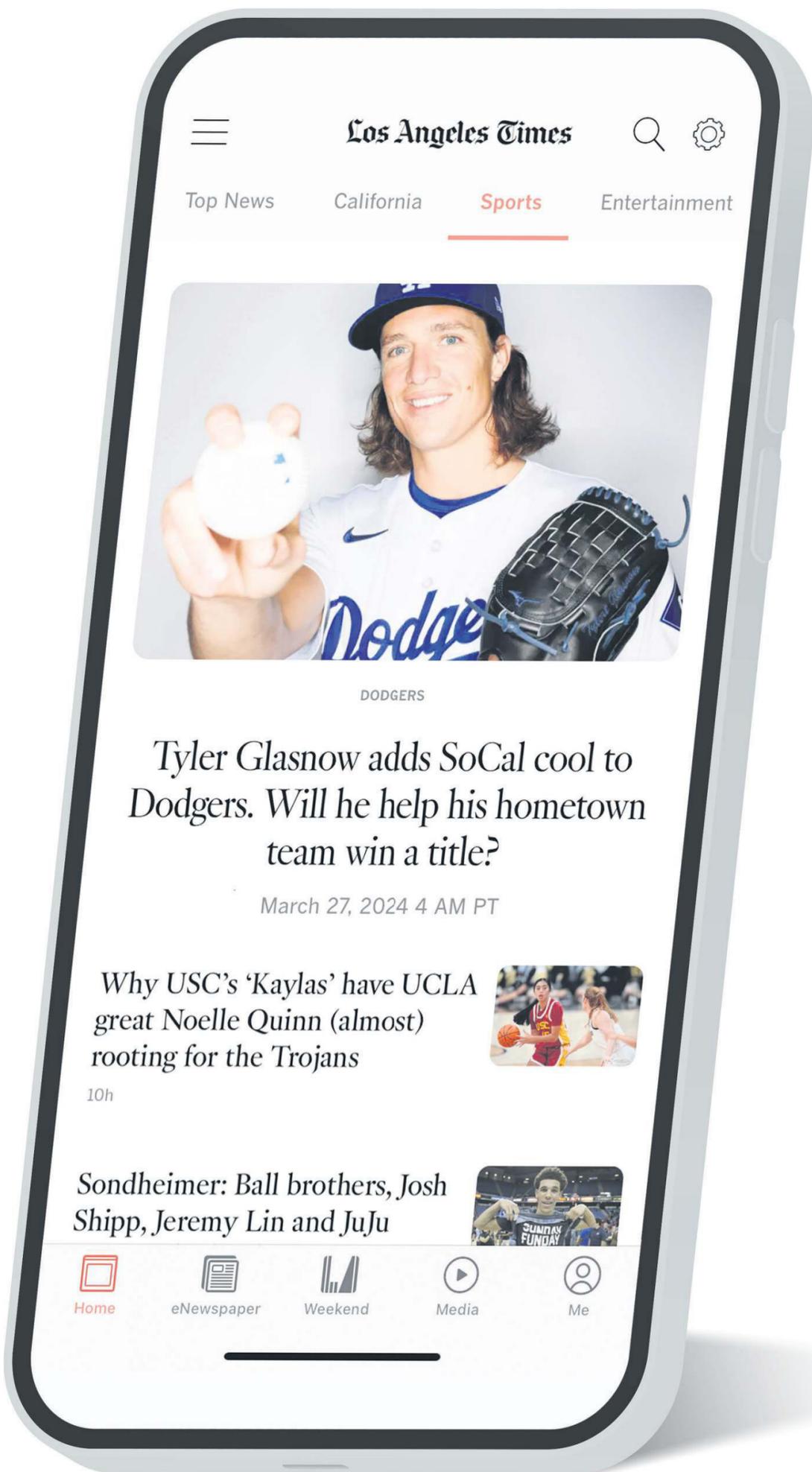


THE SPORTS REPORT

Sign up for our daily sports newsletter at latimes.com/newsletters/sports-report.

STAY CONNECTED

■ On Instagram @latimes_sports
■ On X @latimesports



Get the latest from on and off the field.

Discover more in the app.



Los Angeles Times

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/CALENDAR



ACTOR PAUL REISER, right, helped Michael McDonald write his memoir. Reiser says he tightened and shaped it, but "it's all Mike." JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

They hit it off, so they decided to write a book

After meeting at a party, singer Michael McDonald and actor Paul Reiser crafted McDonald's memoir, 'What a Fool Believes'

By MIKAEL WOOD POP MUSIC CRITIC

Michael McDonald and Paul Reiser — yes, the golden-piped white-soul singer, and yes, the veteran sitcom star and comedian — were at Reiser's spread in Malibu the other day when something far more important than their new joint project came up.

"Forgive me, but I need to take a quick timeout," Reiser said, calling up a menu on his phone. "Half of every writers' room is: What are we doing for lunch?"

The two had earned the interruption: McDonald, 72, and Reiser, 68, teamed up to write McDonald's memoir, "What a Fool Believes," after they met at a party a few years ago and went back to Reiser's to jam on side-by-side pianos. The book is titled after McDonald's chart-topping 1978 hit with the Doobie Brothers; it covers his childhood in St. Louis and his eventual move to Los Angeles,

his stints in Steely Dan and the Doobies, his eventual solo career and his struggles with drugs and booze. Reiser, whose previous books include "Couplehood" and "Babyhood," said he volunteered for the job because he'd always been a fan but didn't understand the arc of McDonald's career.

"This way I could just ask him," he added with a laugh.

On Wednesday night the two will appear together in a conversation at the El Rey Theatre. McDonald then will spend the summer on the road with the Doobie Brothers, including a June 23 stop at Inglewood's Kia Forum. These days the singer lives with his wife, singer Amy Holland, in Santa Barbara — where, speaking of lunch, his all-time favorite Mexican restaurant recently shuttered.

"The old couple who ran it," McDonald was sad to report, "they literally died in the place." [See **Memoir**, E2]

'Fantasmic!' wowing again at Disneyland

The reimagined show debuts with new pyro, laser and water effects but minus the dragon.

TODD MARTENS GAME CRITIC

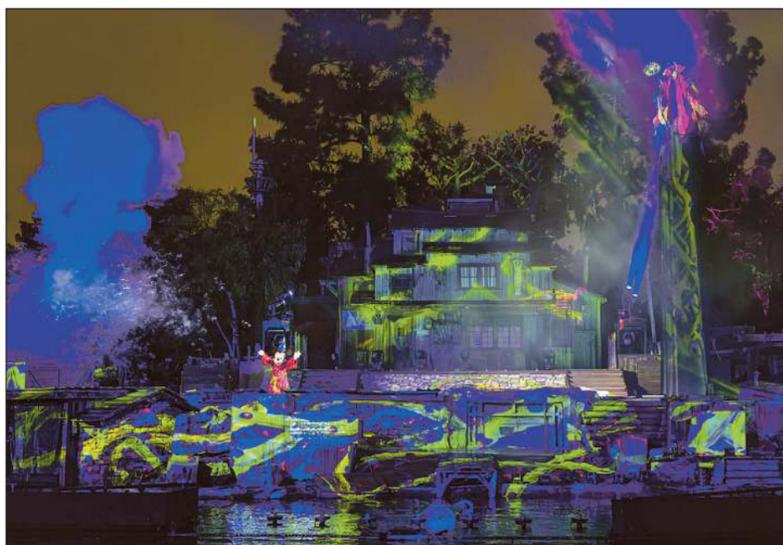
For more than three decades, Disneyland's nighttime show "Fantasmic!" has lighted up the Anaheim park's Rivers of America. A story about our dreams and nightmares centered heavily on Disney's animated works, "Fantasmic!" has long boasted an assortment of projections, pyrotechnics and fireworks.

In 2023, however, a key portion of the show caught fire. A climactic battle between Mickey Mouse and Maleficent in her 45-foot, fire-breathing dragon form

brought the show to a halt when the latter became engulfed in flames. Viral video propelled the story to national news, and "Fantasmic!" was placed on an indefinite hiatus while Disney's live entertainment team reimagined the show.

And now, it's back. The new "Fantasmic!" features a few key changes, including the return of an extended segment focused on "Peter Pan." It also doesn't have a dragon.

Yet the apex of "Fantasmic!" still revolves around a battle between Mickey and Maleficent, who in images is seen towering over the star of the show, her figure conjuring an array of lighting, projection and pyrotechnic effects. Maleficent, with scepter in hand, ascends to a height of 35 feet. Firework effects appear to shoot from [See **'Fantasmic!'**, E6]



MICKEY MOUSE and Maleficent do battle in the revamped "Fantasmic!" The show was reimagined after Maleficent in her dragon form caught fire in 2023. RICHARD HARBAUGH

Aparicio finds the beauty in the ruins

An aura of disaster, death and decay is omnipresent in the artist's solo exhibition.

CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT ART CRITIC

Some of Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio's sculptures are suspended from the ceiling or are hanging flat against gallery walls, the scruffy thinness of their sheets of rubber or latex material yielding an impression of flayed carcasses or maybe burial shrouds. Others, fabricated from translucent amber resin that has hardened to a glossy sheen, are low and horizontal, oozing and puddling across the floor like pools of blood or toxic spills.

An aura of disaster, death and decay is omnipresent in the artist's solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art's Geffen warehouse in Little Tokyo. But so, surprisingly, is a quality of determined endurance — and even elegance. Aparicio finds beauty amid the ruin. His art engages serious social and political experience, but it succeeds by its refusal to be monolithic.

The show, organized by MOCA's Anna Katz and Anastasia Kahn, is the first in the revival of the museum's dormant "Focus" series of emerging artists. (Aparicio was born in 1990 in Los Angeles, where he still works.) Modest in size, it includes fewer than a dozen works [See **Aparicio**, E6]



Latino International Film Festival SOCIAL media antics drive "The Unexpected." DE LOS

DE LOS

Putting her in her place: In front

L.A. Latino International Film Festival pays tribute to women filmmakers.

By ANGIE ORELLANA HERNANDEZ

The Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival kicks off Wednesday, featuring five days of programming that will pay tribute to women filmmakers and below-the-line talent.

New ventures this year include a film market — a curated set of movies that are available for distribution — and a venue expansion into downtown's Regal L.A. Live to accompany programming at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

Erika Sabel Flores, vice president of programs and innovation at the Latino Film Institute, the nonprofit organization that presents [See **Festival**, E3]

Big Bird, Elmo learn to adapt

Creators of "Sesame Street" hope to help children learn to live in a world with a changing climate. **E3**

Comics **E4-5**
Puzzles **E5**

Going deep on music, regrets and aging

[Memoir, from E1]

Are you guys afraid of dying?

Paul Reiser: Only on-stage. I've had some tough crowds.

Michael McDonald: I don't know that I'm afraid of it. I let myself think about it once in a while.

Reiser: You're not really gonna lead with this.

Hey, Mike brought up the subject.

Reiser: I'm gonna jump in front of you here.

All right, all right. The jam session that sparked this book — what were you guys playing?

McDonald: We were sitting at a couple pianos, like Ferrante & Teicher, playing Beatles songs, kind of analyzing our favorite bridges, which were so great, especially in that period of time we both love.

Reiser: Pre-“Rubber Soul.” We played some Motown too. I tried to slip in a couple of Michael McDonald songs: “While I have you here, is that an A-flat you're playing there?”

Just two famous guys talking about chords.

Reiser: When you're drawn to something, your brain goes there. I can't help it — I'm watching a movie and I'm going, “How did they shoot that?” With the Beatles, it really is staggering — just this perfect 2-minute-and-39-second piece of work. I watched “Get Back,” and it was thrilling to get to see these songs as they're forming.

McDonald: It kind of gives you hope as a writer because you realize there were moments when they had no f—ing idea how this was gonna work out.

The book grew out of a series of Zoom conversations between the two of you, right?

Reiser: That's all it was. This was four years ago, March 2020, and I was asking Mike to explain to me this or that. I jokingly said, “You should write a book,” and he said, “Well, I've thought about it, but I don't know how to do that.” I said, “I've written a couple — plus, we've got nothing else to do.” That was really a factor — that it'd be good during the pandemic to have something to wake up and do. So we both learned Zoom that week, and for about a month and a half, we'd just talk three or four days a week.

McDonald: My biggest fear was: How much of a story is this? I mean, nobody dies, nobody goes to prison.

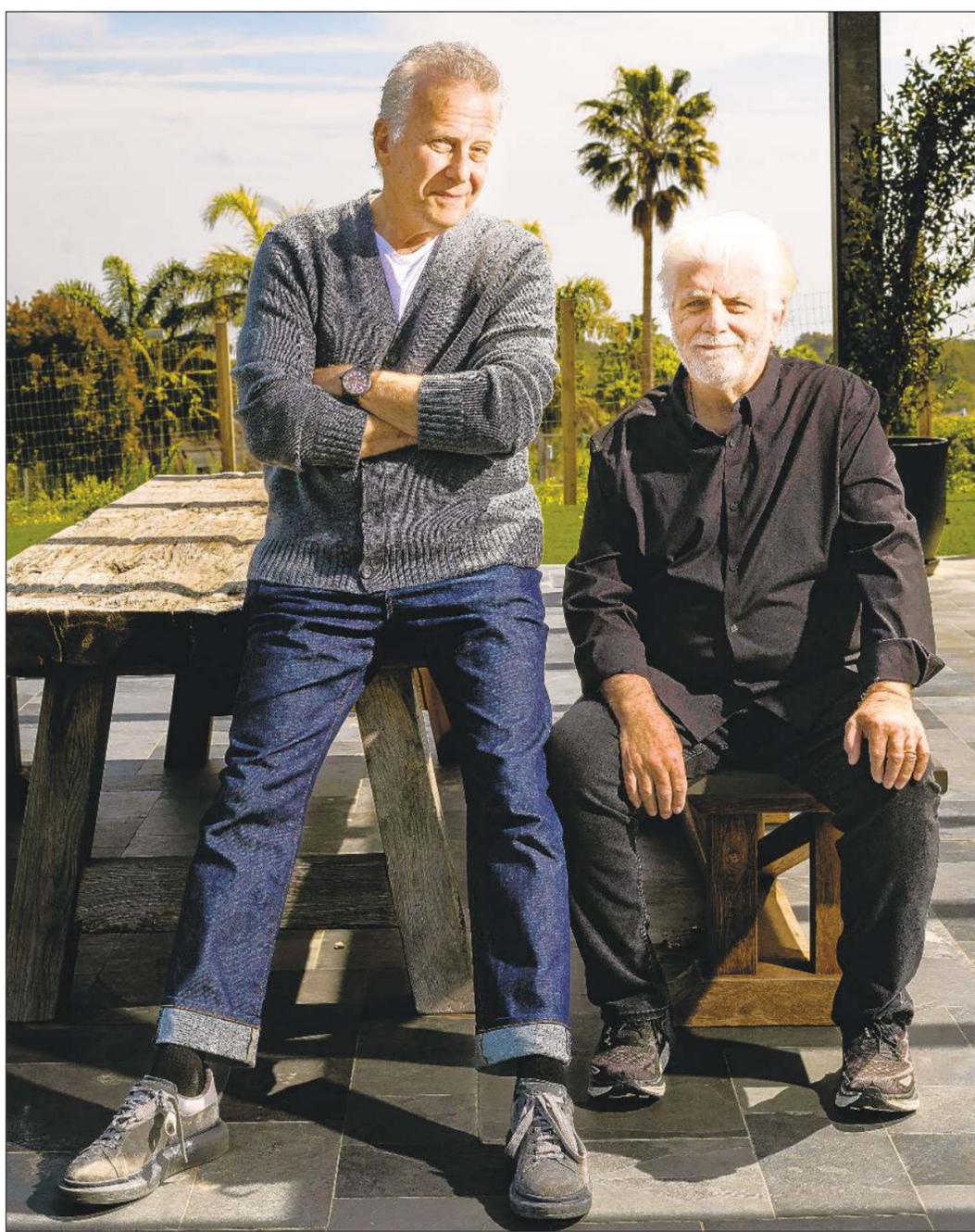
The book does open with you in the drunk tank in Van Nuys.

McDonald: There weren't many guys in that cell who showed up because they fell asleep in a booth at Du-par's.

How would you rate your recall of long-ago events?

McDonald: Well, I thought if I wait another five years, I'm not gonna remember half this stuff. Lot of things I didn't remember correctly — dates and places and times.

Reiser: He's talking and I'm Googling: “Uh, Mike, that record came out four years earlier.”



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

PAUL REISER, left, and Michael McDonald at Reiser's house in Malibu. They collaborated over Zoom.

The book has some nice writerly moments. There's a part where you're talking about the Doobie Brothers' Grammy wins for “What a Fool Believes,” and you say that after the ceremony you couldn't bear to face “the ominous quiet of my house in the hills.” Who wrote that?

Reiser: It's all Mike. I put the conversations in a rough sequence and then he'd take it and write it so it didn't just sound like chitchat. Sometimes he'd write it so well I'd be like, “We can't have 47 essays.” So we'd tighten it.

McDonald: Paul was great at saying, “Here's the story. All this other stuff, you're kind of wasting the reader's time.”

That's the challenge, though, right? As a reader, I want the story but I also want the texture.

McDonald: That line you mentioned — that was a true thing for me. Going home that night was ominous because I didn't like being alone at that point in my life. My demons were such that I usually found something to occupy myself with. I'd go out to clubs by myself just to get out of my own house.

Reiser: Now your goal is not to go out of your house.

McDonald: That's exactly right.

“What a Fool Believes” was probably inevitable as the book's title.

Reiser: I had to twist his arm a little bit.

McDonald: It just seemed too obvious to me. I wanted it to be something more offbeat — like, “Shut the F— Up, Teresa.”

Reiser: My sense was that you didn't want to hang your whole life on a song title, which I understood. But there's so many books out there. You want somebody to go, “Oh, that's about Michael McDonald — I got to read that.”

McDonald: Now it seems like the perfect title.

Reiser: My next one's gonna be “Does This Look Infected?”

You write in the book about how you'd hoped to make your second solo album with Quincy Jones, but it didn't work out: You had to move faster than he was able to, which you let a record exec tell him instead of doing it yourself. I was struck by how little resentment you seem to harbor about that.

McDonald: I think that's the truest form of that story. Those were some big revelations for me — that even with people I was righteously indignant about, in almost every case, they did more for me than they ever did to me. With Quincy, I'm

nothing but grateful. Whatever happened that stood in the way of us doing a project, that was my fault. But people I did have issues with, when I look back on it, I realize those are the key people but for whom I'd probably still be in Missouri.

Is seeing things that way a function of age? I realize you wouldn't have written this book 30 years ago, but if you had, would you have had a different attitude?

McDonald: I'd probably still be stewing over those things. Not that I still don't: You learn to forgive and you learn to realize your part in things — then, not an hour later, you're at a stoplight going, “That son of a bitch...” Are any of us truly capable of total forgiveness? But to get to a point with all that is important, I think, to your own serenity. Otherwise you just keep drinking the poison hoping the other guy's gonna die.

Reiser: Mike takes responsibility almost to a fault. I'd never spent this much time with a guy who's so evolved. I went, “Oh, I'm really a piece of crap.”

McDonald: But the point is, those conclusions, I didn't come to them easily. I came to them the hard way.

Reiser: Unlike Mike, I enjoy holding onto my resentments: *You know, in 1994, I should have said to that son of a bitch...*

You ever encourage Mike to talk a little trash?

Reiser: I'm not a fan of gossip. I don't like it about other people, and I certainly don't want anything being said about me that I wouldn't want shared.

McDonald: Whenever I read one of those books, as much as I might enjoy it, I'm always left with that —

Reiser: You feel dirty.

McDonald: That, and the feeling that it's just this person's version of it. I wonder what the other guy would say, and so you're left kind of unsatisfied.

See, I love it when someone's reached a point in their life and career where they're lighting people up.

McDonald: “F— it, I'm going in.”

Reiser: I did think Stevie Van Zandt's book was great, and he's just totally ripping people he felt like ripping.

While we're on the subject of Quincy: Why were you not on “We Are the World”?

McDonald: You're not the first person to ask me that recently.

Reiser: Dan Aykroyd

took his spot.

Given your success at the time, it's a conspicuous omission.

McDonald: I'm sure there are other people who weren't on it. I mean, it was only a cast of thousands.

Reiser: The important thing is that you've made Mike feel bad about something from 40 years ago.

McDonald: If I said I didn't give it a lot of thought, I'd be lying. There were other things I *was* on, like a Donna Summer session Quincy asked me to do. It was Bruce Springsteen and Stevie Wonder — I have a picture of this — and I'm standing over there looking like I was delivering sandwiches.

The unmade Quincy album made me wonder if writing this book made you mull over other missed opportunities.

McDonald: Oh yeah. And I always considered that a missed opportunity — I always regretted it. For such a fortunate person, I could f— up a good thing in a heartbeat. My M.O. was letting other people handle what I should have handled myself and then being pissed off at them. That was something I did far too many times in my life.

I enjoyed learning that the hair dye you used in the '80s was called Chocolate Kiss.

McDonald: High-end stuff.

Reiser: I went with Don Ameche 7.

McDonald: That's what I love about these rock 'n' roll events with guys my age: You're in line going in and that shoe-polish smell hits you from the guy in front of you. No one born to this world ever had eyebrows that black.

What gave you the gump-tion to stop dying your hair?

McDonald: I got tired of it real quick. I think in the back of my mind I had the idea that maybe it would get me out of having to make the next music video — because if I refused to do it, they weren't gonna want me to be seen with white hair.

Of course, your white hair then became your visual trademark.

McDonald: I guess. For me, the ordeal of leaning over a sink with a towel around my neck while my wife is yelling at me — that was torturous. I said, “I can't do this anymore or we'll get divorced.” So I went

to my hair cutter and had him do it, with the tinfoil and everything. That was even worse.

Did going back over your career make you think about why people have connected with you as a singer?

McDonald: I don't know that I'd ever have the courage to really analyze that because I may not like the answer. Or I may find out I am the imposter I think I am. It's kind of like staring at yourself in the mirror too long — you start to scare yourself a little bit.

Reiser: That's one of the things that I found challenging to put into words. You say “Michael McDonald” to anybody, they go, “Oh my God, that voice!” But you can't ask the guy, “What's going on in your esophagus?” I realized it's like asking George Clooney how he got so handsome.

McDonald: As someone who came into a band that was known for a certain vocal sound — Tom Johnston and Pat Simmons [of the Doobie Brothers] — I was met with as much skepticism as I was someone going, “I love your voice.” For every one of those, there was somebody who said I ruined the Doobie Brothers. “You sound like you have marbles in your mouth,” which is true.

You've been embraced in particular by some of the greats of R&B and soul music, some of whom cut duets with you: Aretha Franklin, Patti LaBelle, James Ingram.

McDonald: That's been one of the most gratifying things I've experienced. When I heard Ray Charles for the first time I understood what soul music was. I'd heard other artists and loved them: Nat Cole and Louis Armstrong and Etta James. But it was something that was so explicit about how he approached it. Right away, you went, this guy never sings any song the same way twice — it's a total improvisation of feeling in the moment. And that just blew my head wide open.

White singers operating in a traditionally Black cultural space can be viewed as interlopers or appropriators. That doesn't really seem to have happened with you.

McDonald: I think a lot of that comes from the fact that when we grew up listening to music, it was very regional. Growing up in St. Louis, pretty much all the music we listened to was R&B from 10 or 15 years before us because it was passed down by the older guys. If you were in a band, you were gonna work up this Bobby Bland song that was out maybe before I was born. So I had a personal relationship with all that music because in that region, that's what we listened to — just like Stax/Volt was a natural evolution of growing up in Memphis or like beach music in the Carolinas. Most people don't even know what beach music is, but it was a day-to-day cultural experience for people who grew up on the southern East Coast.

When it came to writing about your family members in the book, did you feel like you needed to ask their permission?

McDonald: I did in my wife's case because her journey in sobriety is not something I would normally ever talk about. You just don't do that. But it was such a significant part of the story that I felt compelled to write about how it affected us as a couple. To this day, I think she's one of the main reasons I'm sober — not because I did it for her but because she really pointed the way for me by her own example.

I was moved by your account of deciding to homeschool your son after his struggles in regular school. That wasn't something I expected to encounter in a rock 'n' roll memoir.

McDonald: I think parents should communicate across these perceived lines of the things we don't want other people to know are going on in our house. I found great comfort in that with my son. He wasn't easy, but he wasn't terrible, you know? And I learned that by talking to other parents. All these things I was staying awake all night worrying about, I realized I'm not alone.

LAEMMLE™ Info Line 310.478.3836		NOT AFRAID OF SUBTITLES www.LAEMMLE.com	
ROYAL 11243 Santa Monica Blvd. West L.A. TAKING VENICE 1:20 4:20 7:20 EVIL DOES NOT EXIST 1:10 7:10 WICKED LITTLE LETTERS [R] 4:10 PM LA CHIMERA 1:00 7:00 STAY WITH US 4:30 PM	TOWN CENTER 17200 Ventura Blvd. Encino INVISIBLE NATION 1:00 3:10 5:15 7:30 THE COMMANDANT'S SHADOW [R] 4:00 PM BACK TO BLACK [R] 1:10 4:10 7:10 IF [PG] 1:20 4:20 7:00 TAKING VENICE 1:30 4:30 7:20 THE FALL GUY [PG-13] 1:00 7:00	GLENDALE 207 N. Maryland Ave Glendale FURIOSA: A MAD MAX SAGA [R] SAGA [R] 1:00 4:00 7:00 HIT MAN [R] 1:20 4:20 7:20 BABES [R] 1:20 4:20 7:20 BACK TO BLACK [R] 1:00 4:10 7:10 ISAW THE TV GLOW [PG-13] 4:30 PM LA CHIMERA 1:10 7:10	NoHo 7 5240 Lankershim Blvd. No. Hollywood FURIOSA: A MAD MAX SAGA [R] 1:00 4:00 7:00 BABES [R] 1:10 4:20 7:30 BACK TO BLACK [R] 1:00 4:00 7:00 ISAW THE TV GLOW [PG-13] 1:20 4:30 7:20 IF [PG] 1:30 4:20 7:20 EVIL DOES NOT EXIST 1:20 4:10 THE FALL GUY [PG-13] 1:10 4:10 7:10 CLAREMONT 450 W. 2nd Street Claremont THE COMMANDANT'S SHADOW [R] 4:00 PM FURIOSA: A MAD MAX SAGA [R] 1:00 4:00 7:00 THE GARFIELD MOVIE [PG] 1:20 4:20 7:20 BABES [R] 1:30 4:30 7:30 BACK TO BLACK [R] 1:00 7:00 IF [PG] 1:10 3:55 7:10
MONICA 1332 Second Street Santa Monica FURIOSA: A MAD MAX SAGA [R] 1:00 4:00 7:10 HIT MAN [R] 1:20 4:20 7:20 BABES [R] 1:30 4:30 7:30 BACK TO BLACK [R] 1:10 4:10 7:10 IF [PG] 1:10 4:10 7:20 THE FALL GUY [PG-13] 1:00 4:00 7:00	NEWHALL 22500 Lyons Ave. Santa Clarita FURIOSA: A MAD MAX SAGA [R] 1:00 4:00 7:00 SIGHT [PG-13] 1:30 4:30 7:30 THE GARFIELD MOVIE [PG] 1:20 4:20 7:30 BACK TO BLACK [R] 1:20 4:10 7:20 IF [PG] 1:10 4:20 7:10 KINGDOM OF THE PLANET OF THE APES [PG-13] 1:00 3:50 7:00 THE FALL GUY [PG-13] 1:10 4:00 7:10		

BARGAIN IN () [CC] CLOSED CAPTION [NS] NON-STANDARD PRICING FOR 5/29/2024 ONLY

BOILING POINT**‘Sesame Street’ aims to prepare kids for disasters**

Creators of the program want to teach children to live in a fast-changing world.

BY SAMMY ROTH

Twenty-three years ago, “Sesame Street” aired a remarkable series of episodes in which the beloved puppets and their human neighbors recover from a hurricane. One focus is Big Bird’s struggle to come to terms with the destruction of his nest.

“I’m angry at that hurricane for wrecking my home,” he says. “I feel sad.”

PBS re-aired versions of the episodes after Hurricane Charley struck Florida in 2004, and after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans a year later, and again after Hurricane Sandy slammed the Northeast. One rerun began with “Sesame Street” resident Gordon Robinson (Roscoe Orman) offering guidance to parents and other caregivers.

“Every year, there are a number of natural disasters that affect many people. Even if you are not directly affected, the television coverage of these events can be scary, especially to young children,” he said. “So watch with your child and talk about any fears or concerns he or she might have.”

From there, the show launched into its hopeful, happy-go-lucky theme song: “Sunny day Sweepin’ the clouds away

On my way to where the air is sweet

Can you tell me how to get How to get to Sesame Street?”

Discordant? Maybe a little.

But also poignant — and hopefully a sign of powerful stories to come, as Big Bird



MATT SAYLES Associated Press

BIG BIRD and other “Sesame Street” characters can help children adapt to a world with changing climate.

and friends tackle the climate crisis.

Sesame Workshop — the nonprofit that’s produced the show for 55 years — said this month it would partner with global charity Save the Children to “foster young children’s climate resilience.” Basically, the organizations intend to work together to tell stories — starring Elmo, Cookie Monster, Grover and company — that help kids and their families prepare for the increasingly extreme storms, floods, droughts and other weather extremes already being worsened by coal, oil and gas pollution.

Sherrie Westin, president of Sesame Workshop, said one goal is emotional well-being — helping kids learn to cope with an issue they’ll deal with their whole lives, even if we quickly phase out fossil fuels and avoid far more dangerous consequences.

“We know how important it is to reach children in those critical early years. It’s when their brain is developing faster than at any other time,” Westin said at the Milken Institute Global Conference in Beverly Hills.

“We’re talking about giving them tools at an early age,

helping them develop problem-solving, give them a sense of agency, so that they can feel empowered to take care of themselves, their communities.”

“Sesame Street” has always been part entertainment, part education, with lessons running the gamut, from the alphabet to racial tolerance — typically backed up by rigorous research. The show hasn’t shied away from environmental stories.

But although the venture into climate programming is new, it’s hardly out of step with the rest of the entertainment industry.

Last month, the Walt Disney Co. promised to replace the gas-guzzling vehicles at Disneyland’s Autopia ride with electric cars. A year earlier, NBCUniversal launched its GreenLight Program, with a goal of incorporating sustainability themes in its films.

Our world is changing fast. It makes sense that the “Sesame” creators want to help children learn to live in that world.

What might that look like in practice?

Although details are still being worked out, Save the Children’s president, Janti Soeripto, told me some of

the programming will be extremely direct. For instance, her group and Sesame Workshop hope to teach kids in developing countries — in refugee camps, for instance — where to go when a hurricane or a flood hits, and how to keep their families safe.

They’ll make sure kids know about climate solutions, too.

One example: “for children in Sierra Leone [to learn] that the mangrove forest plays a really important role in carbon capture, for the world ... and what they can do to help preserve it, without making their community lose their livelihoods,” Soeripto said.

Introducing kids to climate solutions will, hopefully, help them grapple with a gnawing sense of despair.

“Climate anxiety is real,” Westin said.

Can a single TV show really prepare millions of children for supercharged storms, floods and fires?

There’s academic research suggesting maybe it can.

In 2019, economists Melissa Kearney and Phillip Levine co-authored a peer-reviewed study finding that preschool-age kids who had access to “Sesame Street” when it first aired in 1969 did better in school than those who didn’t — with long-lasting effects. They determined that students who lived in parts of the U.S. where they were able to see the initial broadcasts were 14% more likely to be attending the age-appropriate grade years later, in middle school and high school.

“There’s very good evidence on the immediate impact of watching the show,” said Levine, a professor at Wellesley College.

Marie-Louise Mares, a professor of communication arts at University of Wisconsin-Madison, reached a similar conclusion.

In 2013, she and her colleague Zhongdang Pan conducted a peer-reviewed analysis of two dozen existing studies exploring how “Sesame Street” had affected the education of more than 10,000 children around the world. Their analysis was commissioned by Sesame Workshop, as were some of the studies they examined. But the nonprofit stayed out of the research, Mares said.

On the whole, the show had many positive effects, including better literacy, numeracy and health and safety knowledge.

As for climate change, “it definitely makes sense to me that ‘Sesame Street’ could be effective,” Mares said.

For that to happen, though, Sesame Workshop and Save the Children will need money.

They’re trying to raise \$500,000 to launch a pilot in Bangladesh, where Sesame Workshop has co-produced the show “Sisimpur” for nearly two decades, and where extreme temperatures have recently kept tens of millions of kids home from school.

The nonprofits will try to share “Sesame Street” stories with families that don’t have TV sets — maybe by following a model that Sesame Workshop utilized during the Syrian refugee crisis, which involved trained facilitators delivering Arabic-language “Ahlam Simsim” programming to schoolkids through WhatsApp group calls. New York University researchers determined the WhatsApp calls were beneficial for language, numeracy and social-emotional development skills.

Eventually, Sesame Workshop and Save the Children hope to raise \$5 million to expand the initiative to the U.S. and elsewhere.

“We also have a lot of data that shows that even though

you’re creating content that’s essentially for a child, it becomes a catalyst for adult behavior change,” Westin said. “It’s one of the very few children’s properties that also appeals to adults.”

I don’t have strong recollections of watching “Sesame Street” as a toddler, but my mom tells me that I absolutely adored Elmo — “Emmo” was one of my first words — and that I must have learned a lot. She said I was walking around a social hall a few months after my first birthday when I spotted a trash can and blurted out, “Ocka!” — a reference to Oscar the Grouch.

Revisiting the show today, I have no trouble imagining how it could be put to use for climate purposes.

The hurricane arc doesn’t mention climate explicitly. But it does feature key elements the show will need to confront this difficult topic — a character coping with climate anxiety (Big Bird) and a resilience of spirit that leaves viewers feeling hopeful.

As Gordon counsels his grief-stricken friend, “You’re right, Big Bird, it’s not all right. But it will be all right.”

The storyline concludes with the “Sesame Street” crew helping Big Bird rebuild his nest. Everything is OK. A happy ending.

With global warming, the conclusions won’t be so simple. I wonder how the show will navigate that treacherous terrain.

However it works out, I’m glad Elmo and Oscar are going to try.

This column is the latest edition of Boiling Point, an email newsletter about climate change and the environment in California and the American West. For more climate and environment news, follow @Sammy_Roth on X.

Women filmmakers are front and center at festival

[Festival, from E1] LALIFF, said a continual goal for the festival is to represent all the contours of what it means to be Latinx.

“You can come to our festival and see yourself no matter who you are,” she said.

This year’s opener is “In the Summers,” a semi-autobiographical drama directed by Alessandra Lacerazza Samudio — her feature debut — that was awarded the Grand Jury Prize in the U.S. dramatic competition at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival. The movie follows two sisters throughout various stages of their lives as they navigate summer trips to visit their father in Las Cruces, N.M. The film also marks the feature acting debut of rap musician René Pérez Joglar, better known as Residente.

LALIFF also will host screenings of documentaries “Prodigal Daughter” and “Paper Butterfly,” comedy “Sisters” and popcorn flick “The Unexpected.”

The closing film, “Grassland,” is a tense drama that follows a single Latina

mother at risk of losing her illegal marijuana business when her son befriends new neighbors. It explores the “failures of the criminal justice system.”

The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.

What was the vision for this year’s programming at the festival? What feelings did you want your viewers to come away with?

Erika Sabel Flores: One of the things that was important for us was to really put women at the front. There are just a lot of women that we have been working with through all of our different programs to empower. The other thing that we try to do is highlight the whole breadth of the Latino experience. We understand that better than anyone — that being Latino doesn’t mean that we all have the same thing to say or that we have the same perspective.

A good portion of the feature films — and also the short films — contain representations of the LGBTQ+ community and

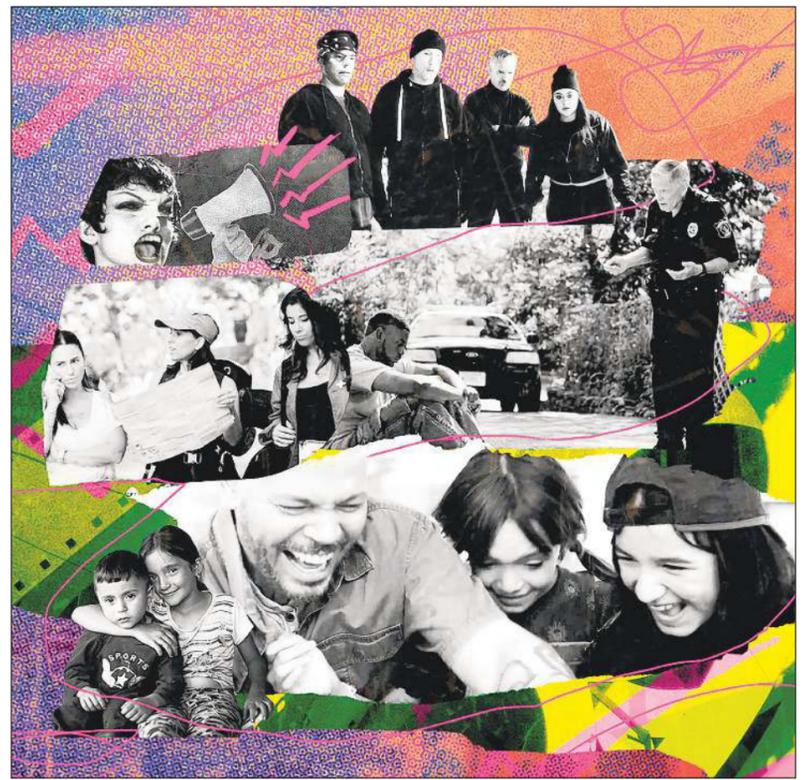
many are also directed by women. How did you want the festival to continue shining a light on communities and filmmakers who aren’t as often represented in the media?

It’s a huge part of what we do. Approximately 50% are female-directed films. We also have Afro Latino-directed stories, we have Indigenous stories and LGBTQ+ representation. It’s really a commitment, and it’s not just one type of story.

If you go to a festival that is not Latino-focused, it’s likely that the type of programming you’ll see is very specific because, to them, that’s what is Latino, right? And for us, it’s really never thinking that way. Everything is Latino. We’ve had stories where somebody could say, “That’s not really a Latino film,” and it’s like, if a Latino made it, it is a Latino film.

Something that’s also new this year is the film market. How did that come to be, and why is it so important to get these films sold?

We’ve been thinking



ELANA MARIE For De Los; Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival

about this forever. So that’s why I’m so excited because we finally were able to make it happen. As an organization, we have the ability to advocate and highlight work and make those arguments that I’m telling you

right now: It doesn’t have to necessarily be only a border crossing story. We have the opportunity to use our platform to highlight work that we think is important, different and interesting.

We have a curated cata-

log of films that we determined are commercially viable. And we’re going to present them to sales agents and potential acquisition and distribution people. The end [goal] is distribution, right? So that is why we wanted to add that piece to really complete the work we’re doing over here.

When he needed an assist, he looked to Grateful Dead

Bill Walton, a noted Deadhead, said the group helped shape his approach to life.

BY TRACY BROWN

Bill Walton was a proud Deadhead.

The basketball great, who died Monday at age 71 after a prolonged cancer battle, was famously a huge fan of the Grateful Dead (and a tie-dye aficionado).

A fixture at the band’s shows — he was hard to miss at nearly 7 feet — Walton reportedly had attended more than 850 shows since 1967, including when the Dead played in front of the Great Pyramids in Egypt in 1978. As a broadcaster for ESPN, Walton often inserted references to the band in his color commentary during games.

“I became the basketball player that I was because of



ROCKY WIDNER NBAE via Getty Images

BILL WALTON, left, and the Dead’s Mickey Hart entertain fans before Sacramento Kings game in 2011.

the Grateful Dead,” Walton said in a 2016 interview with Salon. “I am the human being that I am today because of the Grateful Dead. They’re right there at the top of my teachers. Their inspiration moved me brightly.”

More than just a fan, the UCLA basketball legend — who helped lead the team to

back-to-back NCAA championships (and undefeated seasons) during coach John Wooden’s tenure in the 1970s — developed a friendship with the Grateful Dead over the years.

Members often stayed at Walton’s house when they were in San Diego, and the Hall of Famer attended band member Jerry Garcia’s

private funeral in 1995.

Not only that, but his home also resembled a Grateful Dead museum, with photos and memorabilia lining the walls. Walton even peppered his 2016 memoir, “Back From the Dead,” with his love of (and lyrics from) the band.

Among the anecdotes that Walton shared was how he got his Boston Celtics teammates into a Dead show in 1985. (Walton, who was drafted first overall by the Portland Trail Blazers in 1974, had been traded by the Clippers to the Celtics in 1985.) His teammates had never seen the band perform and gathered at Larry Bird’s house before the concert.

“I had to explain to everybody in the Grateful Dead that ... the Celtics were just icons and they couldn’t really go out in public because they were so popular,” Walton recounted in a video previously shared on X, formerly Twitter. “They said,

‘We’ll take care of this, Bill.’ So they built this special little enclave right on the side of the stage where, unless you were on the stage, you couldn’t look into this little area. It was all curtained off. It was the perfect little place to watch the concert.”

After news of his death, fellow Deadheads posted tributes to Walton on social media, remembering him for his kind spirit and big smile.

In a TV interview, Walton discussed how the Grateful Dead helped shape his approach to life.

“I don’t look back,” he said. “Over the course of my basketball career, I’ve had many many setbacks and many pitfalls that I’ve stumbled into.”

“Something that I’ve learned and I’ve received a lot of encouragement and help from my friends, particularly in the Grateful Dead, [is] don’t look back. Just keep going and something good will happen.”

What conversations have you had with the filmmakers who are going to premiere their projects at the festival?

That’s one of the really fulfilling parts of the job. We really can discover voices and put forward people who could have been falling through the cracks or may not have had an opportunity before.

Some people just got their first short film ever in a festival. Some people who were with us for a couple of years with shorts are now with us for their first feature. Some people who did really well at other festivals now have a chance to come be part of a specifically Latino-focused festival. So I think that part is very rewarding — having all of those conversations about what the festival means to the community.

The Los Angeles Times is a premier sponsor of the Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival.

COMICS

LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz



PICKLES By Brian Crane



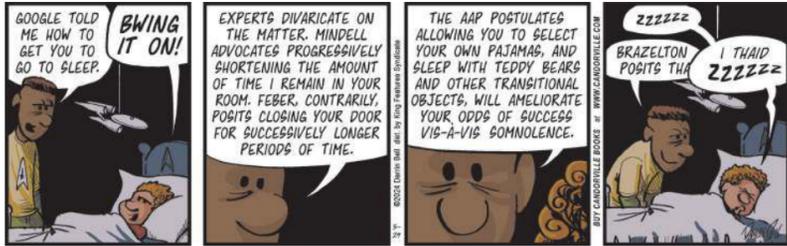
CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia



BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell



CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers



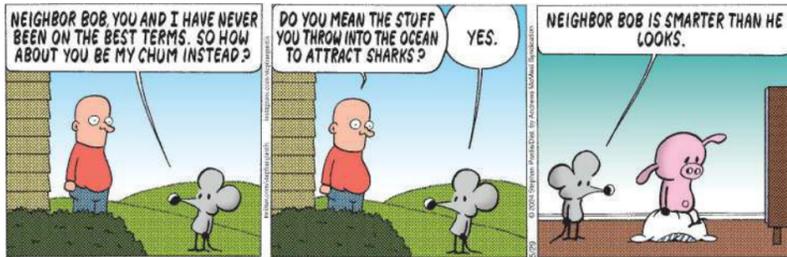
LOOSE PARTS By Dave Blazek



JUMP START By Robb Armstrong



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis



MACANUDO By Liniers



LIO By Mark Tatulli



BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall



ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



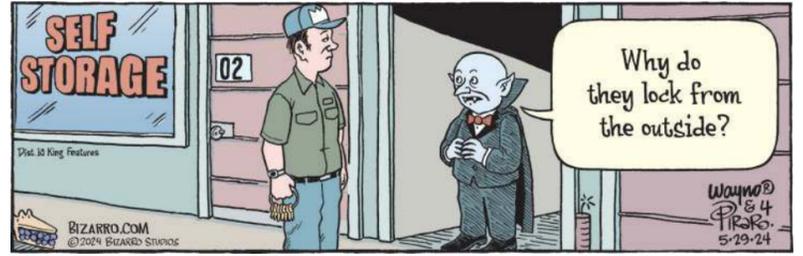
BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy



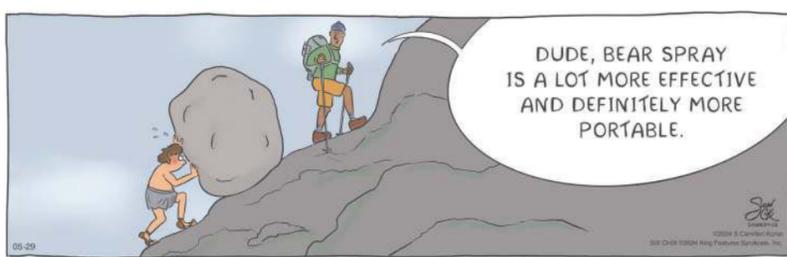
TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter



BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro



SIX CHIX By Susan Camilleri Konar



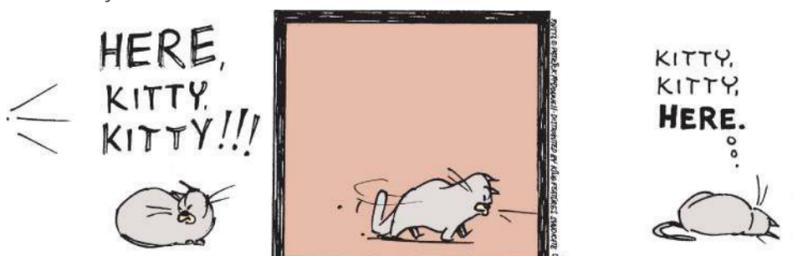
DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan



FRAZZ By Jef Mallett



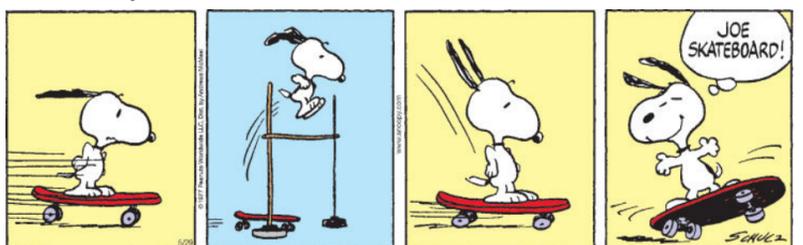
MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell



NON SEQUITUR By Wiley



PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz



COMICS

SUDOKU

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

5 2 6
1 2 4
5 6 3
3 4 5 2 8 1 6 7 9
6 1 5 7 4 9 2 3 5
2 9 7 6 3 4 8 1
11 8 4 6 3 4 7 9 2
8 5 2 4 9 7 1 6 3
9 7 3 1 2 6 8 5 4
5 8 6 9 1 2 3 4 7
7 2 9 3 6 4 5 1 8
4 3 1 5 7 8 9 2 6

©2024 The Mepham Group. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency. All rights reserved. Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 or 2-by-3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 (or 1 to 6 for the smaller grid). For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk

KENKEN

Every box will contain a number; numbers depend on the size of the grid. For a 6x6 puzzle, use Nos. 1-6. Do not repeat a number in any row or column. The numbers in each heavily outlined set of squares must combine to produce the target number found in the top left corner of the cage using the mathematical operation indicated.

EASY CHALLENGING
4+ 3 2-
3- 2-
4 24x
2- 3

5- 11+ 24x
7+ 2- 1- 6x
20x 7+ 5- 2-
2 14+ 1- 5-
6x 3-

PREVIOUS ANSWERS
2 3 4 1
4 1 2 3
3 4 1 2
1 2 3 4
6 5 3 4 2 1
5 2 6 3 1 4
3 6 4 1 5 2
4 3 1 2 6 5
2 1 5 6 4 3
1 4 2 5 3 6

HOROSCOPE

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

Aries (March 21-April 19): Historians know what happened already. Visionaries see what hasn't happened, and perhaps never will. It's better to be a learner than to be learned.
Taurus (April 20-May 20): You'll respectfully disagree without hurting anyone's pride. You'll show vulnerability when it's right.
Gemini (May 21-June 21): Being kind and wise requires more than just an open heart; it demands social skills, and you have those as well, to an enviable degree.
Cancer (June 22-July 22): Knowing someone's inner world, their pains, desires and quirks, is the cornerstone of meaningful connection.
Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): To get what you want is a thrill. To discover you want what you have is more of a steady stream of satisfaction.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): One of your many strengths now is in gathering information in an intuitive and conversational way. It's like you just know what to ask.
Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): You'll be busy making sure that what you do has enormous value to someone. If that someone is you, it counts too.
Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): New alliances are exciting because you never know what you'll be able to accomplish with a particular lineup of talents and interests. Experiment in this regard.
Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Ultimately, you'll give what others need and be paid well for the contribution. Teaching is the best way to learn.
Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Instead of wishing for a superficial improvement, you'll wish for an essential elevation that will lift everything around you.
Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb.

18): Expectation and assumption, the close cousin of expectation, will change your understanding of reality.
Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): You're serious about making progress, but you won't let that interfere with your kindness, humor or style. You put people first.
Today's birthday (May 29): There's power in vulnerability, and vulnerability in power, and you'll know this concept from many different angles in this year of leadership. You'll nurture and teach others. You'll set up systems that contribute to everyone's thriving. More highlights: bonds made in fun, a new way of eating and moving, and a fabulous trophy. Aquarius and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers: 30, 5, 14, 28 and 19.
Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

BRIDGE

BY FRANK STEWART

At the game at the Mad Hatter's, Alice grew weary of the Red Queens' bickering over who was greater. She sought relief in the company of the low spot cards.
'Those Queens don't know how lucky they are,' the Deuce of Hearts told Alice. 'We deuces rarely win a trick, and then only if our suit happens to be trumps.'
'You know,' Alice said, 'the Queen of Diamonds may be right: Losing a trick can be better than winning one. And who better to lose a trick than a deuce.'
As South, Alice leaped to six hearts, knowing she might have two unavoidable diamond losers. West, the Hatter, led the queen of diamonds: three, king, ace. The

A-K of spades offered two diamond discards — if Alice could reach dummy.
'You're about to make yourself useful,' Alice told the Deuce of Hearts kindly. She took three high trumps and next started the clubs. East refused to ruff the fourth club, but Alice led the deuce of trumps. East had to win and lead a spade to dummy. Making six.
You hold: ♠ Q 8 6 4 3 ♥ 8 7 6 4 ♦ K ♠ 10 7 5. The dealer, at your left, opens one heart. Your partner doubles, you respond ('advance') one spade and partner raises to two spades. What do you say?
Answer: Your partner has substantial extra strength. He shouldn't raise you otherwise since your response was required even with poor spades and no

West dealer N-S vulnerable
NORTH
AK109752
3
73
862
WEST
J
95
QJ109864
943
EAST
Q8643
8764
K
1075
SOUTH
None
AKQJ102
A52
AKQJ
WEST
3
All Pass
NORTH
3
Pass
EAST
Pass
SOUTH
6
Opening lead — ♦ Q
Tribune Content Agency

ASK AMY

His tale smells very fishy

Dear Readers: My final 'Ask Amy' column will run on June 30. (Readers will be able to find me through my newsletter and on amy.dickinson.com.) Until then, I'll occasionally open my files and rerun some previously published Q&As.

went to her house on a bet from this friend.
I'm trying to move forward, but I don't know if I believe my boyfriend.
Do you think he cheated? Should I put this behind me, move on and accept his explanation?
WONDERING & WORRIED

faded in places, wood facia is rotting, along with other significant cosmetic problems.
There do not seem to be any code violations.
I am not aware of the owners' financial situation, but they've been there long enough that there should be significant equity to refinance and get money for repairs — or sell and move to a less expensive home.
Other neighbors have left notes, to no avail.
Any suggestions on how to get this family to fix up their house, or even move?
FRUSTRATED NEIGHBOR

Dear Amy: I learned that my boyfriend might have cheated on me.
He told me that a friend of his saw a female (whom the friend used to date) on a dating site. The friend wanted to get revenge on this ex, so he used my boyfriend's old profile from the dating site to catfish her.
But from what I saw, it seems like my boyfriend was not the middle man but the primary person.
All the messages between the two were from my boyfriend, and the messages sounded just like him.
My boyfriend and I got into an argument, and he left the house.
While he was arguing with me, he was texting the girl, wanting to see her. He went to her house and came home acting differently.
Later I spoke with the female involved. She told me that she and my boyfriend had in fact slept together.
He has adamantly denied this, saying he only

Dear Wondering: Rome's Bocca della Verità, or 'Mouth of Truth,' is an ancient marble mask, which according to the medieval legend will bite the hand off of anybody who has told a lie.
If your guy had placed his hand inside the Mouth of Truth while spinning this tale, he would be left holding a bloody stump.
So yes, put this behind you. You also might want to put him behind you.
Dear Amy: I live in an affluent neighborhood of expensive although older homes. The vast majority of homes are well maintained and manicured. Many have had major remodels.
However, there are a couple of homes that are in serious need of a facelift!
One home in particular is a complete eyesore.
Although it is worth more than a couple million dollars, the lawn is dead, paint doesn't match and/or is

Dear Frustrated: It is so generous of you to provide such a detailed list of repairs to be made to this property! You've obviously inspected the house quite closely.
What a neighborhood! People leaving notes and developing repair punch lists and investment advice — and not one finding out who these neighbors are and asking if they need a hand.
I suggest you approach this by putting human values ahead of property values. Changing your orientation and approach should improve the neighborhood.
Email questions to Amy Dickinson at askamy@amydickinson.com.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol
By Matthew Stock

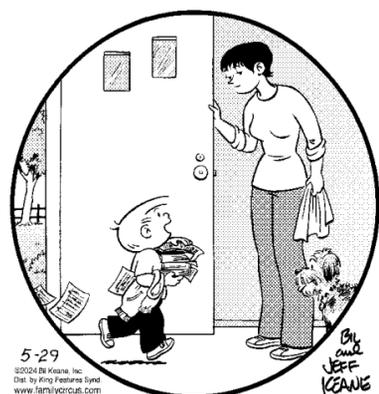
- ACROSS
1 Retail club similar to Costco
5 Coin flip call
10 Pine family tree
13 Sitting on
14 Arm joint
15 Singer and civil rights activist Horne
16 Marine animal that resembles a flower
18 Possesses
19 Open-toed shoe
20 Payable now
21 Dance Dance Revolution move
22 Term of address that elides a letter
23 Branch of mathematics focused on collections
25 Creature in Sherpa folklore
27 Virtuous one
28 Contributes
31 'Kapow!'
34 Guinness, for one
36 'You stink, ref!'
37 Chance to get together and take shots?
39 Slam Dunk Contest org.
40 Pixy Stix contents
42 Episodic drama
43 'Come on now'
44 Underneath
46 Minor in astronomy?
48 Genre for 1980s hair bands
51 Parts of plays
54 Mother of Apollo and Artemis
55 Thanksgiving, e.g.: Abbr.
56 'I'm one of them too!'
58 Lends a helping hand
59 Kittens who should be adopted together, or what can be found in this puzzle's circles
61 Catch sight of
62 _ Martin: British car
63 Norway's capital
64 Go limp
65 Naps, say
66 Simple tops

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15
16 17 18
19 20 21
22 23 24
25 26 27
28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35
36 37 38 39
40 41 42 43
44 45 46 47
48 49 50 51 52 53
54 55 56 57
58 59 60
61 62 63
64 65 66

- 4 Some self-care opportunities
5 Element of high fashion?
6 _ City: New Haven nickname
7 Place to call home
8 Breakfast-on-the-run choice
9 Candy
10 Maybe not any at all
11 Float in some water rides
12 Coarse-sounding
15 Succumb to one's emotions
17 Title
23 Farm fixtures
24 Padlock holder
26 'Candidly,' in texting
28 Muscles stretched in cobra pose
29 High-ABV hoppy beer
30 Extremely competitive
32 _ snail's pace
33 Bigwig
35 Toon devil
37 Gathering for senior partners?
38 Source of water power?
41 'So close'
43 'Bingo!'
45 Mixologist's amenity
47 Uttered
48 Pane piece
49 This and that
50 Some godmothers
52 Needle
53 Happy face
56 Binoculars part
57 God with a bow and arrow
60 Pointillism bit

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE
GOBIG ACK MALT
EDITOR POR OTOH
NOTATE OPI URGE
PLANK POSITION
ASL NANN UTAHAN
STAFF MEETING
SOYAFELL SUSAN
EVEL STENT ACRE
TERSE NOR ROMA
ELEVATOR DOOR
TISSUE RUE PRS
MASTERS DEGREE
URSA OSU HOLDIT
SOUR PEN SOMUCH
STIET ELK TOPIC

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



'That takes care of SECOND grade. How many does that leave for me to do?'

DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham

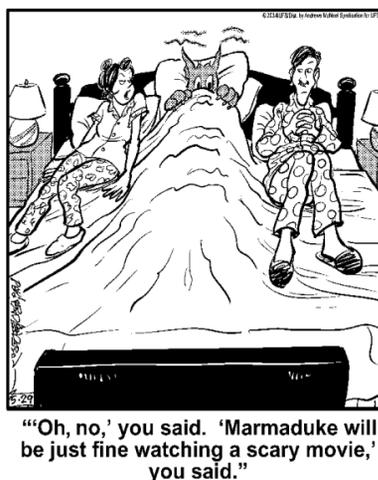


'DON'T YOU WANNA LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE?' 'THIS IS MY BEST LIFE!'

FREE RANGE By Bill Whitehead

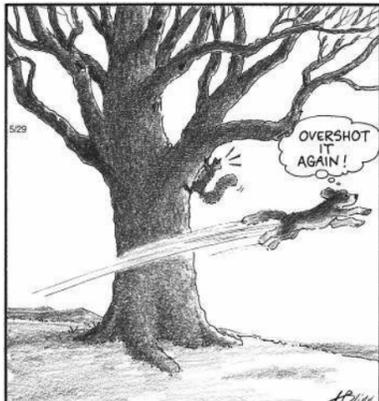


MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson



'Oh, no,' you said. 'Marmaduke will be just fine watching a scary movie,' you said.'

BLISS By Harry Bliss



SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly



The return of 'Fantasmic!'

['Fantasmic!,' from E1] Mickey's hands, and Maleficent sets the river ablaze.

"The whole theme of the show — good versus evil, and Mickey's magic and imagination overpowering the evil — it's important to have that peak in the show," says Disney Live Entertainment's Tobi Longo, who has been working on "Fantasmic!" for nearly all of its three-plus decades. It's Disney's longest-running so-called nighttime spectacular.

"Maleficent is still going to be spectacular," Longo says. "She's on the stage longer than she used to be. We've added new pyro effects, with really cool projections and lasers. The river is still going to light on fire. ... As much as we miss the dragon right now, it's still going to be a spectacular scene."

"Fantasmic!" is a key piece of Disneyland's live entertainment, which the park has been leaning heavily on this season.

With key attractions such as the Haunted Mansion down for refurbishment and the opening of the log flume ride Tiana's Bayou Adventure not expected for a few months yet, Disneyland has sought ways to turn the park into more of a theatrical experience. To wit: A new parade featuring Pixar's recent films has launched in Disney California Adventure as part of Pixar Fest.

It joins the "Magic Happens" parade in Disneyland, which features a nighttime fireworks show based on Pixar. Fireworks fans also have additional ways to take in the show, as Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge has become a prime viewing spot thanks to the addition of music and a light storyline that feeds into the lore of the land.

The return of "Fantasmic!," however, will further the impression that all of Disneyland is a stage, a place where not only guests can play at heightened ver-

sions of themselves but the park can also spring to life and envelop us in stories.

"Fantasmic!" makes use not just of the Rivers of America and its centerpiece island but also such large-scale attractions as the Mark Twain Riverboat and the Sailing Ship Columbia.

Longo, currently the show director for "Fantasmic!," says the team began workshopping the new scenes in mid-December, meaning she's been on an overnight work schedule for the last five months.

In an industry where live productions can have relatively short — or repeatedly on and off — runs, Longo was asked how "Fantasmic!" has endured.

"I think it reflects the wonderful combination of theatrical technology and classic Disney," Longo says. "We've used elements that back in 1992 nobody had ever seen — mist screens, projection on water, lasers and lighting a river on fire. All of that was so new. It's amazing to me that 30 years later, those elements are still as shocking and exciting as they were in 1992."

"It combines the charm of classic Disney, live performance and spectacular technology. And we have to remember that probably 75% of the guests at Disneyland have never seen a live entertainment show."

"I've done a lot of shows, performing at Disney as a choreographer and a director. And I've done a lot of shows on the outside. I don't think I've done anything that combines all those elements."

Of course, big universal themes don't hurt, either, and "Fantasmic!" in about 25 minutes touches on the power of imagination, romantic idealism and inner demons. Characters are presented in different guises throughout — large-scale projections give way to more serene, waltz-like moments



RICHARD HARBAUGH

PETER PAN returns to "Fantasmic!" at Disneyland, replacing scene that featured "Pirates of the Caribbean."



CHRISTIAN THOMPSON Disneyland Resort

FLOATS make their way through Disney California Adventure Park in Anaheim in the "Better Together: A Pixar Pals Celebration" parade as part of Pixar Fest.

on individual boats.

And that says nothing of nostalgia.

Take, for instance, the afternoon parade "Better Together: A Pixar Pals Celebration." Colorful floats that nod to recent films like "Luca" and "Turning Red," the latter complete with a

larger-than-life Red Panda Mei, are contrasted with smaller, more playful units that touch on "Toy Story" and "Monsters, Inc." There's an underlying theme of friendship, and show director Robin Trowbridge argues that parades — and the theme park approach to live

entertainment in general — have a unifying power.

"It's such a great channel to take people in other worlds and just let them live in fantasy for a while," Trowbridge says. "The parade itself — there is such a level of anticipation. You see a parade for 25 or 30 minutes,

and you are being taken in and out of different stories. You get to relive your youth, or you get to share your stories."

"Fantasmic!" serves a similar role, weaving in and out of the history of Walt Disney Animation, especially now that "Peter Pan" has once again returned, replacing a scene referencing "Pirates of the Caribbean." With the Lost Boys in tow, Peter and Wendy take on Captain Hook, climaxing with a swashbuckling battle.

And while the dragon may be missed, Longo offers a hint that we haven't seen the last of Maleficent in her fire-breathing form.

"We're excited for something to come back, and we're in the works and working on it," Longo says. "But I think what I've done with that scene — that good versus evil and that battle between Maleficent and Mickey — is so spectacular. We all loved the dragon, and we'll keep working on things, but there's not much I can say about it."

Theme park theatrical productions, as "Peter Pan" is evidence, are always available for tinkering.

Aparicio turns cultural history into art in Geffen Contemporary show

[Aparicio, from E1] made since 2016. Key to them are the lists of materials dutifully identified in accompanying wall labels. For example: "Cast rubber, with ficus tree surface residues on canvas; glass; twine; and wooden support." That list accompanies an unkempt, dun-colored polymer sheet, roughly 8 feet tall and 4 feet wide, edged with stitching that holds small green shards of broken glass.

Something's gone missing. Aparicio made the work by slathering a tree trunk with liquid rubber, letting it dry, then peeling it off and laying it flat. The living ficus

that gave the sculpture its form is absent.

What hangs on the wall is, in effect, a matrix or shell. The jagged glass shards sewn with twine along the edges are like those vernacular security measures sometimes taken to prevent an invader from climbing over a wall. The implication here is that what's missing may have been stolen. The theft is history.

The title "Who Do You Believe More, the Subversive or the Embassy?" (W. Washington Blvd. and Hoover St., Los Angeles, CA) features a parenthetical aside that might help ex-

plain. A major street intersection in Pico Union, where the ficus was cast, suggests a location for implicit theft. It identifies the heart of the city's Salvadoran community.

Like West Africa, El Salvador is a past source country for the production of rubber, essential to an industrializing Europe's historic colonizing abroad. *Ficus benjamina*, which lines nearby thoroughfares, is an imported type of tree, native to Asia and Africa. Its common name is weeping fig, and in these flayed skins the lamentation resonates.

Aparicio's particular choice of tree, an ordinary feature of the city everywhere you look, turns out to be a global evocation of all of multicultural L.A. A ficus canopy provides welcome shade from blazing sun above, while invasive root systems tear up concrete sidewalks below. Difficult memories of the city's immigrant and migrant worker past are evoked.

The title's reference to choosing between "the subversive or the embassy" — rebel or establishment — also cleverly implicates artists, whose conflicted role in modern society is to somehow bridge the two. Like any artist, Aparicio doesn't stand outside daily life.

That inherent discord might also describe the pointy cones of glazed ceramic that stud "The Ceiba Saved Me." The cones look like chunky thorns. These quietly menacing forms dot a much bigger rubber skin, cast from a different kind of tree, plus the white museum wall around it. The ceiba occupies a central position in various Mesoamerican mythologies, while the imposing tree's thorns turn up as ritual decoration on ancient Maya incense burners and burial urns.

Rags and cast-off clothing are embedded in some of Aparicio's hangings. (The shapes look almost like maps.) Similarly, in the floor works, the golden brown puddles of flowing amber, a fossilized tree resin made extra sparkly with an underlining of what appears to be silver or gold foil, are peppered with bits of refuse — cigarette butts, pizza boxes, auto air fresheners, newspaper



CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT Los Angeles Times

EDDIE RODOLFO APARICIO'S "601 sq. ft. for El Playon" serves as a memorial to the brutal Salvadoran civil war, taking its shape from a body-dumping site.

clippings, soda cans, bones, rocks and more.

The meandering spill begins to suggest a difficult river crossing — the Rio Paz, perhaps, which forms part of the border between El Salvador and Guatemala, or the Rio Grande dividing the United States and Mexico. The glittering sculpture creates a shifting boundary between bright hope and poignant loss.

Titled "601 sq. ft. for El Playon," it's also a memorial to the brutal Salvadoran civil war (1979-1992). The specific shape derives from a volcanic gash in the earth outside San Salvador. El Playon, the war's ruefully named

"playground," was used as a clandestine site to dump dead bodies. The volcanic roiling of inner earth merges with political churning aboveground.

Aparicio's poetic sculptural forms look back half a century to the Post-Minimal art of the 1970s — especially process art, in which predetermined and accidental methods of their making replace personal decisions as the chief driver in creating the form. Robert Overby's full-scale latex casts of ordinary L.A. architectural façades come to mind, as do Lynda Benglis's floor-bound Day-Glo pours of liquid rubber latex, made in New York.

But the difference here is significant. Aparicio coaxes cultural histories from his rubber casts of trees and meandering flows of poured amber. They remind me of painter Gerardo Murillo Coronado, the legendary Dr. Atl, whose pictures used volcanic terrain as a metaphor for Mexico's surging power and disorderly chaos during and long after that nation's 1910 revolution.

Nature is scrutinized as an index of American culture. The landscape view subtly shifts. After seeing Aparicio's show, you're unlikely to look at our omnipresent ficus trees quite the same way again.

JELLY'S LAST JAM

May 29 - Jun 23

Book by
GEORGE C. WOLFE
Music by
JELLY ROLL MORTON
Lyrics by
SUSAN BIRKENHEAD
Musical Adaptation and
Additional Music Composed by
LUTHER HENDERSON
Directed by
KENT GASH

Tickets start at \$44 | pasadenaplayhouse.org

International Daily

42 Asian elephants spotted wandering in southwest China's Yunnan

A herd of 42 elephants, including 10 baby elephants were spotted strolling through the woods and wading through streams in Mengban Town, southwest China's Yunnan Province, according to a footage released by a local monitoring team.

In addition, a lone elephant was spotted playing in the water

with its trunk and fiddling with aquatic plants.

According to the monitoring team, this herd mainly travels between Mengban Town and neighboring Yaoqu Yaozu Township, and since most Asian elephant herds range in size from eight to 15, this 42-member group is a big family.



Asia's 1st cylindrical FPSO facility accomplished in Qingdao



QINGDAO -- Asia's first cylindrical floating, production, storage, and offloading (FPSO) facility was accomplished in east China's Qingdao City on Friday, marking a milestone technological breakthrough in the country's high-end offshore oil and natural gas exploration.

Dubbed "Haikui No.1", the enormous facility, is inde-

pendently designed and made by China.

The floating vessel, containing 600,000 parts, consists of functional modules on the hull and the deck, with a maximum diameter of about 90 meters and a height of more than 60 meters. It is designed with a maximum displacement of 100,000 tons and a storage capacity of 60,000 tons of oil.

With a designed service lifespan of 30 years, cylinder-shaped facility integrates functions of crude oil production, storage, and external transmission. It is able to provide continuous operation at sea for 15 years without docking, according to its producer, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC).

"Through tackling

technological bottlenecks, we have achieved the autonomous application of 15 key technological equipment and systems, such as the sea-land integrated intelligent central control system and high-capacity hydraulic submersible pumps. Furthermore, we have introduced new natural gas desulfurization and dual-fuel generators on offshore platforms. These advancements enable us to effectively utilize associated gas from oil fields and largely improve the energy saving of offshore oil fields," said Liu Huaxiang, general manager of the Deepwater Engineering and Construction Center of CNOOC's Shenzhen branch.

The offshore oil and gas processing project

is planned to be commissioned in China's first deepwater oilfield, the Liuhua 11-1 oilfield, in the Pearl River Mouth Basin,

said the CNOOC, adding that the facility is capable of processing 5,600 tons of crude per day.

Colorful migratory birds nest on shores in southwestern China



Flocks of colorful wild blue-tailed bee-eaters recently gathered to nest on the banks of the Jinsha River in southwest China's Yunnan Province, reflecting the improving local ecological environment.

The blue-tailed bee-eater is classified as a wild animal under grade-II national protection, feeding on various of insects. Known as the "fairy of birds", this small bird has colorful feathers, shining with a metallic luster under the sunlight.

The migratory birds

come to nest and breed on the sandy riverbanks of southwestern China in April, and will fly to Southeast Asia with their young when it gets cool in October.

The bright appearance of the bee-eater attracts birdwatchers from many places to set up tents and watch these delicate creatures.

The abundance of wild migratory birds is evidence of the improvement of the ecological environment in this area.

Horde of macaques spotted feasting on spring bamboo shoots in east China nature reserve

A fascinating scene of a horde of macaques gathering for a delightful spring meal amidst a bamboo forest was recently captured by infrared cameras in the Jiulingshan National Nature Reserve in Jing'an County, east China's Jiangxi Province.

The footage captured the macaques traversing a bamboo forest, where they discovered a flourishing crop of spring bamboo

shoots.

The monkeys, comprising both adults and youngsters, proceeded to settle down and indulge in the tasty treat. The adults expertly peeled and consumed the shoots, while the younger ones frolicked and reveled in the feast alongside them, creating a scene reminiscent of a happy family gathering.

In recent years, the Jiulingshan National Nature Reserve, which

spans an area of 11,541 hectares, has become home to a diverse array of nationally protected rare animal species, further enriching the reserve's ecosystem.

This wealth of biodiversity has also provided invaluable data to support scientific research and conservation efforts in the region.



Nanhua mountains in northwest China shrouded in clouds

The vast Nanhua mountain range in northwestern China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region was pictured recently shrouded in dense, rolling clouds.

The mountain range is an important ecological barrier against drought and desertification.

Since a national nature reserve was established in the area in 1993, the

forest coverage in the area has increased from under 10 percent to over 30 percent, with 95 percent of the reserve covered by different types of vegetation.

The increased greenery has helped protect water sources in the mountains, leading to higher humidity and the more frequent appearance of stunning cloudscapes.



Large kiang herds spotted on Qinghai's grassland

Three herds totaling over 40 individual kiang -- a wild donkey species under first-class state protection -- have been spotted in the scenic grasslands of Gangca County of northwest China's Qinghai Province.

Video footage captured the kiang appearing in groups, with some herds marching in orderly formations across the wide expanses of the grassland, while others leisurely grazed or looked on in the picturesque views.

The grasslands of Jirmeng were taking on a lovely green hue in May, providing a stunning natural backdrop for the kiang alongside the snowcapped mountains.

As a wild species under first-class state protection known for its strong herd mentality and running prowess, the kiang is an iconic symbol of Qinghai's high altitude areas.

They typically inhabit the alpine meadows, grasslands and cold deserts of the Qinghai-Xizang Plateau.

"The kiang in Gangca County are basically dispersed from Tianjun County, and Gangca is located at the most marginal area of kiangs' distribution in Qinghai Province. As the province continues to inten-

sify its efforts to protect the ecology, both the species and quantity of wild animals are now in a trend of recovery and growth," said Zhang Yu, senior engineer of the Qinghai Forestry and Grassland Bureau.



Catering sees increase in holiday as food tour becomes trend

Catering in China saw significant growth in the May Day holiday on May 1-5, as food tours flourished in various regions of the country, according to the Ministry of Commerce on Monday.

In the five-day holiday, sales by major retail and catering enterprises nationwide increased by 6.8 percent compared with the same period of last year, and customers in key shopping districts in 36 of the 70 large and medium-sized cities nationwide increased by 15.1 percent, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

To attract tourists during the holiday, many cities vied with one another to promote local delicacies.

In the northeastern city of Qiqihar, a most favored food was barbecue. Families would drive to campgrounds to enjoy the sizzle

of the grill.

"The barbecue is very good and the place is very nice," said a tourist.

In the eastern city of Xiamen, many tourists wandered the alleys and explored the street food and snacks around the neighborhood, getting out with their hands and stomach full.

"It is lively here. I've bought yam paste cake, which is famous here, and other snacks. I like the living atmosphere here," said Ms. Jiang, a tourist.

Meanwhile, local vendors all experienced busy days.

Hong Zimin, a vendor of hand-shredded chicken, said queues would extend from five p.m. to eight p.m.

"There are so many people here that dozens of us can hardly serve them," Hong said.

Similar situations



occurred at a night market in Yinchuan, northwest China, where people were flocking to stalls selling local snacks.

"People from many regions have come here, and it gets crowded after seven

p.m., and then it gets hectic," said Liu Bao, a vendor selling heated milk.

Tourists cared not only about the taste of food, but also about the vibe and style of dining. Food and beverage merchants managed to

incorporate traditional or fashionable cultural elements into the products and dining environment, inviting tourists to stay, unwind and taste during the holiday.

China's first direct passenger flight to Latin America launches



A direct air route linking south China's Shenzhen with Mexico City, the capital of Mexico, was

launched on Saturday, marking the official opening of China's first direct passenger route to Latin

America.

The inaugural plane on the route took off from Shenzhen Baoan International Airport at 21:00 (Beijing Time) on Saturday, and will land in Mexico City after a 16-hour flight, according to China Southern Airlines.

The route, which is more than 14,000 kilometers long, has become China's longest direct international flight and one of the world's 10 longest non-stop flights.

The direct flight from the Chinese megacity will

depart on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and return flights from Mexico City will take about 21 hours and will include a refueling stop in Tijuana, with passengers staying onboard.

Shenzhen, a major city in China's Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, is a crucial tech and innovation hub in the country. Aviation industry analyst Juan Antonio Jose says one of the reasons for opening the new route is that a growing number of Chinese business leaders

need direct flights to Mexico.

"Nearshoring is bringing China and Mexico closer together. Chinese companies are favoring nearshoring and they want direct contact with their subsidiaries in Mexico," said Jose.

Mexican tourism industry experts say the majority of passengers who are expected to use the new flight route to Shenzhen will most likely also be business travelers, instead of tourists.

Nearly 1,800 brands highlight China's brand development at events

The presence of nearly 1,800 brands at the 2024 China Brand Day events has highlighted the development stories of Chinese brands and raised brand recognition.

Themed "China Brand, Global Sharing" and "Better Quality, Bright Future for Chinese Brands," The 2024 China Brand Day events kicked off on Friday in Shanghai and would last until May 14.

The events focus on how new quality productive forces have promoted the growth of Chinese brands, with heavy equipment and

smart products such as robot dogs and glasses-free 3D on display.

Two theme exhibitions are set up during the events, with more than 150 time-honored Chinese brands displaying their featured products.

"It's really amazing. What impresses me most is that our Chinese brands are gaining growing influence and our manufacturing sector is getting stronger and stronger," said Guo, a visitor.

A report on the development of brands of centrally administered state-own

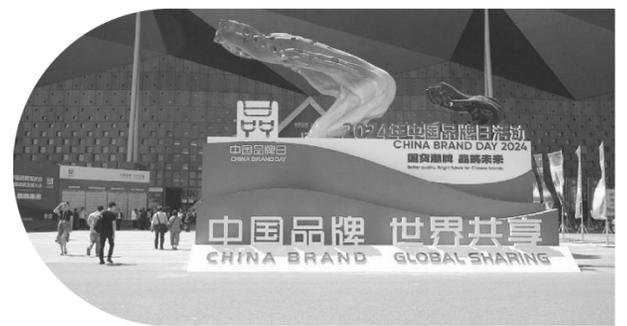
enterprises will be released during the events, showing China's achievements in brand building in all dimensions.

"Brands are an important symbol of high-quality development. The brand building, featuring technological innovation, quality improvement and cultural empowerment, is an important way to advance agricultural modernization and elevate industrial development to a higher end of the value chain, and also an important way to improve the quality of life and meet people's demand

for a better life," said Gong Zhenzhi, deputy director of the Department of Industry under the National Development and Reform Commission.

Established in 2017,

China Brand Day is celebrated on May 10 every year, aiming to increase society's awareness of brand development and create a sound atmosphere for brand building.



Serbia becomes popular tourist destination for Chinese travelers



Serbia has become an increasingly popular tourist destination for Chinese travelers, thanks to its iron-clad friendship between the two nations, its picturesque scenes, and motivation of the visa-free policy.

A poll by the Institute for

European Affairs and Smart Plus Research in 2023 revealed that 75 percent of Serbians think China a friendly nation. This deep bond stems from decades-old cultural influences, mutual trust during critical junctures, significant joint projects, and

destination among Chinese tourists.

"I remember Serbia fondly. I stayed for a month during the summer of 2019. Serbia was the first visa-free European country to Chinese travelers. But at that time, there were no direct flights," a vlogger-influencer, who holidayed in

shared experiences of tragic events.

Serbia offered visa-free entry to Chinese tourists in 2017, which has contributed significantly to its growing popularity as a travel

destination among Chinese tourists. Serbia before, told China Global Television Network (CGTN) through a voice text.

Since 2022, multiple direct flights connecting some Chinese cities with Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, have been established, further enhancing the country's allure for tourists.

Days before President Xi's state visit to this Balkan country, streets linking the Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport to the center of the capital have been adorned with national flags of China and Serbia, underscoring the affinity of fraternal ties between the two nations.

Belgrade, a captivating city, offers a plethora of attractions, while Novi Sad, Serbia's second-largest city located just half an hour away, showcases its unique architectural charm. Both

cities provide indelible experiences for visitors.

"I came to see a country with a good diplomatic relationship with China," said a tourist.

"Because firstly, Serbia and China have had a great relationship in recent years. Also, Serbia has beautiful scenery, which is why I wanted to visit. But mainly it's because of the visa-free policy," said another tourist.

The hospitality of the locals, the amenity of direct flights, and the visa-free policy all contribute to Serbia's magnetism for Chinese tourists. However, the underlying factor that cements this popularity is the enduring ironclad relationship between China and Serbia, which is ubiquitous in the capital city and throughout the country.



The TIR-labeled transport vehicle slowly set off from the customs supervision area of China Chuanhua (SCO) International Logistics

The other day, a TIR-labeled transport vehicle slowly set off from the customs supervision area of China Chuanhua (SCO) International Logistics

Port, heading for Moscow, the capital of Russia. Carrying a 40HQ reefer container loaded with 24.2 tons of such fresh fruits as kumquats, the vehicle was the first TIR-labeled one

SCODA launches the first TIR cold chain logistics channel

dispatched from the SCO Demonstration Area (SCODA), marking the first TIR cold chain transport channel in the SCODA has been officially put into operation.

"As the transport of fruits is demanding in terms of temperature and timeliness, it is very difficult to keep fruits fresh by conventional means of transportation. Subject to no change for new vehicles, overstay

age and unloading in the whole process, the TIR transport model can provide door-to-door or point-to-point cold-chain logistics services for local merchants and is better suited for the export of fresh goods," noted Zhang Quanwen, the general manager of Chuanhua Shanghe (Qingdao) International Trade Co., Ltd.

The SCODA will accelerate efforts to launch new



TIR transport routes such as ones from China to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and build a TIR-featured logistics channel between China and other SCO member states, with an aim to helping more local products and brands tap into overseas markets.

(Wang Meng)

Qingdao included among Chinese cities implementing demonstration programs on improvements of public employment service capacity

The Chinese ministries of finance, and human resources and social security recently finished picking out the 2024 national demonstration programs on improvements of public employment service capacity. After competitive appraisals and public disclosures, 20 cities including Qingdao stood out.

To grow new productive forces and prioritize developing the "Jiuxiangjia" public employment service brand, Qingdao will take opportunities presented by its inclusion into the national demonstration program to launch three campaigns, namely, "technological empowerment

for Qingdao", "consolidating foundations for improving performance" and "beneficial application of intelligent digital technology", and carry out 14 improvement initiatives. The moves are intended to build a whole-process, well-coordinated, convenient and high-efficiency public employment service system that covers all residents in the city so that high-quality full employment can be achieved to improve people's wellbeing, sustain industrial development and facilitate higher-quality social and economic development.

(Fu Jun)

Qingdao rolls out 23 measures to facilitate high-quality development of West Coast New Area



The Qingdao FTZ global novel consumption experience center in the West Coast New Area.

Qingdao recently printed and issued the 2024 Qingdao Work Priorities for Seeking High-quality Development of West Coast New Area, which comprises 23 measures in seven categories including "speeding up the construction of a pioneering area for maritime economy".

Speeding up the construction of a pioneering area for maritime economy is among the goals. Solid steps will be taken to include the third phase of Qingdao port's automated terminal and the corresponding bonded logistics area into the Qingdao Qianwan Comprehensive Bonded Zone. All efforts will be made to strive for the inclusion of the Dongjiakou Com-

modity Storage and Transportation Base into national planning. Support will be rendered to Qingdao port's Dongjiakou and Qianwan harbor district to add new shipping routes. The West Coast New Area will press ahead with the building of "Deep Blue No. 2" truss-type cages and the blue maritime economic complex.

The paper calls for speeding up the construction of a pilot area for high-quality development featuring environmental protection and de-carbonization. The new area will push for digital transformation among a larger number of companies, and strive for six provincial level "smart plants", "digital workshops" or "intelligent manufacturing scenarios". Sustained efforts will be made to build up strength in provincial level emerging industry clusters such as integrated circuits and new-type display, and to ramp up the production capacity of end-use ultra-high-definition video products. The area will continue to press ahead

with the construction of the Qingdao New-type Display Industry Park (Qingdao Economic and Technological Development Zone) and the Green and Low-carbon New Materials Industry Park (Dongjiakou Economic Zone).

The construction of a pioneering area for independent scientific and technological innovation will also be expedited. With priority given to integrated circuits, new-type displays and hydrogen energy among other sectors, an all-out effort will be made to launch scientific and technological programs of all levels and support businesses in tackling problems in key technologies. Support will be rendered to the Center for Ocean Mega-science Chinese Academy of Sciences in all respects ranging from platform building and basic research to industry, education, international cooperation, etc.

(Yang Guang)

Qingdao moves faster to build a convenient railway transportation circle

Qingdao is an important coastal railway hub city in China. By the end of last year, Qingdao was home to 13 railways including Qingdao-Rongcheng Intercity Railway, Jinan-Qingdao High-speed Railway, Weifang-Laixi High-speed Railway, Laixi-Rongcheng High-speed Railway, and boasted a four-pronged

railway passenger transport pattern, namely Qingdao Station, Qingdao North Station, Hongdao Station and Qingdao West Station, among which the first three stations serve as the mainstay and the last one plays a helping role, as well as an extensive road network linking up with the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei

Region northward, the Yangtze River Delta southward, the Yellow River basin westward and the Yantai-Weihai Region eastward.

To date this year, Qingdao has moved faster to build a convenient railway transportation circle, both internally and externally, and therefore made progress in

reaching out to other regions. The first passenger train from Qingdao to Dongying has opened, the frequency of high-speed trains in Hongdao Station and Qingdao Airport Station has been improved and increased, nearly 20 trains have departed from Hongdao Station for Beijing, Shanghai or Zheng-



The train from Qingdao to Dongying made its debut on April 30.

zhou, passengers could take trains in Qingdao Airport Station to go to other cities in Shandong Province as well as cities in other provinces including Beijing, Shanghai, Zhengzhou, Taiyuan and Suzhou.

(Zhou Jianliang)

Qingdao launches a three-year plan to build a film and TV base with high standards

The Three-Year Action Plan for Building Qingdao Film and TV Base with High Standards (2024-2026) was recently released. After its inception, the Qingdao Film and TV Base will sustain its efforts to bring in industry-leading programs or enterprises, press ahead with the

construction of a "science and technology-based movie metropolis", appeal to a larger number of professionals and put in place a high-tech film and TV technology service system and strive to rank among the first batch of demonstration bases for innovation in the Chinese film

industry.

According to the Action Plan, Qingdao will make an all-out effort to build a demonstration base for innovation in the Chinese film industry, add more than 400 film and TV enterprises, generate a revenue of more than RMB 10 bln in the film and TV sector and

related industries by 2026, and move faster to become a world-class tourist destination for film and TV culture.

Over recent years, Qingdao has pooled film and TV industry-related projects with a total investment of nearly RMB 300 bln, introduced more than 1,000 film and TV enterprises of all



A panorama of Qingdao Movie Metropolis Film and TV Industry Park.

kinds and built largely a film and TV industry cluster across the entire chain.

(Wang Kai/ Yi Tao)

Touring around Qingdao in films and TV series

The Qingdao municipal bureau of cultural tourism recently launched a series of tourism products named "touring Qingdao in films and TV series", aiming to build Qingdao into an internet-famous film and TV-themed tourist destination from the following three aspects.

Visiting internet-famous sites in the old urban area of Qingdao is recognized as the most preferred route to admire Qingdao's cultural heritage, which starts from

Qingdao Railway Station and passes via Luxun Park, the Former Site of Qingdao Exchange, Dabao Island Cultural Leisure Block, Badaguan Scenic Area and Textile Valley. Such film and TV works as Mobile Phone, Romance of Our Parents and Once Upon a Time in Tsingtao were produced along the route. Many popular movies and TV shows including Gold Marriage and Ocean Friends were set in Badaguan Scenic Area.

To admire the fashionable

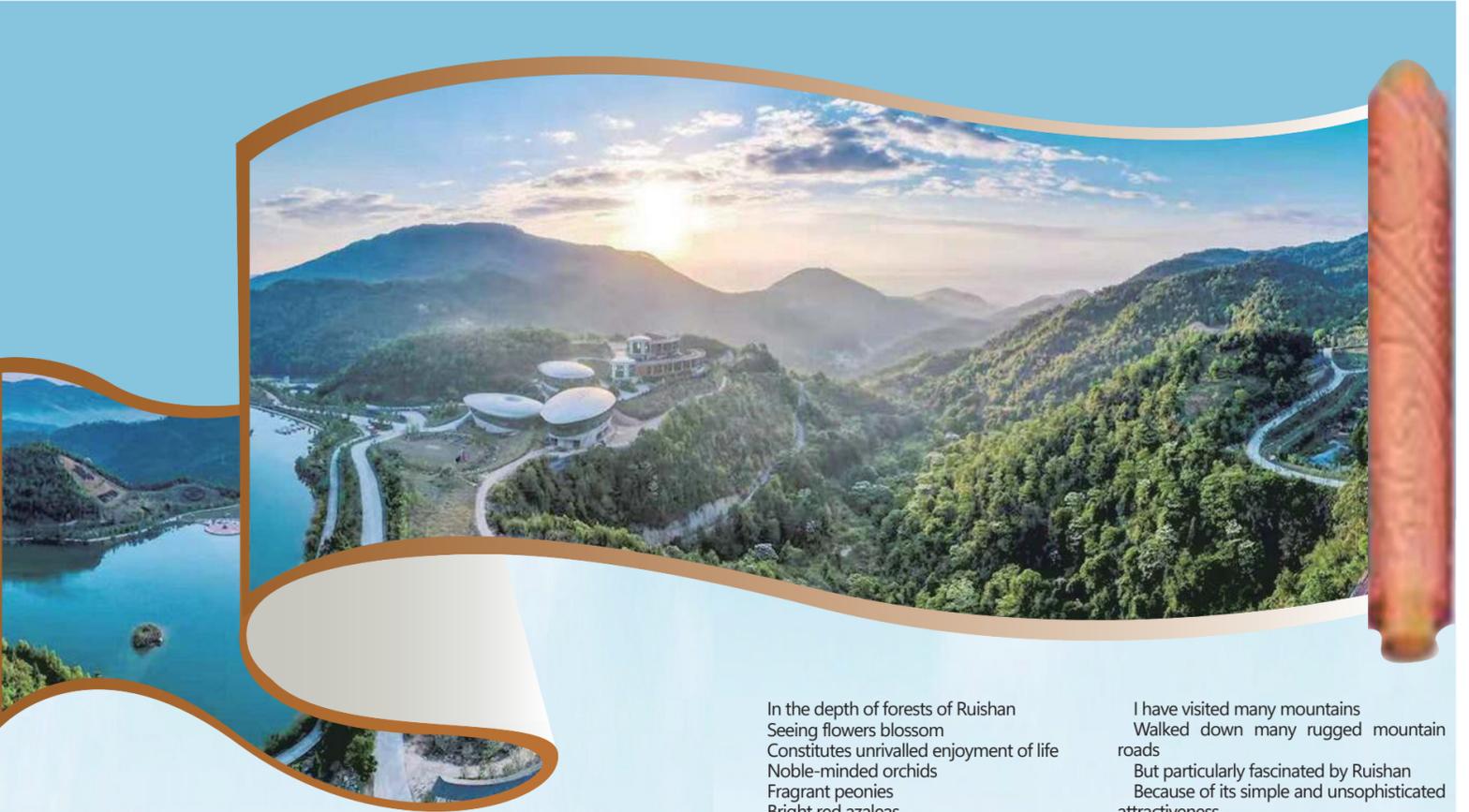
city of Qingdao, we can start with Qingdao Oriental Movie Metropolis, and then pay visits to Lingshanwei, the Ferris wheel known as the "eye of Qingdao", the TAG Art Museum and the Qingdao Liuting International Airport. The Wandering Earth and Creation of the Gods, two milestone works in the history of Chinese movies, as well as the hot broadcast TV series Ordinary Greatness were produced in Qingdao Oriental Movie Metropolis.

To enjoy cultural landscapes in Qingdao, we can start with the Laoshan Mountain Scenic Spot, and then visit Qilan Haiju, Cangkou Park, Lubang International Style Street, Tiantai Hot Spring Resort. These sites integrate natural endowments with internet-famous attractiveness in a perfect manner. A few outstanding works such as You Are More Beautiful Than Starlight and My Fight with Marriage were photographed along the



route, which appealed to a number of stars in the reality TV show the Night of the Greater Bay Area.

As for Qingdao, a world "film city", "touring Qingdao in films and TV series" is likely to unfold the city in front of tourists in a brand new manner.



Never to be forgotten since the first sight

---Ode to Ruishan

Author: Cai Haiguang



If I didn't encounter you
 Would be difficult to describe your look
 Although heard a lot second-hand or
 browsed over Wechat posts
 Merely a blurred impression
 Until I was immersed in your beauty
 As if farmers fall in love with their field of
 rice

Sunflowers locate the direction of
 sunshine
 My love at the first sight resembles a
 delicate garment
 Prospering with you
 In spring every year

Amid sun-glow on an autumn day
 I climbed over the mountain where
 glorious revolution happened
 Looking back, the fire of revolution
 Kindled in the hinterland of Ruishan
 To disseminate revolutionary ideas
 Although living in hunger and cold, and
 being as slippery as an eel
 A stone-made command post
 Nurtured the seed of ideals and convictions
 Now, smoke of gunpowder gives way to
 idyllic scenery
 Climb over a dozen of winding stone
 steps
 To penetrate into the body of Ruishan
 Making every small step
 Analogous to unfolding a new chapter of
 revolutionary stories
 Looking back suddenly
 People never forget original aspiration,
 and march forward as usual
 Here and now
 What a vivid classroom atmosphere

In the depth of forests of Ruishan
 Seeing flowers blossom
 Constitutes unrivalled enjoyment of life
 Noble-minded orchids
 Fragrant peonies
 Bright red azaleas
 In the exclusive territory of sunshine
 Throw a flower language party in the
 forest
 It is conceivable to see
 In this world without music playing
 Birds, insects, squirrels and peacocks
 All being absolute protagonists in the
 grand banquet

Despite not being famous
 But culturally rich and charming
 Simple and unadorned instead of being
 pretentious
 Graceful without losing glamour
 Natural giant stones standing upright
 against wind
 Being treasures endowed by nature
 Frogs, turtles, earthworms and snakes
 These dancing elves
 In the vast universe
 Behold the shifts and changes of life
 Without fearing vicissitudes

No one knows why these charismatic
 giant stones
 Can always blend in with their natural
 surroundings
 Gurgling mountain spring flows all the
 year around
 To narrate their past and present stories
 As if they had never left
 Nestling the familiar farming village
 Ripened rice field, simple and unsophisticated
 dwellings
 Year after year, season after season

In a summer afternoon
 Randomly choose a place in the dense
 forest of Ruishan
 To hang a hammock to repose
 As if the cradle we slept in during
 babyhood
 Feel mountain breeze as tender as a
 mother's hands
 Listen to flowing spring as melodious as a
 nursery rhyme in dream
 Happy hours are fleeting
 Though sunshine is blocked for the time
 being
 My heart feels exceptionally warm

I have visited many mountains
 Walked down many rugged mountain
 roads
 But particularly fascinated by Ruishan
 Because of its simple and unsophisticated
 attractiveness
 Neither humble nor pushy, neither fragile
 nor flattering
 Stand upright in the secular world
 You can easily get attached to it
 On one hand
 Being undisturbed by favour or disgrace
 On the other hand
 Being romantic and lighthearted
 Ruishan, I love you
 For being common but not ordinary
 For being unsophisticated but not naive
 Never to be forgotten since the first sight!



China's top leisure and wellness destination -- Ruishan Ecotourism Resort

The China Ruishan Ecotourism Resort (<http://www.ruishan.com>) is located in Zhouhui Town, Dabu County, Guangzhou Province, dubbed as the "world longevity town", which is richly endowed by nature, such as selenium-rich oil, lush vegetation and high oxygen content. Covering a total area of 31,000 mu, the tourist attraction is 48 km and 35 km away from the urban area of Meizhou and the county seat of Dabu, respectively. Tourists can reach the resort by air, high-speed railway and expressway within one hour.

With a total planned investment of RMB 5.1 bln, the construction of the scenic spot began in 2011 and will experience three phases. To date, nearly RMB 1 bln worthy of investment has been utilized. With a priority given to ecological wellness, forest therapy, leisure & wellness, the project features patriotism education, study travel among primary and secondary school students and outdoor extending. With industrial presence such as premium drinking water "Ruishan Tianquan", planting of Chinese herbal medicine

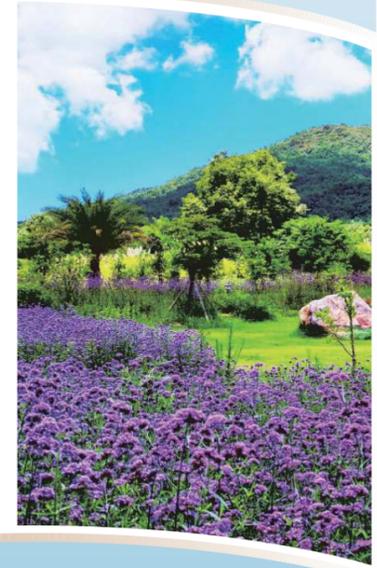
and product research, the project is intended to build Ruishan into a famous eco-friendly wellness resort and a home to different industry forms.

The Ruishan scenic spot boasts a more than 80% forest coverage rate, and negative oxygen ion content of more than 27,000 pieces/cm, the level of medical value. The scenic spot is home to a variety of resources including valleys, primeval forests, falls and hot spring. It is endowed with ecological resources, in particular such rare resources as hot spring and selenium-rich water. The alkaline "Ruishan Tianquan" premium drinking water, launched through resource exploitation, sells well in the Pearl River Delta and other cities such as Shantou, Chaozhou, Jieyang, Xiamen, Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, and has emerged as a famous brand in Meizhou and even Guangdong Province.

The Ruishan tourist resort was included among provincial key construction projects in 2013, rated as a "municipal leading agricultural enterprise"

and a "municipal leading forestry enterprise" in 2014, and a "provincial leading agricultural enterprise" and a "leading forestry enterprise" in 2015, honored with the title "Guangdong provincial demonstration project for leisure agriculture and rural tourism" and ranked among "national high-quality tourism projects" in 2016, and included among "Guangdong provincial high-end tourism projects" in 2017. In 2018, it was honored with the titles of "patriotism education base in Dabu County" and "Guangdong provincial forest wellness base", and included among "national key projects for poverty alleviation through tourism"; in 2019, it was rated as a "national 3A-grade tourist attraction" and a "leading enterprises for poverty alleviation in Guangdong Province", and ranked among "national outstanding roadshow projects in the Guangdong provincial investment and financing fair"; in the same year, "Ruis-

han Tianquan" was designated by the UN Material Procurement Supervision Center as "UN water for rescue and relief"; in 2020, it won the honorary titles of "Meizhou study travel camp for primary and secondary school students", "national pilot demonstration project for forest wellness" and "Guangdong provincial featured route and emerging brand for forest tourism"; it received the honorary titles of "Guangdong provincial demonstration comprehensive park for forest ecology" in 2021, "2022 annual rural culture and tourism foregoer project", and "Meizhou patriotism education base" in 2022, "national key leading forestry enterprise", and "demonstration revolutionary education base among previous central soviet areas" in 2023, and "Guandong travel study practice and education Base for primary and secondary school students" in 2024.





PEOPLE

Gui Haichao: From small-town dreamer to daring astronaut



Gui Haichao, a member of China's Shenzhou XVI crew and an astronaut, recently visited his alma mater, No. 1 High School of Shidian County in Baoshan City, Yunnan Province. He took the opportunity to share his personal learning experience and inspire the current students at the school by discussing how he achieved his dream of becoming an astronaut.

Gui, born in Yaoguan Town,

Shidian County, had a significant moment during his second year of senior high school. It was on October 15, 2003, when China achieved the successful launch of its first manned spacecraft, Shenzhou V. The news, heard through the school radio, ignited a deep aspiration within him to venture into the vast expanse of space.

Motivated by his aspiration, Gui became increasingly determined to excel in his studies. Following the college entrance examination, he achieved outstanding results and was admitted to Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics (BUAA). Within just nine years, he completed his doctoral degree and pursued postdoctoral research abroad. At the age of 31, Gui attained the esteemed position of a doctoral supervisor at BUAA.

In 2018, upon learning that China was recruiting the first

group of payload experts for its space station, Gui volunteered without hesitation. He had always nurtured a dream of conducting scientific research in the space, and the opportunity to fulfill that dream propelled him to immediately sign up.

The astronaut selection process is known for its demanding nature, thoroughly assessing the candidates' physical and mental qualities. Amidst approximately 2,500 candidates, Gui emerged as one of the four outstanding payload experts after enduring a rigorous selection process. Finally, on May 30, 2023, Gui soared into space aboard the Shenzhou XVI manned spacecraft, fulfilling his lifelong dream of venturing beyond Earth's atmosphere.

During his space mission, amidst a busy schedule conducting experiments, Gui took moments to share awe-

inspiring views of the Earth from space. He also tended to the growth of vegetables in the "space garden," taught lessons in the space classroom, and provided guidance on his students' dissertation writing. He convened meetings with the seven of them, even from space, to ensure smooth progress towards their graduation. Gui's unwavering dedication to his students compelled him to continuously revise and improve their dissertations.

From a small-town dreamer to a daring astronaut, Gui has become a beacon of inspiration for numerous

children. Through his remarkable journey, he has demonstrated that education has the power to transform one's destiny.

(Text by People.com, Xinhua News Agency, China Daily, China Youth Daily, and Yunnan.cn)(Pictures by Xinhua News Agency)



TRAVEL

Isaac: Xishuangbanna showed me a different side of China



Stepping off the plane from Beijing to Jinghong, south Yunnan's Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture was like stepping out of one world and into another. Instantly I noticed the tropical weather and how much hotter it was than the cool spring I had left behind only a few hours before.

Not really knowing what to expect, I was eager to get out of the airport and see what the city had to offer. Traveling from the airport to the hotel, I noticed that Jinghong was a much smaller, and seemed like a much more relaxed city than what I was used to in Beijing. The tropical flowers bloomed all around us as we made our way through some light traffic to the hotel.

After getting settled, the real adventure could begin, and it did not disappoint. The entire weekend showed me how people can come together and have fun while celebrating the New Year of Dai people. The sights, sounds, and tastes of the city were simply

wonderful. I was able to learn so much about a part of China that I knew next to nothing about and am now eager to learn more about in the future.

In Jinghong, the Mengle Buddhist Temple sits on the former site of the Jingpiao Temple, an imperial temple built by a Dai King to honor his queen, who believed in Buddhism. The original temple was destroyed in a war in 1848. It was not until 2005 that a new temple was built on the site. Much like the lakes of the north, you will find beautifully decorated pavilions in the imperial gardens of the Dai kings. The pavilions feature an architectural style similar to that of the Theravada Buddhist temples, while the pavilions in Beijing follow the traditional Han style. The architecture of these incredible pavilions blends seamlessly into the natural landscape surrounding them and makes them an excellent place for us today to sit and relax.

The food I was able to try on

the trip was amazing. While a few dishes might make you second guess yourself about trying them, I was up for the adventure and got to sample some delicious dishes like ant eggs and a traditional salad made with chicken feet. Chicken feet were already one of my favorite dishes, so getting to try them in a different preparation was a real treat. There was also a lot of fish and beef dishes served with each meal.

There were two parts of the trip that really stood out as highlights for me during this trip. The first was when we went to the river to release lanterns. Seeing the lanterns rise up into the night sky with the city lights as a background was awe inspiring. It was also quite moving to walk around and watch as people prepared their lanterns for launch. They were symbolically releasing the issues of the old year in preparation for the coming new year.

The second highlight for me was the water splashing. I had watched several videos online to get an idea of what to expect, but they did nothing to prepare me for this amazing experience. People of all ages, from young children to elderly men and women, were part of one giant party and were enjoying the festivities.

Overall, this trip has shown me a completely different side to China that as a foreigner I would never have expected to see, and I encourage you all to pay Xishuangbanna a visit if you get the chance. It is a once in a lifetime experience that you will never forget.

(Text by Isaac, picture by Guo Yao)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yunnan-Angkor world heritage event set for June

The year 2024 has been designated as the Year of China-Cambodia People-to-People Exchange. As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen these exchanges, the Yunnan-Angkor Voices of World Heritage Sites event will take place on June 7 in Yunnan Province, China.

The upcoming event will encompass several noteworthy activities, including a grand launching ceremony, the promotion of world heritage tours, a dialogue session featuring Chinese and Cambodian presidents and editors-in-chief

of media organizations, the inauguration of the Angkor Airport Cultural Corridor, and a direct engagement session among world heritage sites.

Since the official opening of Siem Reap Angkor International Airport in Cambodia in October 2023, Angkor Wat has witnessed a greater influx of international tourists. The inauguration, in turn, has resulted in increased people-to-people exchanges and expanded opportunities for tourism and trade between Yunnan and Cambodia.

(Reported by Liu Ziyu)

FRIENDSHIP

A friendship that endures

Recently, a range of goodwill activities were held in Dayton, showcasing the timeless bond between the US and China, according to Xinhua News Agency. These included a photo exhibition featuring the Flying Tigers and Doolittle Squadron, the Fifth China-US World War II Friendship Forum, and a commemorative ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the donated grinding wheel from Yunnan Province in the US.

During the opening ceremony of the photo exhibition, representatives from two high schools in China's Yunnan Province and the International Leadership of Texas Private High School Garland exchanged a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that was recently signed online. The MOU solidifies the partnership for the Flying Tigers Friendship Schools and Youth Leadership Program. Amidst the representatives stood a warplane and a grinding wheel, which not only embody the deep-rooted US-China friendship during World War II, but also bear witness

to the unwavering spirit of the Flying Tigers and the enduring legacy of US-China friendship.

Over 80 years ago, the Flying Tigers' Curtiss C-46 Commando transport aircraft performed a remarkable feat on the renowned "Hump" route. During the construction of the airfield for the Flying Tigers, thousands of Chinese soldiers and civilians used the massive grinding wheel weighing 3.7 tons to compact the runway.

Twenty years ago, the grinding wheel, donated by the Yunnan Provincial People's Government, made its journey to the National Museum of the United States Air Force, where it became an integral part of the exhibit alongside the C-46 transport aircraft. Throughout the past two decades, the museum has welcomed tens of millions of visitors who have not only been in awe of the remarkable accomplishments of the Flying Tigers and the Chinese military and civilians symbolized by these artifacts, but have also been deeply moved by the profound friendship

between the people of the United States and China in their united stand against the Japanese invaders.

At the commemorative ceremony, a representative from Yunnan Province recounted the captivating tale of the grinding wheel and the Flying Tigers, rekindling the history of their combat side by side. The narrative unveiled the remarkable partnership between the brave Yunnan soldiers, civilians, and the Flying Tigers.

The Flying Tigers Friendship Schools and Youth Leadership Program is a dedicated initiative to impart the values and legacy of the Flying Tigers. On April 12, a memorandum of understanding, outlining the collaboration for this program, was signed online among two high schools in Yunnan Province, namely Kunming Foreign Language School and Xiangyun No. 2 High School, the International Leadership of Texas Private High School Garland, and the Sino-American Aviation Heritage Foundation. (Xinhua News Agency and Yunnan Daily)

YUNNAN: A MANY-SPLENDORED LIFE

A metro journey to purple romance



As early summer descends upon Kunming, the capital city of Yunnan Province, the blooming jacaranda trees transform the landscape into a mesmerizing canvas of romantic purple, enchanting visitors from both within the country and across the globe.

Kunming Rail Transit Co Ltd has gone the extra mile to provide a special experience for both locals and tourists wishing to immerse themselves in the beauty of jacaranda flowers. On the Metro Line 4, a jacaranda-themed train instantly captivates passengers with its stunning purple ambiance. Clusters of

jacaranda flowers inside the train transport passengers to a floral wonderland, allowing them to enjoy the fragrance of blossoms during their metro journey. Adding to the delight, performers from the "Dynamic Yunnan" troupe engage with passengers, creating a truly interactive experience. Moreover, certain metro stations are impressively embellished with jacaranda decorations, creating breathtaking spectacles for all to enjoy. (Text by Yunnan Daily and the "Kunming Wuhua Fabu" WeChat public account)(Pictures by Xinhua News Agency and Yunnan Daily)



Transit passengers get free sightseeing in city

Hu Min

SHANGHAI Express, a free layover tour service for international passengers transiting for more than eight hours at Shanghai Pudong International Airport, was launched recently.

It enables inbound passengers to explore the city and experience its unique splendor in their limited time.

The free half-day tour was launched by China's global travel service provider Trip.com on April 15, and three

routes that include iconic city attractions are available.

The one-stop service covers a range of items from free sightseeing trips and free transportation to foreign currency exchange and free Internet services.

An English tour guide service is offered.

The service also includes admission to the Yuyuan Garden and a Huangpu River cruise tour at night.

Since April 15, nearly 200 foreigners have enjoyed the service, with the majority of them from Europe and from

Southeast Asian countries, according to Trip.com.

There were also passengers from North America, South America and Africa.

Maria Creasey from the United Kingdom who made a transfer at the airport recently had a pleasant tour with the service.

She and her partner took a flight from Sri Lanka and transited at the airport. She was bound for London. "We had 21 hours in Shanghai, and we originally planned to visit the city ourselves," she told Shanghai Daily.



Shanghai Express program participants have a stroll in the Yuyuan Garden Scenic Area. — Hu Min

Creasey showed the reporter about 10 places that she planned to visit.

"See, several have overlapped with the free tour stops," she said, delighted.

"The service is amazing, incredible, and really awesome," she said.

Maria tasted a local scallion pancake at the Yuyuan

Garden Scenic Area.

"It's very delicious."

The city launched the "Visit Shanghai" campaign in December last year to boost inbound tourism and make Shanghai the first stop in China for inbound travelers.

And Shanghai has proved to be an attractive destination for inbound tourists.

Tacky but addictive: How mini-dramas cash in on millions of viewers' emotional demands in China

Li Xueqing

The birthday party descended into chaos as tables were overturned, wine bottles shattered, and the birthday girl found herself struck in the cheek by a cake, tumbling to the floor in bewilderment. Amidst the turmoil, the troublemaker showed no signs of halting her disruptive actions. Seizing the birthday girl by the hair, she uttered menacingly, "I want you to suffer."

This dramatic scene, not a real-life incident of bullying, unfolded as part of a mini-drama production at Hengdian World Studios, a four-hour drive from Shanghai.

Mini-dramas were born in the 2010s, and are gaining momentum recently in China. Typically shot vertically for mobile viewing, these series span 30 to 100 episodes, each lasting one to three minutes, brimming with melodramatic twists and turns. While audiences can often access initial episodes for free, unlocking the full narrative require payment or viewing advertisements.

In 2023, China's mini-drama market reached 37.39 billion yuan (US\$5.17 billion), nearly 70 percent of China's box office revenue that year. The number is expected to reach 100 billion yuan in 2027, according to a report by iMedia Research.

Over 300,000 companies were involved in the industry last year, nearly four times the number in 2016, reported National Business Daily. Notable players range from tech behemoth Tencent to smaller enterprises.

Jian Daili, 28, a supporting actress in this Hengdian show, stands witness to the mini-drama boom. She has embodied over 50 characters since starting to play in mini-dramas last year. At her peak, she juggled 25 days of filming per month, playing three to four different roles in different crews.

Compared with traditional TV series, mini-dramas have much shorter production cycles. Filming usually takes



A mini-drama being filmed at Hengdian World Studios. — Ma Xuefeng

one or two weeks, followed by two to eight weeks of post-production work.

Jian's latest work has 80 episodes, but was filmed in just eight days. During Shanghai Daily's visit to Hengdian, shooting started at 9am, continuing unabated until around 7am the following day. For Jian and her colleagues, grueling hours on set were not uncommon. Some crews would compress filming time to five days to save budget.

Jian recalled that once after a marathon day and night of shooting, she struggled to recall her lines. In order to complete the filming, "the managing director uttered a line, and we repeated it," she said.

Last year, over 1,400 mini-dramas were released online. The cost of production ranged from 200,000 yuan to well above 1 million yuan — a fraction of traditional TV series expenses.

Yet their revenue can be quite substantial. Audiences paid 100 million yuan within eight days after the release of the mini-drama "Unparalleled." The income was 200 times its production cost.

While not all mini-dramas rake in profits, those that do thrive on emotionally engaging viewers.

"Ciwei Gongshe" (Hedgedog Commune), a digital content platform, analyzed the titles of 6,000 mini-dramas to discern trends resonating with

Chinese mobile viewers.

For female viewers, the analysis unveiled a preference for titles featuring "boss" or "CEO," followed by words like "madam" or "wife." Romantic entanglements with authoritative CEOs are one of the most popular topics.

Male audiences are drawn by an underdog's rise to success and his revenge on his enemies, as "ex-wife," "God of War" and "King of Dragons" are among the most used words in the titles. "Unparalleled," a blockbuster last year, shares a similar storyline.

While these themes echo established tropes seen in franchises like James Bond or Marvel, the plots in mini-dramas often unfold with rapid pace, escalating conflicts and resolutions in swift succession.

"A popular mini-drama should be intense and entertaining. When you see a bad guy on the screen, you'll want to beat him up," said Wang Yushun, a director whose first mini-drama released last year has earned more than 20 million yuan so far.

Wang attributed the breakneck tempo of mini-dramas to the fragmented viewing habits of mobile phone users, who consume content on-the-go. Other than sitting in a cinema to concentrate on the plot, viewers consume mini-dramas on the subway or during work breaks.

"People need to be captivated by the mini-drama

immediately," said Wang.

He also said that the earnings from mini-dramas nationwide more than tripled as soon as the Spring Festival holiday was over, as people went back to work and school.

There are more than 500 million mini-drama viewers in China, nearly 60 percent of them young adults, according to the National Business Daily report.

However, demand for immediate emotional engagement often comes at the cost of logic. On Chinese social media, many viewers labeled mini-dramas as "tacky," "unrealistic" but "addictive."

A typical male lead may casually spend 100 million yuan, enough money to buy 125 Tesla Model X vehicles in the real world, all just to rent out a karaoke bar to beat a love rival up.

Some mini-dramas even suggest audiences to "put your brain aside while watching."

"The audiences know there's something irrational in there, but they choose to ignore it," said Li Wei, professor of literature of Nanjing Normal University and a long time observer of online literature and art.

"The reason perhaps is that mini-dramas have met the audience's emotional needs that are unfulfilled in everyday life," she said.

Her opinion is shared by Professor Xia Lie, dean of the School of Creativity and

Media at Hangzhou Normal University.

"Mini-dramas offers a kind of compensation for what people can't achieve in reality," Xia said. "Of course, these needs are met in an illogical way and no real problems are solved, but people are happy while watching these dramas."

For viewers like Yang Liu, a 31-year-old IT engineer, mini-dramas offer a respite from mentally taxing content, ideal for treadmill viewing.

She has turned to mini-dramas also because she is fed up with poorly-made TV series.

"A minor conflict that could be resolved with a simple conversation between the characters is dragged out over several episodes in those TV series, while in mini-dramas, it's resolved in just one minute," Yang said, adding that she still has time for high-quality TV dramas, such as "The Glory," a popular South Korean series produced by Netflix in 2022.

As China's mini-drama landscape matures, industry experts foresee a proliferation of high-quality narratives catering to diverse audiences.

"When the playwrights are skilled enough, we may have another 'Breaking Bad,'" director Wang said.

Professor Xia anticipates a shift toward nuanced storytelling that resonates with a broader demographic.

For practitioners in the industry, change is already underway.

Jian, the actress, has noticed a drop in actor demand this year. The pace of filming is slowing down, too, allowing her to brood over acting details. She also has more time to rest now.

Wang's company has tried to reduce production and embraced advanced CGI technology to elevate production standards.

"Mini-dramas have not yet reached the pinnacle of their potential yet," he said, adding that more professionals of traditional movies and TV series are entering the industry. "We are able to tell more complex stories now," said Wang.

SHINE
BEYOND A SINGLE STORY

Check out our website

WWW.SHINE.CN

You are welcome to send your comments and opinions to editor@shanghaidaily.com

FOLLOW US

Search for "Shanghai Daily" @



Mesmerizing aurora borealis illuminate many parts of northern China

A mesmerizing spectacle unfolded across northern China's skies on Saturday morning as aurora borealis, also known as northern lights, captivated tourists and photography enthusiasts with its breathtaking display of colors.

Stunning dancing waves of light

illuminated the night sky over Mohe City in northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, with many visitors eagerly pulling out their cameras to record the spectacular natural display.

"I drove all the way here from Beijing and finally caught the aurora borealis. It is colored red and pink and like dancing beams of light, swaying

from side to side. It is wonderful and quite impressive to me," said a tourist named Ma Jingxuan.

"I read the news that there would be auroras in this place. So, I came all the way here to admire it. This is my first time to see the natural display, which doesn't appear in my hometown. It is very beautiful," said Zeng Lingqing, a tourist from southwest China's Guizhou Province.

The celestial spectacle was also observed in Huzhong Town of Huzhong District in the Greater Khin-

gan Mountains area of Heilongjiang, as well as in Altay City in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

The aurora borealis is caused by the collision of charged particles directed by the Earth's magnetic field. The phenomenon is observable in areas close to the Earth's north pole, making Mohe - China's northernmost city - the best place in the country to observe the natural wonder.

Nature reserve in northwest China's Shaanxi beefs up monitoring, protection of giant pandas in activity season



The Foping National Nature Reserve in northwest China's Shaanxi Province - popularly known as a "home of giant pandas" - has beefed up monitoring and protection of giant pandas living there at the current period of late spring and early summer, in which giant pandas are more active in the wild.

According to results of a latest survey, there are 67 wild pandas living in the Foping National Nature Reserve, with an average of one panda for every 1.5 square kilometers.

Experts and rangers of the nature reserve have been working with these rare species for many years and they are familiar with the habits of giant pandas.

"Look at the panda feces. What do they suggest? The shape and color indicate that they were excreted last night or this morning, given the pattern typical for this season in which they eat bamboo shoots," said Li Tao, an engineer with the Administration Bureau of the Foping National Nature Reserve.

Li said that such fresh excrement

indicates recent frequent panda activities, which was further confirmed by a video captured in the reserve showing wild panda behavior. In the video, a male panda is seen rubbing its rear against a tree. Li explained that this behavior is the giant panda's way of marking territory and expressing affection towards a female panda.

"The digestive system of the giant panda still remains as that of a carnivore. By rights, it should eat meat, but it is indeed a real vegetarian. That is to say, more than 99 percent of its diet is bamboo. This dietary preference dictates that it must reside in a bamboo forest for its entire life, earning the giant panda the nickname 'bamboo hermit,'" Li said.

The nature reserve has continuously strengthened the construction of itself into a giant panda habitat. Currently, it has established a comprehensive monitoring system network, which includes management administration, protection stations, and patrol points. These efforts are aimed at jointly protecting the giant pandas.

"We protect the giant panda and its habitat through extensive wildlife protection publicity, operation of a 24-hour network monitoring system, regular field patrols, and other special actions," said Zhu Dapeng,

Panda cubs caught on camera delightfully indulging in bamboo buffet

Two giant panda cubs at a research center in southwest China have been caught on camera, happily munching away on their favorite meal, a helping of fresh, crunchy bamboo.

The adorable video footage from the multimedia platform "iPanda" shows the cute giant panda cubs enjoying a tasty portion of their beloved bamboo at the Dujiangyan base of the China Conservation and Research Center for Giant Pandas (CCRCGP) in Sichuan.

One of the food-loving giant panda cubs, "Bao Yuan," was born at the center in August 2021. He is the son of "Bao Bao" who was born and grew up in the National Zoo in Washington,

D.C., but was sent back to China in 2017 as per an agreement between China and the United States.

Another panda cub, "Mao Mao", was also born at the center in August 2021 and he is the son of "Shui Xiu."

The CCRCGP is a world-leading institution for the breeding and conservation of one of China's national treasures. The center has also established a global platform for promoting international cooperation and exchanges involving 18 zoos from 16 countries and regions, as well as 39 domestic animal breeding institutions and more than 10 scientific research institutes.



head of the scientific research section of the Foping National Nature Reserve.

In addition, the reserve also collaborates with the local community to protect pandas by organizing publicity and education activities, with an annual audience of at least 3,000

residents.

The Foping Nature Reserve, about 215 kilometers to the provincial capital city of Xi'an, lies on the middle of the Qinling Mountains and contain the highest panda population density in China.

Zhouzhi nature reserve sees birth of 30 new golden snub-nosed monkeys this year

As spring breathes life into the nature, golden snub-nosed monkey families are venturing out with their 30 fluffy newborns at Zhouzhi National Nature Reserve in northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

Situated about 1,500 meters above sea level in a dense forest, these little monkeys, accompanied by their

parents, are learning their first survival lessons.

The elder ones have been practicing foraging and climbing while the newborn babies snuggling up to their moms, creating a warm and lovely scene.

Normally, autumn is the breeding season for the golden snub-nosed

monkeys, and they give birth from March to May next year. Spring offers abundant food and is ideal for the healthy growth of new babies. Consequently, the golden snub-nosed monkey families migrate to lower-altitude areas to forage.

According to footages recorded by monitors, about 205 golden snub-nosed monkeys from 12 families live here. As of mid-April, around 30 healthy newborns have been observed, with five coming from a single family.

Established in 1986 and upgraded to a national-level reserve in 1988, Zhouzhi National Nature Reserve is aimed at the conservation of golden



snub-nosed monkeys. The current population of these monkeys has shown steady growth in recent years.

Migratory bird populations thrive as Dandong ramps up conservation efforts

Hundreds of thousands of migratory birds have recently been spotted resting, playing, and foraging at a national wetland reserve in Dandong City, northeast China's Liaoning Province.

As one of the most important stopovers for migratory waterbirds in the East Asia-Australasia Flyway, the Yalu River Estuary

Nature Reserve is the birds' paradise in China, attracting hundreds of thousands of migratory birds in March and April every year.

According to a staff member at the reserve, about 300,000 birds have arrived here in recent days, from the Oceania. After a month of rest, they will move further north to their breeding sites in early May.

Thanks to the preservation efforts of

local authorities and residents, the grandiose scenery of migratory birds resting and flying can be observed every year.

"Every year during the migration period, we adopt a method of regional zoning management. Local officers, forest and wetland rangers, and volunteers are mobilized by town party committee to patrol a 5 km coastal line and a 15 km wetland line in the zoned area to enhance preservation for birds and wildlife and regulate the behaviors of bird-watchers, such as forbidding induction shooting," said Li Chao, deputy town chief of

Huangtukan Town, Dandong City.

Additionally, the fishery departments also engage in these efforts, expanding the coverage of preservation to over 80,000 hectares.

"In 2010, the number of observed bird species in the reserve was estimated at 254, and by 2021, that number had risen to 324," said Sui Yanzuo, staff member at the Dandong Forestry and Grassland Development Center.



Farmer photographs China's 'yellow wonder' for two decades



By Li Hang

In a dense jujube trees grove, through which people can only pass one at a time, a man in a red vest, carrying a camera and holding a tripod, was swiftly moving. With each click of the shutter, the breathtaking scenery of the Hukou Waterfall, the world's largest yellow waterfall, was captured.

The man is Lü Guiming, a farmer photographer of Jixian county, North China's Shanxi Province. The 52-year-old has been dedicated to photographing the Hukou Waterfall for 24 years.

The Hukou Waterfall is the second-largest waterfall in China and the largest waterfall on the Yellow River. The Yellow River rushes here, with steep cliffs on both sides converging like the mouth of a pot, hence the name Hukou Waterfall.

Over the last 20 years, Lü has captured more than 100,000 images of the Hukou Waterfall, using a wide range of cameras including film cameras and digital cameras.

Through his lens, he has captured the seasonal transformations of the waterfall, from spring floods to the clear streams and soaring waterfalls of summer, the waterfall groups of autumn, and the ice-hanging cascades of winter.

'Son of the Yellow River'

Lü first saw the Hukou Waterfall when he was about 11 years old and lived only 17 kilometers away from it. While working outside in 1998, he unintentionally saw an image capturing the winter scenery of the waterfall, stirring up deep nostalgia within him.

Consequently, he returned to his hometown, capturing photos for tourists while observing every subtle change in the waterfall, beginning his journey in photography.

"I am a son of the Yellow River. I have too many deep feelings for the Yellow River and the Hukou Waterfall. It is the



Photos of the Hukou Waterfall taken by Lü Guiming

Hukou Waterfall that has changed my life," Lü said when answering why he has been dedicated to capturing the Hukou Waterfall for decades.

In order to take good photos, Lü started from scratch, diligently studying photography techniques. Besides reading numerous books, whenever photographers came to the Hukou Waterfall scenic area for work, he would accompany them, helping carry their photography equipment or tripods, to gain practical photography experience.

To photograph the Hukou Waterfall, Lü moved to a dilapidated cave near the waterfall, residing there for over 300 days each year. Observing the water flow, colors, and weather changes of Hukou became his daily essential task.

"For over 20 years, in pursuit of distinctive works, I have explored to every corner of the Hukou Waterfall, leaving my footprint even on every hilltop on both sides of the waterfall," he said.

According to Lü, most of his works were captured in the most dangerous areas beyond the protective railings of the Hukou Waterfall.

To capture the desired scenes of the Hukou Waterfall in winter, despite the perpetual mist and muddy banks, he purchased safety ropes and crampons to approach the edge, enduring chilling waits for

ideal lighting and compositions.

"Looking back, it was quite terrifying. But most of the time, once I entered the creative state, all dangers were forgotten," he said.

More than 2,000 photographs by Lü have been published in various newspapers and magazines. In 2017, a collection of his photos of the Hukou Waterfall in winter were featured in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Improved environment

From starting with a film camera to now utilizing drones for photography, his photography skills have continued to improve, and his lens have documented the changes in the ecological environment of the Hukou Waterfall.

As the icy Yellow River in the upper stream thaws due to the warm weather, the Hukou Waterfall on the border between Shanxi and Northwest China's Shaanxi Province enters the spring flood season when peach trees on both banks of the river are in full blossom, thus the

annual spring flood is also known as the "peach blossom flood."

"In the picture I took of the peach blossom flood of the Hukou Waterfall in 2005, the water was very turbid; in the one I took in 2015, the water flow was obviously much clearer," Lü commented on his photos of the peach blossom flood of the Hukou Waterfall taken over a decade that have witnessed the changes in the Yellow River.

The Hukou Waterfall is a landmark of the Yellow River. In recent years, a series of important ecological protection and restoration projects have been implemented in the Yellow River basin, such as reclaiming farmland for forest, improving the quality and effi-

ciency of economic forests, and wetland restoration.

Data shows that the area of water and soil erosion on the Loess Plateau has been reduced from the most serious estimate of 450,000 square kilometers since monitoring began to 231,000 square kilometers, and the sediment yield of the Yellow River has been greatly reduced.

"When I first started taking photos, there was a lot of wind and sand, and my clothes and face were covered with mud dots. Five cameras were broken in a year. Now, look at how clean this drone is when it flies back," Lü said.

As the ecological environment improves, the Hukou Waterfall tourist area has also become a "bird paradise." Black storks, herons, egrets, black-winged stilts, and geese... Lü's subjects for photography are becoming increasingly diverse.

"In the future, if there is an opportunity, I hope to organize an influential photography exhibition and publish the best album of the Hukou Waterfall, so that Hukou can go global and let the whole world know about it," Lü said. "Doing one thing well in a lifetime is enough."

By Ye Zi, Peng Xunwen and Kang Jie

China has become more enticing for foreigners as the country has concluded mutual visa exemption agreements covering different passports with more than 150 countries and regions.

Recently, relevant departments in China have rolled out multiple measures for payment institutions to improve payment services to meet the demand of foreigners in various scenarios. With the concerted efforts of various parties, the country's payment services are becoming more convenient, higher in quality, and more efficient for foreigners: streamlined procedures for opening bank accounts, registration, and binding overseas bank cards, and acceptance of foreign cards at more key venues and stores.

"A few days ago, I tried to bind my Visa card to WeChat and Alipay, and to my surprise, the whole process was very fast. With no need to verify my identity with my passport, it only took less than one minute to succeed," said Jack, an Australian, who recently came to China with his Chinese wife to visit her family. He heard from his family that the process of binding foreign bank cards through mobile applications had been simplified, so he decided to give it a try.

Jack had visited China with his wife a few times before, but at that time, it was quite complicated to bind a foreign bank card to Chinese mobile payment platforms. Therefore, he had to give up and let his wife handle the payment each time. "Now, after binding my own cards, all I need is a phone when I'm out," he said.

With the support and guidance of the People's Bank of China and the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, Alipay and Tenpay (provider of WeChat Pay services) have implemented a series of measures to improve payment services for foreigners in cooperation with commercial banks, clearing agencies, and card organizations since 2023. As a result, foreigners are allowed to bind overseas bank cards to Alipay or WeChat Pay for consumption, and more and more overseas e-wallets can be used in China.

Now, foreigners can use their overseas mobile phone numbers, bank card

numbers, etc. to open mobile payment services in China. China UnionPay has established interoperability with nearly 200 overseas e-wallets, which means users of overseas e-wallets such as K PLUS of Thailand, Naver Pay of South Korea, and GoPayz of Malaysia can make consumption in China. Alipay and Tenpay have allowed users of 13 overseas e-wallets to make payments in China. In addition, the two platforms have raised the single transaction limit for overseas travelers using mobile payments from \$1,000 to \$5,000, and lifted the annual cumulative transaction limit from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

The registration and verification for mobile payment have been further streamlined for foreigners. For instance, overseas users who open an account on WeChat Pay for the first time can make small payments without verification by only binding a foreign bank card. Subsequently, users can choose to complete real-name verification to increase the transaction limit.

Tenpay introduced a tiered verification solution before the Spring Festival in 2024, where overseas individuals only need to submit simple identity

information to directly link their foreign card and make payments in most daily scenarios within a certain limit.

Details of services have been improved. On March 18, Alipay launched a pilot multilingual translation service on its application, expanding from the original two languages of Chinese and English to 16 languages. The translation service can be ap-

plied to various scenarios within the application, such as ride-hailing, hotel booking, ticketing of tourist attractions, public transportation, and checking exchange rates.

An executive of Alipay noted that in the future, the focus will be on high-frequency scenarios used by foreign tourists visiting China, and Alipay will introduce more exclusive services for foreign users.

Additionally, Alipay will expand its service coverage to include more card organizations and overseas e-wallets, allowing more foreign tourists to make QR code payments with their own e-wallets in China, the executive added.

"Mobile payment in China is very convenient. Now I've gotten used to using it. I can scan and pay at restaurants, cafes, and supermarkets, and the exchange rate is shown in real time," Jack said.

Foreign currency exchange and cash services are also being improved. China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange has requested that at least one of the five foreign currency exchange channels should be available in important scenarios such as ports and hotels serving international guests.

Efforts are being made across China. For example, Beijing is improving its ability to accept foreign bank cards at key commercial areas, scenic spots, parks, and hotels; Shanghai has set up a special section on its official website to gather information about payment methods for foreigners,

making it convenient for them to find the content they need in a short time; Zhejiang Province launched a payment facilitation program for overseas personnel in November 2023, and by the end of February this year, there were already 2.56 million merchants across the province accepting mobile payments from overseas individuals.



▲ Tourists from Thailand pose for photos at the Mohan railway station of the China-Laos Railway in Southwest China's Yunnan Province. Photo: Border inspection station in Mohan



► A Pakistani customer pays his bill with Pakistan's NayaPay mobile app in Beijing. Photo: Kang Jie

CHINA STRIVES TO MAKE PAYMENT ENVIRONMENT MORE CONVENIENT, EFFICIENT



A foreign tourist books park tickets with a mobile app in Beijing. Photo: Kang Jie

A famous Chinese brand seeking to go global



Lai Wenhao, chairman of Guangzhou Mingyan Cosmetics Co., Ltd.



The August 8th Beautiful Skin Festival held by Guangzhou Mingyan Cosmetics Co., Ltd.



The XIeurope Shiqi Thailand ceremony held by Guangzhou Mingyan Cosmetics Co., Ltd.



The R&D team in Guangzhou Mingyan Cosmetics Co., Ltd.



The XIeurope Shiqi Thailand ceremony held by Guangzhou Mingyan Cosmetics Co., Ltd.



Francisco Kalbuadi Lay, the vice-prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, gave an interview with Lai Wenhao and his wife Yang Mei



Xanana Gusmão, the prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, met with chairman Lai Wenhao



The modern park and the fully automated workshop of Guangzhou Mingyan Cosmetics Co., Ltd.



On April 11, 2024, Hai Xia, hostess of Credit China, a program on the CCTV old story channel, had an interview with chairman Lai Wenhao

Tell old stories of a credible enterprise to see changes in Chinese business circle — About Guangzhou Mingyan Cosmetics Co., Ltd.

China Cultural center in Budapest to deepen understanding between two peoples



The upcoming official launch of the China Cultural Center in Budapest will play a pivotal role in enabling more Hungarians to deepen their knowledge of China and Chinese culture, said the Hungarian enthusiasts.

The China Cultural Center in Budapest, established by China's Ministry

of Culture and Tourism in accordance with the bilateral agreement between China and Hungary the , serves as an official cultural institution.

According to the China-Hungary Joint Statement on the Establishment of an All-Weather Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for the New

Era issued on Thursday, the two sides will support exchanges and cooperation between the China Cultural Center in Budapest and the Liszt Institute - Hungarian Cultural Center in Beijing, among others.

The center has evolved into a significant platform for Hungarian enthusiasts to delve into the Chinese

language, explore China's diverse cultural heritage, and gain insights into China's abundant tourism resources.

"(Hungarians) are keen on learning (Chinese) culture or understanding Chinese culture. So I think the China Cultural Center in Budapest will be a very important platform in the future to let Hungarian people better understand Chinese culture," said David, a staff member at the center.

Those Hungarians who have profound interest in Chinese culture have actively contributed to the construction of the cultural center. They believe that by immersing themselves in Chinese culture, they can gain a deeper understanding of China and its people.

"These are very very beautiful and touching the human soul, and I think if I learn and I practice these

activities, I can get closer the human souls and the people," said Gabor Cserkesz, chairperson of the Chinese Art Center.

An official from the China Cultural Center in Budapest said that China and Hungary share deep-rooted friendship, with frequent notable cultural exchanges that underscore their strong bond. The center will further enhance these exchanges and create new opportunities for bilateral cultural collaboration.

"The China Cultural Center in Budapest will better serve the cultural exchanges between China and Hungary in the future, enhance the friendship between the two peoples, and promote the people-to-people bonds," said Jin Hao, director of the China Cultural Center in Budapest.

Huizhou's Millennium Genealogical Records added to Memory of World Register



The historical region of Huizhou, now known as Huangshan, in east China's Anhui Province, has seen its "Millennium Genealogical Records" listed on UNESCO's "Memory of the World Register for Asia and the Pacific," underscoring the region's historical and cultural significance.

The records were included alongside two other significant documents from China -- Chengdu's old teahouse archives and Dege's printing blocks -- by the Memory of the World Register for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP), a regional branch of UNESCO's global Memory of the World Programme, as announced by China's National Archives Administration on Wednesday.

Huizhou is celebrated not just for its breathtaking landscapes, such as Mount Huangshan, but also for its rich cultural heritage that has flourished beneath these heights. The allure of

this region extends from its natural beauty to its deep historical roots.

Within the Huangshan Municipal Archives, one can trace centuries of familial legacies. The collection of records consists of 427 titles in 2,235 volumes, documenting nearly a thousand years of history from the Song Dynasty (960-1279) to the year 1949.

These records are foundational to understanding the traditional governance and societal structures based on clans and gentry in Huizhou.

These archives are more than historical records; they tell the stories of the enduring legacy of Huizhou families, detailing their interactions and cultural integrations over millennia. The global impact and historical depth of these families paint a vivid picture of the region's past.

For instance, the Wang family's genealogy, dating

Three archival documents in China inscribed into UNESCO Memory of World

Three archival documents submitted by the National Archives Administration of China have been approved for inclusion in the Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP) Regional Register by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Wednesday.

The Memory of the World Program is an extension of the world heritage protection, with a focus on documentary records.

The three archival documents include Archives of Chengdu Traditional Teahouses, Huizhou Genealogy Archives, and Printing Blocks Housed at the Derge Printing House.

Archives of Chengdu Traditional Teahouses are currently preserved in the Chengdu Municipal Archives in southwest

back to the Qing dynasty, includes 10 precepts focused on filial piety and fraternity. These principles have profoundly influenced generations, promoting ethical conduct and family loyalty, and preserving good family traditions and moral virtues.

The "Millennium Genealogical Records of Huizhou" are invaluable not just as historical accounts of various eras but also as chronicles of significant

China's Sichuan Province. These archival documents possess significant regional cultural characteristics and completely preserve the samples of tea house culture in Chengdu.

Archives of Chengdu Traditional Teahouses contain a collection of 6,345 items, including business licenses, statistical table, business documents, and printed materials related to tea houses in Chengdu from 1903 to 1949.

These archives are significant original documents for studying fine traditional Chinese culture, particularly Chinese tea culture, and hold important academic value.

Nowadays, the tea house has become a must-go destination for visitors to experience Chengdu-style life.

The Asia-Pacific Memory of the World Program currently has 17 achievements from China.



events, local customs, landmarks, and origins of festivals related to these families. They are essential resources for disciplines like archival science, history, cultural anthropology, and folklore studies.

Wang Zhaohui, director of Huangshan Municipal Archives who also oversees the MOWCAP application for the Huizhou documents, emphasized their significance.

"The 'Millennium Genea-

logical Records of Huizhou' are an integral part of Huizhou's documents. By nominating them for the Memory of the World Register for Asia and the Pacific, we can better provide foundational and supportive archival materials for the study of Huizhou and Chinese history, promoting the protection and development of the world's memory heritage," said Wang.

Hungary's Liszt Academy hits high notes in collaboration with Beijing music center

A top music school in the Hungarian capital Budapest has orchestrated a groundbreaking education initiative and embarked on a harmonious symphony of cultural exchange by partnering with an arts institution in the Chinese capital Beijing.

Launched between the Liszt Academy Secondary School - Bartok Bela Conservatory and the Beijing International Center for Music and Art, this inaugural pre-college program offers students a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a rich musical environment.

The endeavor marks a new milestone in musical pedagogy and signifies the deep-seated collaboration between Hungary and China in nurturing young musical talents.

Founded in 1875 by Hun-

garian composer and pianist Franz Liszt, the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest is an educational institution with a deep musical heritage. It houses the Liszt Collection, which includes invaluable books and manuscripts donated by Liszt himself.

Professor Gabor Eckhardt, a renowned pianist and one of this year's examiners for the program's entrance exam, is in Beijing to impart his knowledge through a series of masterclasses aimed at aspiring musicians.

"We can show them a lot of skills which belongs to the theoretical part of music. I think the Chinese students, are because of their very skillful, very attractive art of playing, this is what we can learn from China. But how to understand the music, espe-

cially the historical background, the meanings of the melody, the meanings of the harmonical background, these are very important if I would like to achieve higher goals," said Eckhardt.

Over the next three months, entry exams will take place for students aspiring to join the pre-college program, which is open to a wide range of musical talents, including those specialized in the strings, piano, wind, vocal, composition, conducting, and jazz genres. However, competition to grab one of the coveted places is intense, with only 20 spots available in this inaugural year.

The program is ultimately aiming to prepare some of China's finest young talents to qualify for admission to the prestigious Liszt Academy of Music, one of the most highly-regarded music



education institutions in Europe.

Through this collaboration, the two sides are forging a future where cultural and musical exchanges shape the global landscape of classical music.

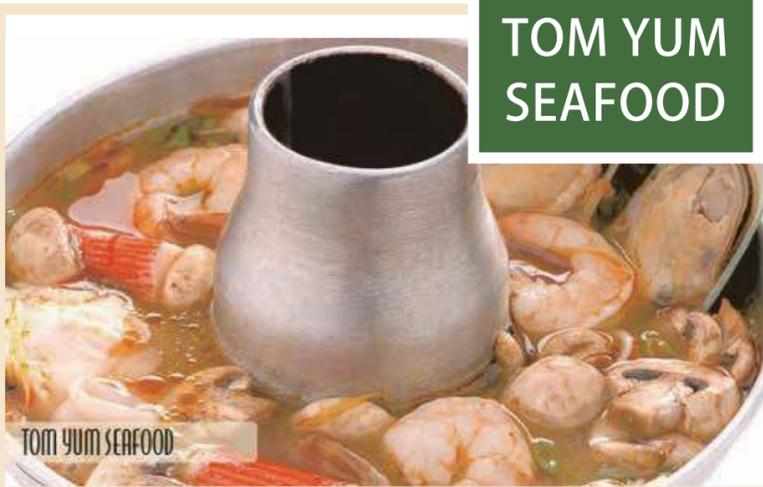
"Hungary and China are connected because our roots are common, we understand each other without knowing the languages of each other. For Hungary, [it] is as important to have the

Chinese students as [it is] for China to [have Hungarians] studying there. Because later when they come back, when they move forward, they can take this kind of music heritage and they can be diplomats of this cultural connection. So Hungary and China has a lot of roots, which is not discovered yet," said Eckhardt.



First Thai Architecture Building in Southern California

Papa Sa



TOM YUM SEAFOOD



PAPAYA TEMPURA SALAD LEGAL

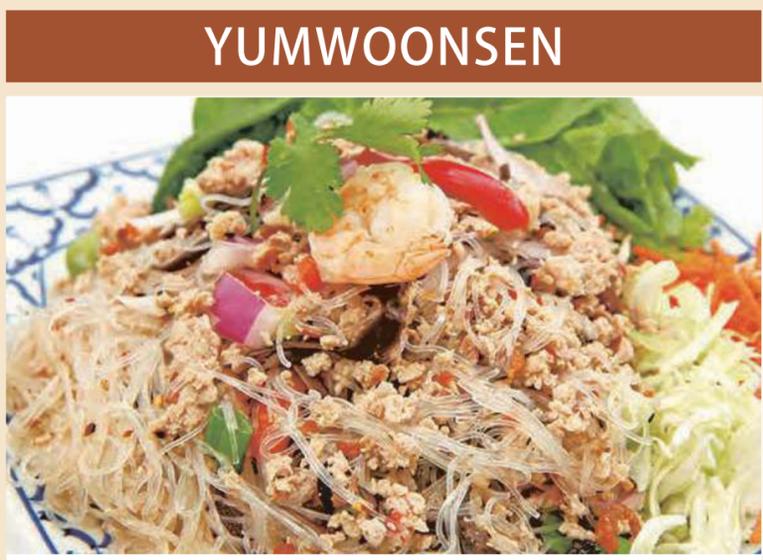
SOFT SHELL CRAB



PRESIDENT BBQ BEEF



ONG CHOL



YUMWOONSEN



ONG CHOI

At President Thai, we believe in providing our customer with the greatest and freshest ingredients with a warm touch of traditional Thai hospitality. We offer a wide selection of Thai authentic menu items for you to choose from. Our restaurant provides spacious space with the capacity to serve over 150 customers, perfect for organizing family get-togethers, parties or just a night out with your significant other. We are open 7 days a week from 11:30AM to 10:00PM.

Call Today For Reservation

Pasadena Location
 Phone: (626) 578-9814
 Website: president-thai.com
 Email: president-thai@live.com

VOTED BEST THAI CUISINE BY THE READER OF THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRIBUNE, PASADENA STAR NEWS AND WHITTIER DAILY NEWS

