

Abrupt heat-up brings warnings in state

The marine layer will shield the coast, but triple digits are likely in some inland areas.

By Grace Toohey

After months of below-average temperatures and weeks of unseasonably wet weather, California's first heat wave of the year is marking an abrupt transition into summery heat, with record-breaking, triple-digit temperatures expected this week in some inland areas.

The next few days — particularly Wednesday and Thursday — could offer a preview for the summer season, which is expected to bring higher temperatures than typical across the state's interior — creating potentially dangerous conditions for both human health and wildfire management.

"We can definitely expect a warm summer as a whole," said Brian Adams, a National Weather Service meteorologist in San Diego. There's a strong chance for above-average temperatures statewide through at least August, including during much of June, according to the latest models from the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center.

This week, the state's inland communities will feel the most intense temperature spikes from the high pressure ridge, or heat dome, parked over California, while the coast will be largely unaffected — a strong "June gloom" still providing refuge from the heat.

"It's the marine layer, that's nature's air conditioning and this is the peak of it," said Ryan Kittell, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Oxnard. "There's a lot of moderation from that heat due to that marine layer. ... It's a real steady increase [in temperature] as you go further inland."

Kittell said the extent and length of Southern California's marine layer will [See **Weather**, A12]



ASYLUM SEEKERS are detained by U.S. authorities Monday after entering from Mexico. "Republicans left me no choice" but to issue an executive order to "gain control of our border," President Biden said Tuesday.

ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

BIDEN SIGNS ORDER CLOSING BORDER

When crossings are high, U.S. will ban asylum seekers from entry through Mexico.

By Noah Bierman, Andrea Castillo and Hannah Fry

President Biden signed a proclamation Tuesday that bars migrants from seeking asylum along the U.S. border with Mexico while crossings are high — a change designed to make it harder for those who enter the country without prior authorization.

Under a new interim rule issued by the Biden administration, the president can put the border restrictions into effect when detentions surpass 2,500 migrants for seven days in a row — as was the case Tuesday. The rule also raises the legal bar for an asylum claim at the border from a reasonable possibility the migrant will face torture at home to a reasonable probability it will happen.

The heightened restrictions were scheduled to go into effect just after 9 p.m. Pacific time and to end two weeks after the number of crossers stopped at the border dips below 1,500 for more than a week.

There have been more than 1,500 border stops per day for most of the last nine years.

"This action will help us gain control of our border, restore order into the process," Biden said during a news conference Tuesday. "This ban will remain in place until a number of people trying to enter legally is reduced to a level that our system can effectively manage."

The restrictions would not apply to those who enter at official ports of entry or use other legal means, including those who use a relatively new mobile app to request an appointment. They would also exempt certain groups, including unaccompanied children, victims of [See **Border**, A6]

Anxiety at UCLA: 'Everywhere you turn there's a security guard'

Protesting students make up a fraction of the 41,000 on campus



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

PRO-PALESTINIAN activists face police breaking up their encampment at UCLA in May. Many students say they are caught in the middle.

By Grace Toohey, Hannah Fry and Caroline Petrow-Cohen

Weeks of protests, violence, massive police actions and now a strike have taken a toll on the UCLA campus community, leaving many students overwhelmed, anxious and still struggling to make sense of the events.

The unrelenting whirl of police and news helicopter rotors continued for days in early May as the pro-Palestinian encampment on campus was violently attacked and then dismantled. Tense and boisterous campus protests have taken over gathering areas. Last week, academic workers began to picket on campus, disrupting some classes and office hours as students prepared for finals.

Much of the focus has [See **UCLA**, A9]

Broken by a 17-hour ordeal, he gave a false confession

By Jessica Garrison and Anita Chabria

Thomas Perez Jr. first felt anxious that something bad might have happened to his father, Papa Tom, on an August night in 2018.

Papa Tom — people called Thomas Perez Sr. that — had put their family dog, Margosha, on her leash for a quick walk to the mailbox in their Fontana neighborhood, though it was nearly 10 p.m. But now, here was Margo back alone, the leash hanging off her collar, and Papa Tom nowhere to be found. Not at the mailbox, not at the neighbors, not at the nearby park.

Though he was elderly and spoke limited English, Papa Tom was a bit of a romantic player, and a secretive one at that. At first, Perez thought maybe his dad had met up with a lady friend. But by the next day [See **Interrogation**, A7]



Fontana Police Department

UNDER interrogation by Fontana police, Thomas Perez Jr. admitted to a murder that never happened.



MATT SLOCUM Associated Press

PRESIDENT'S SON ON TRIAL

The firearms case against Hunter Biden, with wife Melissa outside federal court in Wilmington, Del., opened with excerpts of his memoir. **NATION**, A12

A dispute over RV parking

Illegally placed planters are removed from a street used by vehicle dwellers. **CALIFORNIA**, B1

Musk's anger over immigration

Billionaire immigrant, and his misinformation, could influence the U.S. election. **BUSINESS**, A8

Weather Turning sunny.

L.A. Basin: 79/60. **B6**



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Fauci faces House GOP’s COVID clown show

In smear effort, panel attacks accomplished public health official without any substantiation

MICHAEL HILTZIK

Here’s what we know about Dr. Anthony S. Fauci: As a staff member at the National Institutes of Health for 54 years and director of its National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for 38 years, Fauci was a key figure in the development of therapies for HIV and ensuring that funding was available for the search for a cure.



Under his leadership, NIAID invested billions of dollars in research that resulted in the development of mRNA technology, which in turn resulted in the development of COVID-19 vaccines in record time, saving millions of lives.

Under Fauci, NIAID also sponsored research into treatments for pandemic flu and the Ebola and Zika viruses. When COVID struck, he was tapped as a top advisor to then-President Trump — one of seven presidents he has advised during his career, from Reagan through Biden.

He’s revered in the communities of immunologists and virologists; even after Trump sidelined him because he was speaking truths about COVID that Trump didn’t like, he was a prominent spokesman for a scientific approach to the pandemic.

Here’s how he was depicted by Republicans during a hearing Monday of the GOP-dominated Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic: as the mastermind of “dogmatic” policies that resulted in school closings and business failures, of forced vaccinations, of “one of the most invasive regimes of domestic policy the U.S. has ever seen.”

As the financial sugar daddy of research overseas that created COVID. As the sponsor of policies that are “fundamentally un-American.” And as a liar and hypocrite.

None of those accusations, which were aired Monday by subcommittee Chairman Brad Wenstrup (R-Ohio) and other Republican members, has the slightest relationship with truth.

They’re all elements of a campaign among Republi-



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE Associated Press

DR. ANTHONY Fauci, the former director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, pushes back during the hearing by the House select subcommittee on the coronavirus pandemic on Monday.

cans and right-wingers aimed at painting Fauci, 83, who retired from NIAID in December 2022, as “a comic-book supervillain,” in the words of Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-Md.).

Why are they doing this? One answer must be that conspiracists always need a target to attack in order to attract followers.

At the core of this campaign is the Republican conviction that COVID escaped from a Chinese laboratory.

Since there is absolutely no evidence for this theory that anyone has yet produced, Plan B has been to smear anyone in the firing line. Unfortunately for Fauci, he’s the designated “it.”

As I’ve reported many times, according to reputable scientists who have studied the origin of COVID, scientific evidence suggests that it’s overwhelmingly more likely that COVID reached humans the same way most viruses do, as spillovers from wildlife — in this case, via a thriving trade in animals susceptible to the virus.

Let’s look at the particular rabbit holes into which the subcommittee has burrowed to smear Fauci, as set forth during the 3½-hour congressional hearing Monday and in a 15-hour interrogation of Fauci by the subcommittee in January, a transcript of which was released over the weekend

along with a memo that misrepresented and cherry-picked his answers.

The committee members are fixated on the notion that Fauci “suppressed” discussion of the possibility of a lab leak. Why would he do that? Rep. Ronny Jackson (R-Texas) proposed an answer:

“It’s obvious to everyone,” he said, “that you and your organization, NIH, had a lot to lose if the American people were to discover that COVID-19 most likely leaked from a lab in Wuhan, China, and that you ... actually funded this research.”

Fauci has to this day stated that he is open-minded about the origin of the pandemic.

More to the point, documentary evidence in the subcommittee’s possession shows that in the early days of the pandemic — January and February 2020, when scientists saw features of the SARS-CoV-2 virus causing COVID that they didn’t recognize as coming from nature — he urged them by email to report their concerns, if validated, to “the appropriate authorities,” meaning the FBI in the U.S. and MI5 in Britain.

“It is inconceivable,” Fauci said in his opening statement to the subcommittee, “that anyone who reads this e-mail could conclude that I was trying to ‘cover up’ the possibility of a laboratory leak. I was advocating for a prompt and

thorough examination of the data and a totally transparent process.”

As it happened, further scientific scrutiny convinced the scientists that “any type of laboratory-based scenario” was not “plausible,” as they reported in Nature in March 2020. Their conclusion has held up over time.

The subcommittee Republicans tried hard to contradict the notion that the lab leak hypothesis is a “conspiracy theory.” Fauci played along, up to a point. He acknowledged that speculation about a lab leak is not in itself a conspiracy theory, but that doesn’t go for the elaborations that many of its adherents have made of it.

“What is a conspiracy theory is the kind of distortions of that particular subject, like, it was a lab leak and I was parachuted into the CIA like Jason Bourne and told the CIA that they should really not be talking about a lab leak,” he said. “That’s a conspiracy.” He was referring to a ludicrous accusation published in September, with great fanfare but no factual support whatsoever, by none other than Wenstrup.

The members spent an inordinate amount of time Monday on the question of whether Fauci’s institute funded so-called Gain of Function experiments in China, so a brief primer on this issue is in order.

“Gain of Function” has become something of a shibboleth for lab-leak adherents, the way “critical race theory” and ESG have become dog whistles for activists trying to undermine, respectively, the public educational system and environmental and social concerns for investors — in this case, giving the term a uniquely sinister connotation.

Generically, however, it refers to laboratory work that augments natural qualities of a microbe to facilitate experimental scrutiny or achieve a necessary goal, such as allowing microbes to produce a flu vaccine or bacteria to produce artificial insulin.

From 2014 to 2017, the U.S. suspended gain-of-function experiments to develop a standard identifying research that might produce “potential pandemic pathogens.” The lab-leak camp asserts that NIAID funded experiments that gave a virus in the Chinese lab the features necessary to make it infectious for humans.

The work that NIAID funded in China was analyzed according to that standard, and it was determined by NIH not to fall into that category, as Fauci has testified before. The subcommittee peppered Fauci with questions aimed at eliciting an admission that the NIAID-funded work qualified under the broad, pre-2017 definition, but he

made clear — and is supported by the public record — that the work did not fall into that category.

Much of the hearing was devoted to trivialities. The Republicans blamed Fauci for imposing a regulation on Americans specifying that effective social distancing required a six-foot space between individuals. The GOP members maintain that no scientific research validates a six-foot standard, and cited a 2020 peer-reviewed paper as confirmation.

This assertion is self-refuting, however; the paper actually says that under some circumstances, six feet may *not be enough*. When Fauci was asked about the issue in January, he explained that coughing, sneezing, wind and other conditions could play into the efficacy of social distancing at any distance. At that point his questioner, GOP counsel Mitch Benzine, acknowledged, “I didn’t think that through, I guess.” But the Republicans masticated the issue endlessly Monday nonetheless.

In any case, Fauci never had the authority to impose public health mandates — whether for masks, social distancing, vaccination or anything else. These were a product of state and local policy decisions. To the extent they relied on government recommendations, those came from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a government body with which Fauci had no official connection.

The fundamental theme of Monday’s hearing was that Fauci should be blamed, even pilloried, for doing the best anyone could in dealing with a virus that no one had seen before, with means of transmission that were not understood for months or more and therapies that took more than a year to figure out.

It’s Fauci’s burden that ignorant and irresponsible politicians and their followers have chosen to turn their gunsights on him, for reasons that remain unclear.

“There have been everything from harassments by emails, texts, letters, of myself, my wife, my three daughters,” he said. “There have been credible death threats leading to the arrests of two individuals, and ‘credible death threats’ means someone who clearly was on his way to kill me. It’s required my having protective services essentially all the time.”

Is this how we wish to treat our most devoted public servants — by smearing them to the point that promising scientists choose not to place themselves in the firing line by entering the public health field?

At the close of the hearing, Wenstrup said his panel’s “goal is to take a hard look at the facts.” But there were few “facts” elicited Monday, just disinformation and character assassination.

Was that really the goal? There are no signs that the Republicans learned a thing from their inquisition. In January, during Fauci’s interrogation, Rep. Michael Cloud (R-Texas) tweeted, “While many lost their loved ones, their businesses, and livelihoods, Dr. Fauci made millions and enjoyed the media spotlight. It was his most successful year.”

Monday, I asked Cloud if he still believed that. He replied, “I 100% stand by this tweet. Dr. Fauci received more money and glowing media coverage than he had ever received in his life, and if you can’t pick up that he both enjoyed it (and fed into it), then that is on you.”

Let’s give Fauci the last word on that. In January, he lamented that in 2020 he “became the villain number one of the extremists in the population,” which made it “one of the worst years of my life.” Shown the tweet, he remarked, “A congressman tweeted that?”

When he was told, “Yeah.” He replied, simply, “Jesus.”

Trump’s conviction tests America’s character and values

MARK Z. BARABAK

When he isn’t fetishizing the fictive cannibal Hannibal Lecter — “a wonderful man” — Donald Trump rhapsodizes over the gangster Al Capone.



“He was seriously tough, right?” Trump said of the murderous bootlegging pimp and drug dealer. “If you looked at him in the wrong way, he blew your brains out.”

The reverie, twisted as it may be, is an apt one.

Though Capone cut a sanguinary trail broader and wider than the Windy City, the Chicago mobster landed behind bars only after being nailed for tax evasion — certainly one of the least of his crimes.

So it is with Trump’s New York conviction for falsifying business records — “mere pieces of paper,” in the words of his thwarted defense counsel.

It’s possible, amid the yuckiness and the yucks — too much information about Trump’s bedding of Stormy Daniels, snickering accounts of the defendant’s courtroom siestas — to lose sight of the wrongdoing at the heart of the case.

Trump paid \$130,000 in hush money to cover up his extramarital liaison with Daniels, knowing the facts would very likely cost him the 2016 presidential election if voters found out. (His wife, Melania, was home with their newborn when



JIM RASSOL Associated Press

SUPPORTERS outside the ex-president’s Florida estate Sunday reflect troubling values in today’s GOP.

Trump stepped out on her.)

It’s hardly the most egregious of Trump’s myriad offenses: pilfering highly classified documents from the White House; trying to strong-arm Georgia’s secretary of state into stealing enough votes to overturn Trump’s defeat; siccing a deadly mob on the Capitol to reverse the result of the 2020 presidential election.

But thanks to a Florida judge evidently in Trump’s back pocket, the blundering of a Georgia prosecutor and a pliant U.S. Supreme Court, none of the ex-president’s other criminal cases are likely to reach a jury in time for a verdict before Nov. 5.

Thus, Trump’s conviction on 34 felony counts by a Manhattan jury is a welcome and important political marker.

Imperfect justice. But justice nevertheless.

The response from many

of Trump’s fellow Republicans was no less sad or pathetic for its utter predictability.

Falling in line as they dropped to their knees, a parade of vice presidential wannabes — Doug Burgum, Marco Rubio, Tim Scott, Elise Stefanik among them — decreed the verdict as a cosmic miscarriage of justice.

When Larry Hogan, Maryland’s former Republican governor and a candidate for U.S. Senate, called on Americans to “respect the verdict and the legal process” — a statement that is not only reasonable and respectful but a kind of political boilerplate — the response from Trump World was telling.

“You just ended your campaign,” Trump’s consigliere, er, top campaign strategist fired back.

House Speaker Mike Johnson said Trump’s

conviction marked “a shameful day in American history,” which certainly puts things like the Dred Scott decision and Wounded Knee Massacre in perspective.

Like many — including the groveling Rubio, Scott and Stefanik — Johnson was once a Trump critic. Now Johnson unflinchingly embraces him, whiplash being a common condition in today’s Republican Party.

Trump isn’t just the GOP nominee-in-waiting, Johnson said at a weekend fundraiser in Peoria, Ill., “but a symbol of one who is willing to fight back against ... corruption, the deep state and all the rest.”

Republican have long run against government and its perceived overreach, but the strategy has reached new heights in the last few years.

The Party of Lincoln, which appealed to the better angels of our nature, has become the Party of Trump, who panders to the baser instincts of his aggrieved followers.

If it’s uplift you want, catch an elevator.

The country needs a strong, vibrant and serious-minded GOP, to compete against and hold the Democratic Party in check. A see-no-evil personality cult dedicated to the presidential restoration of a grifting, vengeance-minded felon just doesn’t cut it.

The party, and the country, needs to purge Trump once and for all, and the only way that will happen is a resounding and unequivocal defeat at the polls,

Again.

Trump has been a loser in three straight elections, starting with the 2018 midterms. Even the most zombified Republican politician will eventually come to realize the party needs to move on.

More broadly, the election in November amounts to a test of character. Not Trump’s. It’s about the character of our country.

In 2016, many voters chose to overlook Trump’s serial bankruptcies, mendacity, extravagant malice and utter lack of qualifications, assuming he would “pivot” — a term fashionable at the time — and become more sober and responsible once he became president.

Eight years later — after two impeachments, four criminal indictments, two libel verdicts, a civil judgment for business fraud, a judge’s finding Trump committed sexual assault and, now, his felony convictions — there is no doubt about the fundamental rot that festers at Trump’s core.

Will voters put him back in the White House? And what does that say about America’s values, not to mention the country’s judgment, if they do?

Every four years, a candidate for one party or the other — whichever happens to be out of power in the White House — describes the upcoming election as the most important one of our lifetime.

It’s a cliché so old it has wrinkles atop its wrinkles.

But this time it happens to be true.

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THE WORLD

Modi claims victory for alliance in India election

Despite his optimism, it looks unlikely that the prime minister's faction will secure a majority on its own.

By KRUTIKA PATHI AND SHEIKH SAALIQ

NEW DELHI — Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed victory for his alliance on Tuesday in India's general election, despite a lackluster performance from his own party as it faced a stronger than expected challenge from the opposition, which pushed back against his mixed economic record and polarizing politics.

Modi told a crowd at his party's headquarters that his National Democratic Alliance will form the government for the third consecutive time, saying Indian voters had "shown immense faith" both in his party and the coalition alliance.

"Today's victory is the victory of the world's largest democracy," he said.

Still, for the first time since Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party swept to power in 2014, it appeared unlikely it would secure a majority on its own, and the prime minister would instead need the support of the other parties in his coalition for his third five-year term in the world's largest democratic exercise.

That would be a stunning blow for the 73-year-old, who had hoped for a landslide victory. Despite the setback, many of the Hindu nationalist policies he's instituted over the last 10 years remain locked in place.

Modi pledged to make good on his election promise to expand India's economy.

He said he would advance India's defense production, boost jobs for youth, raise exports and help farmers, among other things.



MANISH SWARUP Associated Press

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi is greeted by supporters Tuesday as he arrives at Bharatiya Janata Party headquarters in New Delhi.

"This country will see a new chapter of big decisions. This is Modi's guarantee," he said, speaking in the third person.

In the face of surprising numbers, the opposition claimed they had also won a victory of sorts, with the main opposition Congress party saying the election had been a "moral and political loss" for Modi.

"This is [the] public's victory and a win for democracy," Congress party President Mallikarjun Kharge told reporters.

In his 10 years in power, Modi has transformed India's political landscape, bringing Hindu nationalism, once a fringe ideology in India, into the mainstream while leaving the country deeply divided.

His supporters see him as a self-made, strong leader who has improved India's standing in the world. His critics and opponents say his Hindu-first politics have bred intolerance and while the economy, the world's fifth-largest and one of the fastest growing, has become more unequal.

The counting of more than 640 million votes cast over six weeks was expected

to last into the night.

Some 12 hours into counting, partial tallies reported by India's Election Commission showed Modi's BJP was ahead in 114 constituencies and had won 126 of 543 parliamentary seats. The Congress party led in 45 constituencies and had won 54.

A total of 272 seats are needed for a majority. In 2019, the BJP won 303 seats, while they secured 282 in 2014 when Modi first came to power.

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance led in 147 constituencies and won 139, according to the partial count. The Congress party is part of the INDIA alliance, which led in 131 constituencies and had won 99.

The Election Commission does not release data on the percentage of votes tallied.

Exit polling from the weekend had projected the NDA to win more than 350 seats. Indian markets, which had hit an all-time high on Monday, closed sharply down Tuesday, with benchmark stock indices — the NIFTY 50 and the BSE Sensex — both down by more than 5%.

For Payal, a resident of the northern city of Lucknow who uses only one name, the election was about the economy and India's vast number of people living in poverty.

"People are suffering, there are no jobs, people are in such a state that their kids are compelled to make and sell tea on the roadside," Payal said. "This is a big deal for us. If we don't wake up now, when will we?"

If Modi wins, it would only be the second time an Indian leader has retained power for a third term after Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first prime minister.

But if his BJP is forced to form a coalition, the party would likely "be heavily dependent on the goodwill of its allies, which makes them critical players who we can expect will extract their pound of flesh, both in terms of policymaking as well as government formation," said Milan Vaishnav, director of the South Asia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "This would be truly, you know, uncharted territory, both for Indians as well as for the prime minister."

Before Modi came to

power, India had coalition governments for 30 years. His BJP has always had a majority on its own while still governing in a coalition.

Extreme heat struck India as voters went to the polls. While temperatures were somewhat lower Tuesday, election officials and political parties still hauled in large quantities of water and installed outdoor air coolers for people waiting for results.

Outside BJP party headquarters in New Delhi, supporters banged drums and bells as the counting was underway. Earlier, party workers performed a Hindu ritual.

Meanwhile, supporters at the Congress party headquarters appeared upbeat and chanted slogans praising Rahul Gandhi, the face of the party's campaign.

Speaking at the news conference with party president Kharge, Gandhi said he saw the figures as a message from the people.

"The poorest of this country have defended the constitution of India," he said.

Over 10 years in power, Modi's popularity has outstripped that of his party's, and turned a parliamentary election into one that increasingly resembled a presidential-style campaign. The result is that the BJP relies more and more on Modi's enduring brand to stay in power, with local politicians receding into the background even in state elections.

"Modi was not just the prime campaigner, but the sole campaigner of this election," said Yamini Aiyar, a public policy scholar.

The country's democracy, Modi's critics say, is faltering under his government, which has increasingly wielded strong-arm tactics to subdue political opponents, squeeze independent media and quash dissent. The government has rejected such accusa-

tions and says democracy is flourishing.

And economic discontent has simmered under Modi. While stock markets reach record highs and millionaires multiply, youth unemployment has soared, with only a small portion of Indians benefiting from the boom.

As polls opened in mid-April, the BJP focused its campaign on "Modi's guarantees," highlighting the economic and welfare achievements that his party says have reduced poverty. With him at the helm, "India will become a developed nation by 2047," Modi repeated in rally after rally.

But the campaign turned increasingly shrill, as Modi ramped up polarizing rhetoric that targeted Muslims, who make up 14% of the population, a tactic seen to energize his core Hindu majority voters.

The opposition INDIA alliance has attacked Modi over his Hindu nationalist politics, and campaigned on issues of joblessness, inflation and inequality.

But the broad alliance of over a dozen political parties has been beset by ideological differences and defections, raising questions over their effectiveness. Meanwhile, the alliance has also claimed it's been unfairly targeted, pointing to a spree of raids, arrests and corruption investigations against its leaders by federal agencies it says are politically motivated. The government has denied this.

In Mumbai, Mangesh Mahadeshwar was one of many surprised by how the election was playing out.

"Yesterday we thought that the BJP would get more than 400 seats," the 52-year-old said.

Pathi and Saaliq write for the Associated Press. AP journalists David Rising in New Delhi and Rafiq Maqbool in Mumbai, India, contributed to this report.

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- California is earthquake country – scientists predict a 75% chance of a major quake hitting SoCal in the next 30 years.*
- Thirty years ago, the Northridge Earthquake devastated neighborhoods around Los Angeles, leaving some of them "ghost towns" for decades.

Millions of California homes were built before 2000, which may make them more vulnerable to earthquake damage. Was yours? **A seismic retrofit to strengthen your home is one of the best ways to prepare for the next big quake.**

Visit StrengthenYourHouse.com to learn more about seismic retrofits and how they can help protect your home and your loved ones from earthquake damage.

What Types of Homes May Need a Seismic Retrofit?

One of the hardest lessons of the Northridge earthquake was that not all homes perform the same when the earth starts to move. Take a look around your house while you read on; does any of this seem familiar?

A common type of house, favored by Angelenos and SoCal homeowners, has a living space over a garage. These are called "soft story" homes for good reason, and if they were built before 2000, they're likely vulnerable to earthquake damage. Unfortunately, an un-reinforced garage space with a lot of weight built on top of it is especially vulnerable to collapse in a temblor – another horrible lesson from the Northridge earthquake. The good news? A retrofit can help protect your soft-story home.

Older homes on raised foundations, especially those built before 1980, are more likely to be at risk for earthquake damage because they were built before modern building codes. An older home with steps up to the first floor is on a raised foundation and may have a "crawl space" underneath. A strong earthquake can topple this type of house off its foundation, causing catastrophic damage. But a simple retrofit can

help prevent this too, by bolting the house to its foundation and bracing the crawl space walls with plywood.

Other houses, like those with post-and-pier footings and those built on hillsides, may also be at risk. A seismic retrofit can help – visit StrengthenYourHouse.com to learn more.

Why Should I Strengthen My House with a Seismic Retrofit?

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- Help you stay in your home after a damaging earthquake

Your Family

During an earthquake, people can be injured or trapped in their homes. A seismic retrofit strengthens your home and lessens the risk of injury during an earthquake.

Your Investment

Your home is likely your most important financial investment. Compare the cost of a retrofit now to the cost of rebuilding your home after a major quake. (Spoiler: a retrofit is much cheaper.) A seismic retrofit does not guarantee that your house will not be damaged in an earthquake, but it can help greatly reduce the damage.

Your Place to Live

If your house is damaged during an earthquake, you may have to continue paying a mortgage on top of hotel expenses. Retrofitting your home, if needed, gives you the best chance to stay in the house after an earthquake. Affordable housing is hard to find, and the pandemic reminded us all how important home is during an emergency.

But How Much Does It Cost (And How Long Does It Take)?

A seismic retrofit can be simple to do and may not be as expensive

as you think. A raised-foundation retrofit typically ranges from \$3,000 to \$7,000 and may only take a few days to complete.

A soft-story retrofit may be more expensive. But it's still less expensive and less complicated than rebuilding your home after a major earthquake. For both kinds of retrofits, financial assistance may be available.

Fine. I'm Not Saying I'll Do It, But I Am Willing To Look Into It.

That's really all we can ask. Remember that website we mentioned before? Get information on what type of retrofit may help you, useful tips like where to find a licensed contractor to do the work, and lots of other tools to help Southern Californians be better prepared for the next big shake. Oh, and one last note: StrengthenYourHouse.com is backed by the California Residential Mitigation Program (CRMP), a partnership between the California Earthquake Authority and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. We don't get anything when you decide to retrofit (except a very happy feeling). Visit us at: StrengthenYourHouse.com.

* According to the third Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast (UCERF3) report.



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An Earthquake Soft Story (ESS) home with a living space built above the garage.

A U.S. lobbying blitz for Gaza cease-fire plan

As diplomats push the proposal, a far-right coalition in Israel threatens Netanyahu not to accept it.

By MATTHEW LEE
AND AAMER MADHANI

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration has launched an intense drive to persuade Hamas and Israel to accept a new cease-fire proposal in the nearly 8-month-old war in Gaza while it also presses Arab nations to get the militant group to go along with the terms.

It comes as President Biden suggested in a Time magazine interview published Tuesday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may be prolonging the war against Hamas to ensure his political survival. Biden, who gave that interview a week ago, seemed to dial back his criticism in a brief exchange with reporters following an immigration speech at the White House.

In response to a question about whether Netanyahu is playing politics with the war, Biden said: “I don’t think so. He’s trying to work out the serious problem he has.”

Netanyahu faces a far-right coalition that has threatened to break up his government if the prime minister agrees to a new cease-fire proposal, which Biden announced Friday as an Israeli plan. Since then, Biden and his top aides have not only pressed for Israel and Hamas to approve the deal but also have been working the phones with Arab and Muslim nations.

Biden, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and national security advisor Jake Sullivan have all made calls, and Brett McGurk, the White House coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa, will be heading to the region this week to further make the case for the deal. The plan would aim to free remaining Israeli hostages held by Hamas and lead to the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza in phases.

Since Friday, Blinken has spoken with the foreign ministers of Turkey, Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Algeria, according to the State Department. Blinken also spoke over the weekend with Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Benny



ABDEL KAREEM HANA Associated Press

A PALESTINIAN woman outside a hospital in Deir al Balah, Gaza Strip, mourns relatives killed in Israeli bombardment. U.S. officials say Hamas has yet to respond to the cease-fire proposal sent to them Thursday.

Gantz, another member of Netanyahu’s war Cabinet.

Biden spoke Monday with the emir of Qatar — whose country, along with Egypt, has played a major role in trying to negotiate a truce and persuade Hamas to accept one.

That was followed by a joint statement from the leaders of the Group of 7 advanced democracies calling “on Hamas to accept this deal, that Israel is ready to move forward with, and we urge countries with influ-

ence over Hamas to help ensure that it does so.”

U.S. officials say Hamas has yet to respond to the proposal that was sent to them Thursday and have bristled at suggestions that Netanyahu is not fully on board. They have stressed that the Israelis signed off on sending the proposal to Hamas last week.

But two leading members of Netanyahu’s far-right governing coalition — National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance

Minister Bezalel Smotrich — have threatened to leave Netanyahu’s government if he signs off on the proposal. That would cause the coalition to collapse.

Netanyahu has said there are certain “gaps” in how Biden laid out the proposal and Israel would not agree to a permanent cease-fire until “the destruction of Hamas’ military and governing capabilities, the freeing of all hostages and ensuring that Gaza no longer poses a threat to Israel.”

In the Time interview conducted May 28, three days before he announced the cease-fire proposal, Biden was asked about critics in Israel suggesting that Netanyahu was extending the war for political preservation. Biden initially said he wasn’t going to comment, then noted that “there is every reason for people to draw that conclusion.”

White House national security spokesman John F. Kirby told reporters Tuesday that the president’s

comments in Time were “referencing what many critics have said. For our part, though, he and Prime Minister Netanyahu do not agree on everything.”

But Kirby said the U.S. would keep working with its ally to combat Hamas and get the cease-fire plan approved.

Meanwhile in Gaza on Tuesday, the Israeli military said ground troops backed by airstrikes launched an operation in central Gaza’s Bureij refugee camp. Hospital officials said a strike in the camp killed 11 Palestinians, including three children and a woman.

A spokesman for Gaza’s civil defense said first responders recovered the bodies of 360 people, mostly women and children, killed in the urban refugee camp of Jabaliya during a three-week Israeli offensive there.

Israeli attacks in Gaza have killed more than 36,000 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians. Israel launched the war in Gaza after Hamas’ Oct. 7 attack, in which militants stormed into southern Israel, killed some 1,200 people — mostly civilians — and abducted about 250. As many as 100 hostages are believed to still be alive in Gaza.

Lee and Madhani write for the Associated Press. AP writer Seung Min Kim in Washington contributed to this report.

Heavy security, silence prevail on Tiananmen anniversary

Police out in force near site of 1989 Beijing massacre. In Hong Kong, officers swarm protesters.

By KEN MORITSUGU
AND KANIS LEUNG

BEIJING — Checkpoints and police vehicles were in place Tuesday at Beijing’s Tiananmen Square as China tried to silence the 35th anniversary of a bloody crackdown on pro-democracy protests. Hong Kong police swarmed a small group of people who tried to protest or commemorate as the effort extended beyond the mainland.

China has long quashed any public recognition of the 1989 military crackdown on months-long protests at the heart of its capital. An estimated 180,000 troops and police rolled in with tanks and armored vehicles and fired into crowds trying to block them from advancing on the student-led demonstration in the square.

Hundreds, if not thousands, are believed to have been killed in an overnight operation that ended the morning of June 4, 1989.

It was a turning point in modern Chinese history as Communist Party hardliners embraced control instead of political reforms.

The economy boomed in the ensuing decades, turning a once-impooverished country into the world’s second largest economy, but societal controls have been further tightened since party leader Xi Jinping came to power in 2012.

Across China, the anniversary remains a taboo subject that is heavily censored. Any mention on social media is quickly erased.

Life appeared as normal in Beijing on Tuesday, with tourists lining the streets leading to gates to Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City, the former imperial palace across from it. The closest subway exit was closed, as was a viewing point atop Tiananmen Gate, according to a visitor registration website.

“As to the political disturbance that occurred in the late 1980s, the Chinese government has long had a clear conclusion,” Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said without elaborat-

ing. Asked about Western government statements on the anniversary, she added, “We are firmly opposed to anyone using this as a pretext to attack and smear China and interfere in China’s internal affairs.”

Tiananmen Mothers, a group formed by families of the victims, made an online appeal to the Chinese government to publish the names and total number of those who died, grant compensation to the victims and their relatives and pursue legal accountability for those responsible.

“The June 4 tragedy is a historical tragedy that the Chinese government must face and explain to its people, and some people in the government at that time should be held legally responsible for the indiscriminate killing of innocents,” the group said in a letter signed by 114 relatives and published on its website, which is blocked in China.

Tiananmen memorials were also scrubbed out in Hong Kong — for years the only place in China where they could take place. A carnival organized by pro-Beijing groups was held Tuesday in a park that for decades was the site of a huge candlelight vigil marking the anniversary.

Hong Kong police officers were out in force. An elderly man was seen being taken away after holding up two handwritten posters. One read: “Remember 89! Mourn 64!” Hong Kong media said activist Alexandra Wong, popularly known as “Grandma Wong,” was also removed after she chanted slogans.

An AP journalist saw another woman taken away after being searched, and an online Hong Kong media outlet reported a fourth person taken in a police vehicle. In both cases it was unclear why.

“It’s different from the past,” said Hong Kong resident Keith Law. “Many people seem to act as if there’s nothing happening, including myself.”

After darkness fell, one person who lighted a candle and two others who turned on their smartphone lights were quickly cordoned off by police and questioned in three separate incidents outside the park. They were eventually released.

“My heart hasn’t died yet,” said one, former vigil-goer Edward Yeung.

Rows of electronic candles lighted up the dozens of windows of the U.S. Consulate at night, and the British Consulate posted an image on the social media platform X of a hand holding a smartphone with its light on and the Roman numerals “VI IV,” a reference to June 4. Hong Kong is a former British colony.

Some Hong Kong residents remembered the event privately, running 6.4 kilometers on Monday or sharing Tiananmen-related content on social media.

A bookstore that displayed “35/5” on its window — a roundabout reference to the date of the crackdown as May 35 — wrote on Instagram that police officers were outside the shop for an hour Sunday and recorded the ID details of customers.

Hong Kong leader John Lee did not answer directly

when asked Tuesday whether residents could publicly mourn the crackdown. He urged residents not to let down their guard against attempts to cause trouble.

“The threat to national security is real,” Lee said at a weekly briefing. “Such activities can happen all of a sudden, and different people may use different excuses to hide their intention.”

Commemorative events have grown overseas in response to the silencing of voices in Hong Kong. More than 100 people gathered in Washington to light candles Monday at the foot of a replica of a statue erected on the square during the 1989 protest — a woman holding a torch and known as the Goddess of Democracy.

“Chinese people cannot speak for themselves, so we must speak for them,” said political commentator Gordon Chang.

That sentiment was echoed in Taiwan, where people laid flowers and put electronic candles on the numbers 8964 — representing June 4, 1989 — on a banner spread on the ground in Taipei, the capital. Taiwan is a self-governing democratic island that China claims as its territory.

“As long as other places can still protest, we must continue to protest,” resident Leo Chiang said.

Moritsugu and Leung write for the Associated Press and reported from Beijing and Hong Kong. AP journalists Emily Wang Fujiyama in Beijing, Johnson Lai in Taipei and Didi Tang in Washington contributed.

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Seoul will resume border exercises and propaganda campaign after being hit with trash-laden balloons.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL — South Korea said Tuesday that it fully suspended a contentious military agreement with North Korea in order to resume front-line military activities, as tensions between the rivals are rising over the North’s recent launch of trash-carrying balloons.

North Korea didn’t immediately respond, but South Korea’s resumption of firing exercises or propaganda loudspeaker broadcasts will probably prompt North Korea to take similar or stronger steps along their tense border.

In the last week, North

Korea has used balloons to drop manure, cigarette butts, scraps of cloth and waste paper on its neighbor. South Korea responded by promising “unbearable” retaliation. North Korea said Sunday that it would halt its balloon campaign.

South Korea’s Cabinet Council and President Yoon Suk-yeol on Tuesday approved a proposal to suspend the 2018 inter-Korean agreement on lowering front-line military tensions.

Officials said the suspension took effect later Tuesday. Under a related South Korean law, the suspension of the deal requires a notification to North Korea. But defense officials said that since all communication channels between the Koreas remain cut, the announcement of the suspension would serve as a notification to North Korea.

Cho Chang-rae, South Korea’s deputy defense minister for policy, told report-

ers that his nation will use all available measures to protect the public from North Korean provocations.

“The responsibility for this situation lies solely with North Korea. If North Korea launches additional provocations, our military, in conjunction with the solid South Korea-U.S. defense posture, will punish North Korea swiftly, strongly and to the end,” Cho said.

The military agreement — reached during a short-lived era of reconciliation between the Koreas — required the two countries to cease all hostile acts at border areas, such as live-fire and aerial drills and psychological warfare.

During the Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, South Korea’s No. 2 official, said the 2018 deal has weakened the country’s military readiness at a time when the North’s provocations pose real threats to the public. Han

cited North Korea’s balloon campaign, tests of nuclear-capable weapons targeting South Korea, and alleged jamming of GPS navigation signals in the South.

South Korean officials said the suspension of the 2018 deal would allow it to stage front-line military drills but didn’t publicly elaborate on other steps. Observers say South Korea was considering restarting front-line propaganda loudspeaker broadcasts, a Cold War-style psychological campaign that experts say has stung in rigidly controlled North Korea, whose 26 million people are mostly not allowed access to foreign news.

The 2018 deal was already in limbo after the two nations took some steps in breach of it amid tensions over North Korea’s spy satellite launch in November last year. North Korea had already said it won’t abide by the 2018 deal any longer.



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Los Angeles Times

THE NATION

‘I will not be intimidated,’ Garland tells lawmakers

Attorney general confronts Republicans on House panel and decries ‘baseless and ... dangerous falsehoods.’

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Atty. Gen. Merrick Garland forcefully rebuked Tuesday what he described as unprecedented attacks on the Justice Department, telling Republicans who have sought to hold him in contempt that he will “not be intimidated.”

During a hearing before the House Judiciary Committee, Garland condemned the “conspiracy theory” pushed by Donald Trump’s allies that the department was behind Trump’s state court prosecution in New York in which the former Republican president was convicted of 34 felony charges.

Garland called the unsupported claim “an attack on the judicial process itself.”

And Garland denounced what he called “baseless and extremely dangerous falsehoods” being peddled about the FBI, as well as threats to defund the special counsel prosecutions of former President Trump.

His appearance came as Republicans have moved to hold him in contempt for the Biden administration’s refusal to hand over audio of President Biden’s interview with special counsel Robert Hur, which focused on the president’s handling of classified documents.

A transcript of Biden’s interview has been made public, but the president asserted executive privilege over the audio last month to block its release. The White House has said Republican lawmakers only want the audio so they can chop it up and use it for political purposes.

The Justice Department has argued witnesses might be less likely to cooperate if they know their interviews might become public. Garland told lawmakers he would not “jeopardize the ability of our prosecutors and agents to do their jobs effectively in future investigations.”

“I will not be intimidated,” Garland said. “And the Justice Department will not be intimidated. We will continue to do our jobs free from political influence. And we will not back down from defending our democracy.”

Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), the committee chair, criticized Garland in his opening statement for a broad array of what he depicted as politically motivated decisions by federal law enforcement — including the conclusions by different special counsels that Trump

criminally mishandled classified documents while Biden did not.

“Many Americans believe there’s now a double standard in our justice system. They believe that because there is,” Jordan said.

Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.), who was investigated but not charged by the Justice Department in a sex trafficking inquiry, had a tense exchange early in the hearing when he demanded to know if the department would produce records related to the New York state case in which Trump was convicted last week.

Garland disputed as false allegations by Gaetz that he had “dispatched” to the Manhattan district attorney’s office a Justice Department attorney who later became part of the Trump prosecution team, insisting that he had nothing to do with it.



JACQUELYN MARTIN Associated Press

ATTY. GEN. Merrick Garland condemned the “conspiracy theory” that the Justice Department was behind Donald Trump’s New York state prosecution.

Wisconsin charges Trump allies in 2020 fake-electoral case

Two attorneys and a onetime aide face felony forgery counts in effort to overturn the election results.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin Atty. Gen. Josh Kaul filed felony forgery charges Tuesday against two attorneys and an aide who helped submit paperwork falsely saying that former President Donald Trump had won the battleground state in 2020.

The charges were filed against attorneys Kenneth Chesebro, 62, and Jim Troupis, 70, and former Trump aide Mike Roman, 51, who allegedly delivered Wis-

consin’s fake electoral paperwork to a Pennsylvania congressman’s staffer in order to get them to then-Vice President Mike Pence on Jan. 6, 2021.

All three are due in Dane County Circuit Court on Sept. 19, according to court records. They each face one felony count punishable by up to six years in prison and fines of up to \$10,000.

Troupis and Chesebro did not return voicemail messages left Tuesday. Roman did not have an attorney listed in court records.

Kaul, a Democrat, has faced pressure to bring action against the 10 fake electors, who have yet to be charged with any criminal wrongdoing. He has previously suggested that he was relying on federal investigators while also not ruling out a state probe.

Democratic Gov. Tony Evers offered a one-word response to news of the charges being filed: “Good.”

Electors are people appointed to represent voters in presidential elections. The winner of the popular vote in each state determines which party’s electors are sent to the electoral college, which meets in December after the election to certify the outcome.

The fake electoral efforts are central to a federal indictment filed against Trump alleging he tried to overturn results of the 2020 election. Federal prosecutors, investigating his conduct related to the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol riot, have also said the scheme originated in Wisconsin. Trump also faces charges in Georgia and has denied wrongdoing.

Michigan and Nevada

have also criminally charged fake electors.

Chesebro and Roman were among the 18 people indicted along with Trump in August in a sprawling racketeering indictment in Georgia. They’re accused of participating in a wide-ranging scheme to try to illegally overturn the 2020 election in that state.

Chesebro in October pleaded guilty to one felony charge of conspiracy to commit filing false documents after reaching a deal with prosecutors. Roman has pleaded not guilty to racketeering and conspiracy charges related to a plan to have Republican electors meet and cast electoral college votes for Trump even though Biden had won Georgia.

The 10 Wisconsin electors, Chesebro and Troupis,

who was Trump’s attorney in Wisconsin, all settled a civil lawsuit that was brought against them last year.

Documents released as part of those settlements showed that the strategy in Wisconsin replicated moves in six other swing states.

Trump lost Wisconsin to Biden, a Democrat, by fewer than 21,000 votes. Trump carried Wisconsin by a similar margin in 2016.

Wisconsin is one of a handful of swing states again this year.

Government and outside investigations and dozens of court cases have found there was no evidence of widespread voter fraud that could have swung the 2020 election. But Trump has continued to spread falsehoods about his 2020 loss, including in Wisconsin.

LEGAL NOTICE

CITY OF BURBANK, CALIFORNIA
PUBLIC NOTICE

ATTENTION OWNERS/DEVELOPERS INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS

Housing Choice Voucher Program Project Based Vouchers and
Federal HOME/HOME American Rescue Act (ARP) Partnership Funds

The Burbank Housing Authority (BHA) is seeking to award up to 20 Project Based Vouchers (PBVs), on or about July 1, 2024, in order to promote affordable housing opportunities for Housing Choice Voucher Program eligible residents in the City of Burbank. The initial term of the proposed contract is 20 years. Federal regulations require the BHA to offer the PBVs via a public and competitive solicitation. Furthermore, there are available federal HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) and HOME ARP funds available for development proposals under this RFP.

Overview: The purpose of PBVs is to provide rental assistance to very low-income families enabling them to rent decent, safe and affordable housing. The shortage of available permanent supportive housing units in the area has resulted in many of the community’s homeless residents being unable to locate affordable housing that suits their unique needs. This RFP seeks substantial rehabilitation or new construction development proposals that will provide 15-20 PBVs to provide permanent supportive housing intended to serve homeless individuals and families who are the most vulnerable in the community. A fraction of the PBVs may be utilized for lower-income households up to 50% of the Los Angeles County Area Median Income adjusted for household size.

In addition to 20 PBVs, federal HOME and HOME ARP funds are available as summarized below:

Fund Source	Fund Amount
HOME Funds	Estimate \$1,700,000
HOME ARP Funds	Estimate \$1,600,000
Total Funds Available	Estimate \$3,300,000

Proposals should indicate the request of one or both of the available funding sources in a submittal. Complete details, qualification and submission requirements can be found in the RFP.

Note: Participation in the PBV Program requires compliance with Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Requirements, and Federal Labor Standards will apply to eligible projects.

Proposal documents can be obtained from:
Website: <https://www.burbankca.gov/web/community-development/housing/affordable-housing/section-8>

Burbank Housing Authority
150 N. Third Street
PO Box 6459
Burbank, CA 91510

Contact Person: Maribel Leyland Phone: (818) 238-5180

All proposals are to be addressed and mailed to the BHA at the address noted above or sent via email to mleyland@burbankca.gov. Only proposals in response to this invitation will be accepted for consideration. Owners/Developers will be notified by letter of the acceptance or rejection of their proposals. All proposals MUST be received no later than 4:00 P.M. on July 11, 2024. The BHA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

Publish: June 5, 2024 and June 12, 2024

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

Biden order will close border to migrants

[**Border**, from A1] severe forms of trafficking and people with dire medical emergencies or extreme threats to life and safety.

Administration officials defended their efforts to secure the border, saying they have returned more migrants in the last 12 months than in any year since 2010. They sought to blame Republicans for Congress' failure to pass a bipartisan bill that would have given the administration more money and authority to control the border.

Officials conceded that the president's executive action, which is likely to face legal challenges, is essentially a stopgap. The lack of additional funding for resources at the border, along with potentially limited cooperation from Mexico and migrants' home countries, could also hamper the administration's efforts.

Biden slammed Republicans in Congress during his speech Tuesday, saying many legislators abandoned the bill "because Donald Trump told them to."

"Frankly, I would have preferred to address this issue through bipartisan legislation, because that's the only way to actually get the kind of system we have now that's broken, fixed — to hire more Border Patrol agents, more asylum officers, more judges. But Republicans left me no choice," he said.

While Mexico has agreed to take migrants from several Latin American countries, the Biden administration is facing an increase in arrivals from other continents, including Asia.

Officials said they were working to strengthen deals to fly people to India, China and other countries of origin, but this remains a challenge.

Officials have faced a barrage from critics on the right, who blame Biden for what they call an out-of-control border, and on the left, who accuse him of replicating xenophobic policies advanced by former President Trump. Officials took pains to differentiate their policies from Trump's most



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

MIGRANTS are held Monday by the Border Patrol at Campo, Calif. Advocates plan to challenge the executive order to close the border. "It was illegal when Trump did it, and it is no less illegal now," an ACLU leader said.

well-known practices, including attempts to ban the entry of people from Muslim-majority countries and to separate children from their families. "We will not separate children from their families," said one official. "It is not only inhumane, it's grossly ineffective."

Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.), who chairs the Senate judiciary subcommittee on immigration, citizenship and border safety, criticized Biden's decision, saying it would be ineffective and "undermined American values and abandoned our nation's obligations to provide people fleeing persecution, violence and authoritarianism with an opportunity to seek refuge in the U.S."

Biden's border policy places Gov. Gavin Newsom — who sharply criticized Trump's calls to end the asylum system and threat to close the border in 2018 — in

a tricky political position. Newsom, an ally of the president and a top surrogate for his reelection campaign, called out Republicans in Congress in a post on X for voting against more resources for border security.

"Only thing they're interested in is playing politics," Newsom posted Tuesday.

In a separate statement, the governor's office said immigration is vital to California, and Biden's "leadership has bolstered border security."

The pursuit of asylum, regardless of how one arrives on U.S. soil, is a right under the federal Immigration and Nationality Act and international law. That issue proved problematic for the Trump administration's efforts to limit border crossings, and it could trip up Biden's latest order as well.

Biden is relying on two provisions of immigration

law to justify his executive actions, including section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which allows a president to suspend the entry of individuals or classes of migrants if it's in the national interest. Trump also used that section to bolster his travel ban. Though it was challenged, the Supreme Court upheld a revised version of the ban.

"People like the ACLU and other immigrants rights organizations are sure to argue that in this case, section 208 of the immigration statute explicitly allows someone to apply for asylum, whether they cross at a port of entry or enter illegally between a port of entry. And so they're going to argue that 212(f) does not extend that far," said Stephen Yale-Loehr, professor of immigration law practice at Cornell Law School. "That'll be what a court has to decide."

A legal challenge would likely take months or years. The American Civil Liberties Union said Tuesday in a statement that it plans to challenge the executive order in court.

"It was illegal when Trump did it, and it is no less illegal now," Lee Gelernt, deputy director of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project, said.

Biden's decision was applauded by some lawmakers who represent areas along the border, including Rep. Greg Stanton (D-Ariz.), who called it a "decisive, commonsense action to restore order at the southern border at a time when Congressional Republicans continue to use it as a political football."

Amy Fischer, director of Refugee and Migrant Rights at Amnesty International USA, said the executive action "plays into false narra-

tives about the invasions at the border and advances a policy grounded in white supremacist ideas at the expense of people in search of safety in the U.S."

"President Biden's action sets a dangerous international precedent as a first-of-its-kind numerical cap on asylum, limiting the number of people who can claim asylum in the U.S. and effectively shutting down the U.S.-Mexico border, using the same legal authority that the Trump administration used to implement the dangerous and xenophobic Muslim and African travel bans," Fischer said.

Immigration has been one of Biden's thorniest problems, practically and politically. He campaigned in large part on reversing Trump's most hard-line policies and rhetoric, but after Biden assumed office, border crossings and arrests rose dramatically.

Chad Wolf, who was head of the Homeland Security Department in Trump's administration, said during an appearance Tuesday on Fox News that he doesn't believe the border plan will work and is "too little, too late."

"They've been telling the American people there's no crisis along that border now for three years, and they've tried to convince the American people they can't take executive action," he said. "Five months out from an election, now they're serious about border security. I don't buy it, and I don't think the American people buy it."

Polls show that many voters rate immigration and the border as a top issue for the presidential candidates, often alongside the economy, character, democracy and abortion. It's also the area where they are most likely to rate Trump ahead of Biden, according to an ABC News poll released last month. The poll found that 47% of Americans trust Trump more on immigration, compared with 30% who trust Biden more.

Times staff writer Taryn Luna contributed to this report.



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Photographs from Fontana Police Department

DURING the interrogation, police falsely told Thomas Perez Jr. they had his father's body and hard evidence that Perez had killed him.

How police extracted a false confession

[**Interrogation**, from A1] when there was still no word, Perez was worried enough to call the Fontana Police Department and report the septuagenarian as missing.

That simple call for help would leave Perez a broken man. By the end of the week, under intense pressure from police detectives, he had falsely confessed to killing his father and was locked inside a psychiatric ward — though Papa Tom was alive and unharmed.

The cause of his false confession, Perez claimed in a lawsuit that he recently settled with the city for \$900,000, was a coercive interrogation by detectives that lasted more than 17 hours.

Detectives told Perez that they had his father's body and hard evidence that Perez had killed him. They said there was blood all over the house the two men shared. They told him that blood was even on Margo's paws, and that Margo had been traumatized by what he had done. In court documents and videos of the interrogation, police repeat these accusations again and again. They also searched his house, persuaded him to let them take naked photos to document nonexistent injuries he might have sustained from the struggle with his father, fed him suggestions on how the alleged crime had taken place and said they were sending Margo to be euthanized.

And the department considered every one of those interrogation tactics reasonable.

"I start to absorb this false belief that they put together, and I'm accepting it as a truth," Perez said years later in a deposition about what happened to his mental state during that interrogation. "I just allowed the belief of others to dominate me."

What happened to Perez is an extreme example of how a police interrogation method in common use in the U.S. can lead suspects to make false statements — and even falsely confess to crimes they did not commit. Across California and the U.S., detectives are trained to lie. They regularly use falsehoods to elicit confessions, sometimes refusing to even consider alternatives to a suspect's guilt.

That, said El Dorado County Dist. Atty. Vern Pierson, is a problem because lying by police can lead to "very bad results."

Pierson is working to change how police conduct interrogations. He advocates that California require police to be trained in newer methods and no longer allow detectives to lie to suspects to trick them into confessions.

"The Fontana case is an extreme one, but it fundamentally begins with a mistaken belief about the use of deception in the interview room," Pierson said. "A community caretaker doesn't lie or deceive the community it serves, at least not for very long, without the community questioning, 'Are you really my caretaker or some-



DETECTIVES also told Perez that Margosha, the family dog, had been traumatized by what he had done and said they were sending her to be euthanized.

thing else?"

Last week, the city of Fontana posted a statement on its website saying the settlement was "a business decision" designed to "save the City further time, effort, and expense."

The city said it "vigorously" denied any suggestion that its officers had broken state or federal laws. "Had Mr. Perez requested an admission of wrongdoing, the case would never have settled," the statement said.

Officers had good reason, the statement said, to suspect Perez. A cadaver dog indicated the presence of human remains in the Perez house. Moreover, police claimed, Perez had thrown out clothing belonging to his father, as well as bedding and a shower curtain.

The statement also disputed that the interrogation was unduly harsh. "Mr. Perez was not isolated in an interview room for 17 hours," the statement said. In fact, he was "fed multiple times and was taken to a local coffee shop where he was able to freely walk into the location without an escort to provide an interview break."

But a more detailed review of exactly how detectives investigated and interrogated Perez, based on depositions taken for Perez's lawsuit and excerpts from the detectives' interrogation sessions, raises disturbing questions about what happened to him — and the risks facing anyone suspected of a crime.

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On the afternoon of Aug. 8, 2018 — about 16 hours after his dad had walked off for the mail and not returned — Perez called Fontana police to report his father missing.

The officer who took the call later told her supervisor the exchange made her suspicious: Perez seemed distracted, and not overly concerned for his father's welfare.

Police decided to go to Perez's house to talk to him in person. At least three officers eventually showed up, and one asked if Perez would come down to the station to

talk to detectives while other officers searched his house.

Perez didn't know it quite yet, but he was now a murder suspect.

They put him in an interrogation room, and detectives took turns grilling him.

When detectives first suggested he might have killed his father, Perez reacted with disbelief.

"I'm shocked. I'm upset. I can't understand. I'm at loss for words," he recounted in a 2022 deposition. "I kept telling them they're nuts." The officers didn't listen.

'The Fontana case ... fundamentally begins with a mistaken belief about the use of deception in the interview room.'

— VERN PIERSON, El Dorado County district attorney, who is working to change how police conduct interrogations

They kept interrogating him — all night long. The next morning, they put him in a car, and while continuing to tell him they believed he had killed his father, drove him to various locations in Fontana where they claimed he might have committed the crime. They brushed aside Perez's denials and his pleas for medications he took for anxiety and depression.

One detective suggested that, while under the influence of this medication, he had killed his beloved father.

"That medication you're taking has caused you — Thomas — to have some issues," the detective said, according to a transcript contained in court documents. "Where can you take us to show us where Daddy is? ... The medication, it took over, and we need to find Daddy right now."

When Perez failed to lead them to his father's dead body, police took him back to the department, ignoring his requests to be taken to a

hospital because he felt ill. From that point on, the interrogation grew worse, according to Perez's lawsuit.

Detectives told Perez they knew his father was dead and had evidence Perez had done it. At one point, they brought Margo into the interrogation room. Surely he could see how traumatized the dog was at having watched him kill his father, they told him. The dog would not recover psychologically, they said, and would have to be euthanized.

They told Perez to say goodbye to her.

They even summoned a family friend to the station, told him they had rock-solid evidence Perez had done it, and tried to get the friend, Carl Peraza, to elicit a confession.

In a deposition submitted for Perez's lawsuit, Peraza recounted that at first he couldn't believe Perez could have killed his father. He knew the men to have a loving relationship, and had never seen any indication that Perez was violent toward him. But police told him they had overwhelming evidence of Perez's guilt.

Peraza was allowed into the interrogation room without police, who were monitoring from a hidden recording device.

"I wanted to talk to Tom to tell him that he's in very, very big trouble; that he has to recall if — if he forgot, or whatever, that he has to recall what happened to his father because he's being charged with murder," Peraza said in the deposition.

But when Peraza left the interrogation room without that confession, he learned something stunning: Police had duped him as well. Standing in the hall of the station, Peraza recounted, an officer admitted that they did not, in fact, have proof of his guilt.

"It went from overwhelming to circumstantial," Peraza said. "And so I wanted to go in and let Tom know, after I just drove him, you know, to try to confess, that it was circumstantial, not overwhelming, like I was

told."

But police would not allow Peraza back inside.

Exhausted, deprived of his medications and confused by the barrage from detectives who took turns berating him, Perez's mental state began to deteriorate.

"I had been able to hold my own and, you know, go back at them and what have you," Perez recalled in a 2022 deposition. "But now they're reassuring me that my father is dead and that I don't remember, and because of my medications, I blanked it. And they've been trying to help me, and they recovered a body already. ... And then I start losing it."

Perez began to agree with the officers. Yes, he said, he had killed his dad. Maybe they had fought and he had punched him in the face. Maybe he had stabbed him with scissors in the belly. Maybe he had rolled the body inside a shower curtain, as the detectives suggested.

Then, left alone in the interrogation room with the growing belief that he had harmed his father, he took the leather lace off his shoe, made a slipknot and attempted to hang himself on the desk.

But the lace broke.

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While Perez was attempting to end his life, Fontana police were busy building a case for a crime that never happened.

They set up a command post in an RV in front of the Perez house and set to dismantling it in search of evidence. They sliced open a leather sofa, according to court documents. They moved a hot tub, damaging the motor. The contents of drawers and closets were pulled out.

They brought in what police would describe in a search warrant application as a K-9 cadaver dog that allegedly picked up a scent in an upstairs hallway. However, the dog was not an official police canine, and instead belonged to a Sheriff's Department volunteer.

Police also used a liquid known as Bluestar that is meant to be a first-line method of picking up blood stains not visible to the human eye. It is known to give false positives for other substances, including food fibers and minerals found in household goods such as paint. (The Perez house was under construction.) Police claimed that Bluestar conclusively found large amounts of blood, but that evidence was never confirmed by a lab and no officer would later testify to seeing any visible blood.

Then, about 30 hours after Perez reported his father missing, police solved the case.

On Aug. 9 about 8:45 p.m., police spoke with Papa Tom's daughter in Northern California, who told them he was fine. He had indeed gone to visit a friend two evenings prior without telling Perez, she said. He went to Los Angeles International Airport the next day to catch a flight

to Oakland to visit his daughter. He was at the airport as they were speaking, she told police.

Fontana police were dispatched to LAX to confirm the story. For unclear reasons, they detained Papa Tom and read him his rights before bringing him back to Fontana.

But Perez's nightmare was not over.

About two hours after police confirmed Papa Tom was alive, they recommended that Perez be committed to a psychiatric ward for what is known as a "5150" hold, which can last up to three days. Perez said in court documents that police told staff at the hospital that he was not allowed to receive phone calls. Until he was released days later, Perez did not know his father was alive.

Peraza picked him up from the hospital and took him home to Papa Tom. Margo had been retrieved from the shelter where police had sent her — saved from death by her microchip that proved she wasn't a stray, but with a leg injury that would require surgery. The trauma was still fresh for them all.

"It was difficult to talk about anything, it was difficult to hold back, but you didn't know what to do or say," Peraza said in court documents.

Perez declined to be interviewed for this article through his lawyer, Jerry Steering. Peraza did not return a call or text.

But Peraza said in court documents that his friend has never fully recovered.

"There's a sadness there, that I can tell by the way he acts, even sometimes the way he walks or stands," Peraza said. "He's not the same."

And still, the police were not done with Perez.

Six days after Perez made his initial call to police — and four days after Papa Tom was located — police obtained yet another search warrant, this one to place a GPS device on Perez's car. Police, "without explanation or any facts, now suggested to the court that some third unknown party may have been the victim of a homicide," an expert witness hired by Perez wrote in court documents.

That witness, Jeffrey Noble, is a former deputy police chief with more than 30 years of experience. "No reasonably well-trained police officer would have believed that they had probable cause to obtain a search warrant in these circumstances," Noble wrote.

Despite their ongoing attempts to locate a victim or a crime, police found no evidence and eventually abandoned their efforts. Perez decided to file a lawsuit.

Bringing such claims against police is difficult. Police officers in the U.S. enjoy qualified immunity that protects them from lawsuits involving much of what they do in the scope of their jobs. When Perez filed his suit, Fontana argued that the case should not go forward because the officers had qualified immunity.

In depositions, the detectives who had hounded Perez nearly to death claimed that they were only following their training.

"We had been with Mr. Perez all day and we were running out of things to say to him to try to get the answer," one of the detectives explained. "We used a ruse to elicit certain information and that is perfectly legal under the law and it is perfectly legal under the policies and procedures of the Fontana Police Department."

In June 2023, U.S. District Court Judge Dolly M. Gee, after reviewing hours of interrogation tapes, sided with the police on some of the issues. She ruled in favor of the officers when it came to Perez's claims that police had unlawfully searched his home and used excessive force. But she declined to toss several of the claims stemming from Perez's allegations that officers had falsely imprisoned him and inflicted emotional distress. A jury, she ruled, would get to review the evidence and decide whether Perez had been treated fairly. After that ruling, Fontana officials entered settlement talks.

Even years later, during a deposition in 2022, Perez struggled to explain what happened to him in that interrogation room, and how officers could have persuaded him to confess to killing his father.

"I never want to be in that kind of place again mentally," Perez said. "I didn't know anybody could be in that kind of place. I didn't know such a place exists."

BUSINESS

The irony of Musk’s immigration policy views

America’s richest nonnative has made increasingly extreme remarks. Could he reshape the election?

By ANDREA CASTILLO

WASHINGTON — Elon Musk and his brother Kimbal were speaking to a crowd of business leaders in 2013 about creating their first company when the conversation seemed to go off script. Originally from South Africa, Kimbal Musk said the brothers lacked lawful immigration status when they began the business in the U.S.

“In fact, when they did fund us, they realized that we were illegal immigrants,” Kimbal Musk said, according to a recording of the interview from the Milken Institute Global Conference. “I’d say it was a gray area,” his brother replied with a laugh.

Eleven years later, Elon Musk was back at the Milken Institute last month in Beverly Hills, talking once again about immigration. This time, he described the southern border as a scene out of the zombie apocalypse and said the legal immigration process is long and “Kafkaesque.”

“I’m a big believer in immigration, but to have unvetted immigration at large scale is a recipe for disaster,” Musk said at the conference. “So I’m in favor of greatly expediting legal immigration but having a secure southern border.”

Musk, the most financially successful immigrant in the U.S. and the third-richest person in the world, has frequently repeated his view that it is difficult to immigrate to the U.S. legally but “trivial and fast” to enter illegally. What he leaves out: Seeking asylum is a legal right under national and international law, regardless of how a person arrives on U.S. soil.

But as the election year ramps up and Republicans make border security a major theme of their campaigns, Musk’s comments about immigration have grown increasingly extreme. The chief executive of SpaceX and Tesla, who purchased the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) in 2022, has sometimes used his giant microphone to elevate racist conspiracies and spread misinformation about immigration law.

Musk’s business manager did not respond to a request for comment, nor did representatives for SpaceX and Tesla. X does not have a



Photo illustration by JIM COOKE Los Angeles Times; photos via Getty Images, ERIC GAY Associated Press

department that responds to news media inquiries.

While Musk’s views are clear, what’s murkier is his influence. Some see him as an influential opinion maker with the power to shape policy and sway voters, while others dismiss him as a social media bomb thrower mainly heard within a conservative echo chamber.

“If you haven’t heard it already, I’m sure you’re going to see members of Congress citing Elon Musk and pointing to his tweets, and that’s a scary concept,” said Rep. Nanette Diaz Barragán (D-San Pedro), who leads the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

She says she believes Musk is influential with her Republican colleagues who are “always looking for new anti-immigrant talking points.”

Polling shows immigration is a top issue for voters. For the third month in a row, it was named by respondents to an open-ended April Gallup poll as the most important problem facing the U.S.

The November election that’s shaping up as a rematch between President Biden and former President Trump will be the first presidential contest since Musk bought X — a site Trump had been banned from for inciting violence before Musk reinstated his account last year.

Musk used the platform to come to Trump’s defense last week after the former president was criminally convicted for falsifying records in a hush money scheme. “Great damage was done today to the public’s faith in the American legal system,” Musk wrote on X, calling Trump’s crime a “trivial matter.”

After meeting with Trump in March, Musk told former CNN anchor Don Lemon that he’s “leaning

away” from Biden, but doesn’t plan to endorse Trump yet. He also said he won’t donate to any presidential campaign.

Campaign contribution records show Musk regularly donated to both Republicans and Democrats through 2020. That includes a handful of donations to California Gov. Gavin Newsom, who said that his relationship with Musk dates to his time as San Francisco mayor but that they’ve never discussed immigration.

“I think people have formed very strong opinions on this topic,” Newsom said. “I don’t know that he’s influencing that debate in a disproportionate way. Not one human being has ever said, ‘Hey, did you see Elon’s thing about immigration?’ ”

How Musk talks about immigration

Last year Musk visited the border in Eagle Pass, Texas, meeting with local politicians and law enforcement to get what he called an “unfiltered” view of the situation.

He also helped spread viral reports falsely claiming the Biden administration had “secretly” flown hundreds of thousands of migrants into the U.S. to reduce border arrivals.

“This administration is both importing voters and creating a national security threat from unvetted illegal immigrants,” Musk wrote March 5 on X. “It is highly probable that the groundwork is being laid for something far worse than 9/11.”

But the migrants in question fly commercial under a program created by the Biden administration, using the president’s authority to temporarily admit people for humanitarian reasons. The program allows up to 30,000 vetted people from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Vene-

zuela to lawfully relocate to the U.S. each month and obtain work permits if they have a financial sponsor.

Contrary to Musk’s claim that the administration is looking for Democratic voters, those arriving under the program have no pathway to citizenship. The claim gives fuel to extremist ideologies such as great replacement theory, the racist conspiracy that there’s a plot to reduce the population of white people.

Earlier this year, Musk targeted a controversial bill in the California Legislature that would help immigrants with serious or violent felony convictions fight deportation using state funds. Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles) pulled the bill after Republicans slammed it on social media, garnering the attention of Musk, who wrote about it on X: “When is enough enough?”

In February, shortly after a bipartisan group of senators released details of a border security bill that had gone through lengthy negotiations, Musk again echoed great replacement theory, writing on X: “The long-term goal of the so-called ‘Border Security’ bill is enabling illegals to vote! It will do the total opposite of securing the border.”

Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.) shot back.

“No, it’s not focused on trying to be able to get more illegals to vote,” Lankford said on CNN. “That’s absurd.”

Musk’s journey as an immigrant

There’s a particular irony in Musk attacking the program that allows limited arrivals for humanitarian reasons while simultaneously saying he favors legal immigration, said Ahilan Arulanantham, a lawyer, profes-

sor and co-director of the Center for Immigration Law and Policy at UCLA. The program offers would-be migrants a lawful pathway to reach the U.S. and reduced arrivals at the border from the beneficiary countries.

“That shows a very deep confusion about a fairly basic point about immigration law and the way the policy works,” Arulanantham said. Musk’s lack of criticism of a similar program for Ukrainians illustrates the undercurrent of racism accompanying attacks on the program for Latin American migrants, he added.

Musk amplifying false claims is counterproductive to rational immigration policy, Arulanantham said.

“Every voice adds to the pile, and the louder the voice, the marginally greater the addition to the pile,” Arulanantham said. “He is a very loud voice.”

David Kaye, a UC Irvine law professor who studies platform moderation, said Musk’s promotion of misleading or false statements, including those about immigrants, is concerning because he can influence conversations on X in a way no one else can.

“There’s already a pretty robust kind of alarmist approach to immigration, so Musk might only add a little bit of fuel to a pretty big fire,” Kaye said. “But the fact is he’s got a ton of followers. To the extent he promotes disinformation, I think that’s a cause for concern for the United States having fair and fact-driven debates over immigration.”

Musk’s own immigration story is described in the biography “Elon Musk” by Walter Isaacson. Musk left South Africa in 1989 for Canada, where his mother had relatives, Isaacson wrote. While in college he transferred to the University of Pennsylvania and, after graduating, enrolled at Stanford but immediately requested a deferral.

He and his brother Kimbal had invented an interactive network directory service, like a precursor to Google Maps.

Just before pitching the idea to a venture company, Kimbal Musk was stopped by U.S. border officials at the airport on his way back from a trip to Toronto “who looked in his luggage and saw the pitch deck, business cards and other documents for the company. Because he did not have a U.S. work visa, they wouldn’t let him board the plane,” Isaacson writes in the book. So a friend picked him up and drove him into the U.S. after telling another border agent that they were seeing the David Letterman show.

After finalizing the investment, the firm found immigration lawyers to help the Musk brothers get work visas, according to Isaacson.

Once Elon Musk married his first wife, he became eligible for U.S. citizenship and took the oath in 2002 at the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds.

Musk’s recent commentary on immigration and other political issues appears to be a reversal from his views a decade ago, said Nu Wexler, who has worked in policy communications at tech companies and for congressional Democrats.

Wexler recalled when Musk left Fwd.us, the political action organization spearheaded by Meta Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg in 2013 to advocate for immigration reform. Musk left because Fwd.us backed conservative lawmakers who wanted immigration reform but supported oil drilling and other policies that went against Musk’s environmental priorities.

“I agreed to support Fwd.us because there is a genuine need to reform immigration. However, this should not be done at the expense of other important causes,” Musk told the news site AllThingsD at the time.

When Zuckerberg created Fwd.us, it made sense for tech executives to make the business case for immigration reform, Wexler said. Now, immigration is a more divisive issue and executives on the left are less willing to dive into politics.

“At some point he decided that being the main character was helpful personal branding,” Wexler said of Musk. “I don’t know if he’s going to change minds on immigration, although he might be able to fire up the base.”

Alex Conant, a GOP consultant and partner at the public affairs firm Firehouse Strategies, said Musk’s influence could grow if Trump wins the election. If an immigration bill were to take shape at that point, Musk’s endorsement or rejection could shape the debate, he said.

“That’s the sort of scenario where all the sudden he might have some power,” he said.

There appears to be growing evidence for that possibility. Trump and Musk have discussed a possible advisory role for the billionaire, the Wall Street Journal reported last week. If Trump reclaims the White House, Musk could provide formal input on border security policies.

Times staff writer Taryn Luna contributed to this report.

Paramount signals cost cuts as sale looms

The media giant’s three chief executives lay out efforts to improve a battered balance sheet.

By MEG JAMES

Despite the potential sale of Paramount Global, controlling shareholder Shari Redstone kicked off the company’s annual investor meeting Tuesday by expressing confidence in its new management structure and hinting at more cost cuts to come.

Paramount executives declined to answer questions about sale talks with David Ellison’s Skydance Media that have accelerated in recent days.

Paramount’s special board committee has endorsed a deal that would give investors the option of cashing out or holding on to their shares in a bet on Ellison’s ability to rebuild the media giant, according to people close to the negotiations.

The Skydance deal requires the sign-off of Redstone, who is weighing whether to sell her family’s stake in Paramount.

But because any sale is months from completion, Paramount’s recently installed “office of the CEO” — comprising division heads

George Cheeks, Brian Robbins and Chris McCarthy — mapped out a “going forward” strategy to run Paramount as a standalone entity and improve its battered balance sheet.

The trio assumed the helm of Paramount in late April after the ouster of Bob Bakish, who had run the company since its merger with CBS in late 2019.

The executives unveiled a plan that centers on \$500 million in cost cuts — including an undisclosed number of layoffs — as well as asset sales and exploring a joint venture for the Paramount+ streaming service.

“We all agree that Paramount is not where we want it to be,” McCarthy said in prepared remarks. “Given the strength of our assets, our people and our long-term competitive advantage of making some of the biggest and broadest hits, we know that there is significant value to be unlocked.”

Shares in Paramount fell about 4.4% Tuesday to close at \$12.24.

On Monday, the stock got a boost following news that a deal with Skydance, which is joined by RedBird Capital Partners and private equity firm KKR, was within reach.

Paramount has stumbled in recent years.

Once a colossus of the entertainment industry, the enterprise controlled by the Redstone family has fallen behind traditional rivals, in-

cluding Walt Disney Co. and Comcast, as well as upstart tech companies, including Amazon and Netflix.

Years of underinvestment, mismanagement, titanic shifts in audience behavior, the COVID-19 pandemic and a costly push into streaming have diminished Paramount’s standing.

Its once-vibrant cable channels, including Comedy Central, MTV and Nickelodeon, have dimmed in reputation and ratings. Exacerbating the company’s debt issues, Bakish passed up opportunities to sell assets, including Showtime and BET.

Last year’s strikes by the Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists slowed the content pipeline.

S&P Global this year downgraded Paramount’s credit to “junk” status. Investor Warren Buffett bolted, selling shares at a loss. Last month, he acknowledged that buying 63 million shares of Paramount stock was a mistake.

During Paramount’s 44-minute shareholder meeting, several investor proposals, including measures to provide clarity on the use of artificial intelligence and restrictions on golden parachutes for key executives, were rejected.

Six board members were reelected to oversee the

company. In addition to Redstone, board members Linda M. Griego, Barbara M. Byrne, Judith A. McHale, Charles E. Phillips Jr. and Susan Schuman returned for yearlong terms. Four other board members stepped down.

The belt tightening comes after several waves of cost-cutting and previous asset sales, such as the jettisoning of book publishing giant Simon & Schuster and CBS real estate, including its Manhattan skyscraper and Studio City movie and television lot.

“Our plan starts with transforming streaming, which will accelerate our path to profitability and make up for declines in our linear business,” Cheeks said in prepared remarks.

“We’ll reduce non-content costs by streamlining our organization, allowing us to build a leaner, more nimble company that’s better positioned to win,” Cheeks said, adding that the team has “identified near-term cost reduction opportunities with an annualized impact of \$500 million” in its effort to return Paramount to investment-grade status.

Despite the turmoil and the gravity of her decision over the fate of the company, Redstone signaled resolve in her remarks. She voiced support for the three executives running the company.

McCarthy is the longtime leader of MTV Entertain-



EVAN AGOSTINI Invision/Associated Press

CHAIR Shari Redstone must decide whether to sell her family’s controlling stake in Paramount.

ment Studios and, more recently, Showtime; Cheeks has been chief executive of CBS for four years; and Robbins has run both Nickelodeon and the Paramount Pictures studio on Melrose Avenue since 2021.

“While we recognize that this is not a traditional management structure, we are confident that it will enable them to move quickly to implement best practices throughout the company and to drive improved performance,” Redstone said.

The trio “have been behind our biggest successes for years,” she added.

On the deal front, the sweetened Ellison proposal is the third from Skydance and its backers.

The deal would include \$4.5 billion to buy out non-voting B-class stockholders at \$15 a share during a second phase of the transaction. There would also be a \$1.5-billion cash infusion to shore up Paramount’s bal-

ance sheet and reduce debt, according to knowledgeable sources.

Redstone received details of the plan this week.

While she has long favored Ellison’s offer over a potential sale to Sony Pictures Entertainment and Apollo Global Management, she needed to sit on the sidelines while Paramount’s independent directors, led by Phillips, hashed out a deal that would protect the interests of ordinary, nonvoting shareholders.

The Skydance proposal would give the Redstone family more than \$2 billion for their holding company National Amusements Inc. and its voting shares in Paramount.

The infusion would allow the family to pay off National Amusements’ debts and come away with about \$1.8 billion, according to a person familiar with the matter who was not authorized to comment.

UCLA has ‘essentially become a police state’

[**UCLA**, from A1] been on protesting students and those involved at the pro-Palestinian encampment, and the later, related strike. But they represent only a fraction of some 41,000 undergraduate and graduate students, the majority of whom have navigated the campus these last few weeks primarily as observers.

Many are sympathetic to the events unfolding in Gaza but decided not to actively protest. Others have been concerned by what they consider anti-Jewish sentiments or by ideas and stances appearing biased, circulating through an almost echo chamber. Some feel caught in the middle. Many have simply chosen to remain focused on schoolwork.

When classes went virtual and libraries closed during the encampment crackdown, students struggled to find a place on the Westwood campus that was quiet enough to focus, much less take an online class or exam. Several said they felt a constant pull between their course work and trying to keep up with the news — about what was unfolding on campus and in a war taking place thousands of miles away. During the worst moments, it was hard to sleep or keep up with studies, they said. Some turned to UCLA's mental health services for support.

A few students told The Times they avoided campus when the protests and resulting backlash became too intense. The massive security presence — some of them uniformed police and others, private guards — that appeared in recent weeks left them unsettled.

“Midterms were really the last of many people's concerns,” said Lena Schorkopf, a senior political science major, who became involved in the protests after the encampment was attacked. “It felt as though there were bigger issues in the world and within our own campus so even the thought of going in and taking a test on something completely unrelated to that was just unfathomable.”

Many Bruins whose affiliation with the protests was either limited or nonexistent are grappling with the aftermath of a chaotic academic year punctuated by demonstrations, violence and, most recently, a union strike by academic workers rooted



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

PRO-PALESTINIAN protesters leave an area that UCLA campus police and L.A. County Sheriff's deputies surrounded last month. Some students say they avoided campus when the protest situation grew too intense.

in the treatment of student protesters. Some said the events have eroded their trust in UCLA administrators over their handling of the unrest, particularly the lack of security when a mob attacked the camp overnight April 30 and it took hours for police to intervene.

Less than 24 hours after the attack, scores of officers descended on the campus, arresting more than 200 people, including many students, and tearing down the encampment. When students set up a new encampment last week, campus leaders quickly called on police to push them out.

The increased security on the 419-acre campus, which was designed to feel like a “college in a garden,” has translated into an uncomfortable mood on campus, students say.

“Everywhere you turn there's a security guard,” Schorkopf said. “It almost feels like the university has become somewhat of an oppositional force against its students.”

Although college protests against the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza have grabbed headlines across the country, U.S. college students surveyed in a Generation Lab poll in early May ranked the conflict in the

Middle East as the least important issue they faced — behind topics including healthcare reform, educational funding and access, economic fairness, racial justice, climate change and gun control.

But at UCLA, concern over the growing Palestinian humanitarian crisis and the lingering effects on campus have remained at the center of student life weeks after the encampment was dismantled.

Outside Royce Hall last week, striking graduate students mingled in the grass, taking a break from rallies and chants, such as “UC, UC, you're no good, treat your students like you should.” The members of the United Auto Workers Local 4811, which represents more than 6,200 workers at UCLA, walked off the job last week, alleging that their rights were violated by the University of California's actions during pro-Palestinian protests and encampment crackdowns.

The walkout unfolds at a crucial 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. Most held signs accusing the university of unfair labor practices, while a few carried posters focused on the pro-Palestinian

cause. Tour groups and students walked by, occasionally looking over their shoulders or taking photos of the campus' latest demonstration.

A few hundred feet away down the Tongva steps, students lounged on a hill under the sun. They typed on laptops and listened to music, the sounds of the picket line echoing faintly in the distance.

Private security guards stood by surveying the situation. Schorkopf counted them. “Seven,” she said with a slight chuckle of disbelief. “All that for a very non-threatening presence of students.”

“This campus has essentially become a police state,” Elisa Pabon, the postdoctoral unit chair for the union, said gesturing to uniformed security guards standing nearby.

Backlash from the university and the larger community for participating in protests and the encampment has tempered students' desires to be public about their opinions on the war in Gaza. Doxxing, in which someone reveals personal information about another online typically for nefarious purposes, is a serious concern for students, many of whom don't want their names attached to an opinion on the war or what's hap-

pened on campus.

Most undergrads at UCLA had a high school experience tainted by the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic. They've come into adulthood as the nation's political divide has exploded. They were keenly aware of the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, followed by months of protests against racism and police abuse. Now they are confronted with the raw brutality of war.

Some clubs on campus have hosted forums for discussion about the war protests. A handful of professors have devoted class time for students to voice their opinions. Whereas some have been open to share, even crying during discussions, others have stayed quiet. Some prefer to be vulnerable in spaces where they won't be subject to judgment or ridicule.

Adam Tfayli, student body president, said regardless of where people stand on the conflict he's found general agreement that the violence unleashed on the encampment at UCLA was unacceptable.

“The general consensus I've heard is that what occurred on April 30 was a complete violation of students' rights and it was in large part the fault of the administration slash campus

police,” he said.

UCLA's mental health services have increased the number of drop-in sessions to counsel individual students over the last two months in recognition that the events have been “emotionally trying, and in some cases very overwhelming, for many of our students,” Nicole Green, senior executive director of student resilience and mental health services, said in a prepared statement.

“Not all students react the same, and we have seen them express a wide array of emotions, from distress and anger over events and feelings of guilt over not having been more closely involved. We have even seen some students who feel disconnected from what has been happening on campus. While many students have managed to continue with their normal routines, others have experienced — and continue to experience — heightened stress, anxiety, frustration and grief,” Green said.

Zoe Yeh, a biochemistry major who wasn't directly involved in the protests but dropped off supplies for students at the encampment, said watching what unfolded on campus made her want to better keep up with the situation in the Middle East.

“But even as you become more educated, I don't know what I could do to get involved that would actually make a [difference],” she said.

Since the encampment began, Yeh said, there have been more conversations about the protests and global affairs among her peers — which she thinks is positive. But she also noticed that people have become more argumentative.

The events “have caused people to stop ignoring,” what's going on, said a second-year biology major who didn't want to share her name with The Times because her family didn't want her taking a public stance. The campus is “not as neutral as it's been before,” she said.

Some students say it's impossible to avoid the conflict.

Jason Kohan, a junior majoring in economics, said some of his professors and teaching assistants have brought up what was happening in Gaza during class, which he found inappropriate, especially when courses have no clear link to the Middle East.

“I feel like they don't have a lot of knowledge about the subjects sometimes that they're talking about,” Kohan said, adding that he wants people to understand “both sides of the story,” not just the Palestinian perspective.

Schorkopf, the political science major, said despite the turmoil on campus she's reflecting on what she'll carry with her as she prepares to leave UCLA.

“As tragic and upsetting as these past few weeks have been I feel like this time at UCLA has been some of the most educationally enriching,” she said. “A lot of what we deal with is just theory in the classroom and it feels really inapplicable and then here we are seeing those same theories and ideas about activism and decolonization actually play out.”

MARKET ROUNDUP

Stocks end mixed on report hinting at cooler job market

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks were split among winners and losers Tuesday after a report suggested the job market is cooling, the latest signal of a slowing economy that offers both upsides and downsides for Wall Street.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 7.94 points, or 0.2%, to 5,291.34, though more stocks within the index fell than rose. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 140.26 points, or 0.4%, to 38,711.29, and the Nasdaq composite added 28.38

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	38,711.29	+140.26	+0.36	+2.71
S&P 500	5,291.34	+7.94	+0.15	+10.93
Nasdaq composite	16,857.05	+28.38	+0.17	+12.30
S&P 400	2,921.01	-38.93	-1.32	+5.01
Russell 2000	2,033.94	-25.74	-1.25	+0.34
EuroStoxx 50	4,953.37	-50.17	-1.00	+9.55
Nikkei (Japan)	38,837.46	-85.57	-0.22	+16.06
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	18,444.11	+41.07	+0.22	+8.19

Associated Press

points, or 0.2%, to 16,857.05.

The action was stronger in the bond market, where Treasury yields slid after Tuesday morning's report

showed U.S. employers were advertising fewer job openings at the end of April than economists expected.

Wall Street actually

wants the job market and overall economy to slow. That could help get inflation under control and convince the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates, which would ease the pressure on financial markets.

The question is whether the slowdown for the economy overshoots and ends up in a painful recession.

Tuesday's report said the number of U.S. job openings at the end of April dropped to the lowest level since 2021. The numbers suggest a return to “a normal job market” following years full of strange numbers caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, ac-

cording to Bill Adams, chief economist for Comerica Bank.

But it also followed a report Monday that showed U.S. manufacturing contracted in May for the 18th time in 19 months.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury slid to 4.33% from 4.39% late Monday and 4.50% late Friday.

The two-year yield, which more closely tracks expectations for the Fed, fell to 4.77% from 4.81%.

A barrel of U.S. crude has fallen close to 5% in price this week, roughly back to where it was four months ago.

Los Angeles Times

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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
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Politicians, please stop cooking up ways to avoid constituents

CALIFORNIA lawmakers keep trying to make it easier for local officials to evade the public. Ever since the end of the COVID emergency, they have introduced bill after bill to whittle away the state's important open meeting laws so that they and their local-government counterparts can participate in public policy discussions from the privacy of their own dining room tables, driver's seats or, for all we know, beach blankets.

Already, any member of any local government body in California may attend a meeting by phone as long as they meet basic transparency measures, like posting an agenda at the remote location and allowing the public to be present at their end. Under Assembly Bill 2449, which sunsets after next year, they can even conceal their location — as long as there is an emergency or “just cause” as defined in the statute; for example, illness or child-care responsibilities.

Lawmakers want to go further by allowing local leaders to “attend” meetings by video from secret locations without stating any reason.

When their bills fail due to public objections, they simply bring them back the following year.

That's what has happened with Assembly Bill 817, which would strip away the requirement that members of a local government body who participate in meetings by teleconference at least notify the public of their location and make it accessible.

The bill would apply only to “subsidiary” bodies without final decision-making powers, but that doesn't mean just informal advisory groups. City Council committees, for example, would be included. Meetings like these are where the important details of new laws are hammered out, and where public input has the greatest impact.

The bill was approved by the Assembly last year but died in the Senate. Now it's back and faces a key hearing in the Senate on Wednesday.

Let's hope the committee kills the bill once and for all.

The Legislature has poked enough holes in local governmental meeting requirements already. The point of the Ralph M. Brown open meeting law is to permit the public and the news media to be physically

present in the same room as the people who make decisions supposedly on the public's behalf. This allows the public to watch them deliberate, observe who speaks with them between votes and directly address them from the public microphone. Reporters and constituents can flag lawmakers down during breaks to ask questions.

Watching them on television or a laptop is not the same. Commenting on their proposals through a telephone or on Zoom is not the same.

Certainly government bodies should use those technologies to permit a larger portion of the public to participate if they can't attend meetings in person, but the reverse isn't true. Remote participation should not be the public's only way of attending. Nor should remote participation be the norm for officials. Remote access is a convenience for the public, not for officials who'd just as soon avoid scrutiny.

Supporters of the bill claim that it's a necessary route to allowing more people to serve as elected or appointed officials. Competing commitments like child care or physical challenges can make it excessively difficult to attend meetings.

But they can already do that under AB 2449's “just cause” exceptions and can discuss making those changes permanent next year when it's up for review. AB 817 would circumvent that review and permanently eliminate the need for a just cause.

Six bills just passed out of the Assembly, along with AB 817, to carve away even more public rights and official responsibilities in public meetings, based on factors such as the subject matter being discussed (threats to cybersecurity, for example) or the particular body that is meeting (the Tri-Dam Project or the Clean Power Alliance of Southern California).

It's the governmental version of long COVID — a lingering nostalgia among public officials for 4-year-old emergency lockdown provisions that suspended open meeting requirements and allowed them to escape the direct scrutiny of their constituents.

But the emergency is over, and so is the need to keep making exceptions to the public's right to be present at government meetings. AB 817 is not a step forward for the public.



IRFAN KHAN Los Angeles Times
SERGIO LOPEZ cools off by pouring cold water on his head as he works around his home at the Oasis Mobile Home Park in Thermal in July 2023.

We are not ready for more record-breaking summer heat

AFTER A CHILLY spring it seems hard to believe that the gloom would ever leave Southern California. But skies are clearing as a “heat dome” brings midsummer-like temperatures to the state. It could be a preview of another record-breaking hot summer.

In what's becoming a sadly familiar refrain, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says there's a chance that 2024 will be even warmer than last year, which was the planet's hottest year on record. As greenhouse gas pollution keeps pushing temperatures higher and making extreme heat more deadly, can anyone really say we are ready for it?

Extreme heat is the nation's deadliest climate hazard, killing more people than wildfires or hurricanes. Its effects have been felt in California. For example, in 2022 a record-breaking, 10-day heat wave killed 395 Californians, according to a state analysis.

After criticism that California was ignoring the threat and treating it like a second-tier problem, Gov. Gavin Newsom has begun to address this growing threat. For example, the governor's office revamped the state's extreme heat plan, with a new 72-page document detailing four “tracks” to protect California from the effects of rising temperatures, including developing a public health monitoring system, helping communities prepare for heat waves and increasing public awareness of the risks of high heat through websites such as ready.ca.gov.

The updated plan showed a new awareness of the need to get moving against this growing hazard, but in the two years since it has been released the results have been lackluster and any headway made difficult to track.

Meanwhile, the state is still working on CalHeatScore, the nation's first heat-wave ranking and early warning system, even though the 2022 law that mandated the system requires it to be developed by the end of this year.

Although these efforts are a good start, it is disgraceful that despite some movement on this long-neglected issue, the state still is not working with enough urgency. For example, we still don't have rules protecting indoor workers from high temperatures, although it has been promised for seven years.

It's time for California's leaders to shift into a higher gear, because extreme heat is already here. According to the Climate Prediction Center and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the probability of California getting “above normal” temperatures in July and August ranges anywhere from 33% to 60% depending on the location.

With scorching temperatures almost certainly on the way, California leaders should be able to say to the state's residents that they have done everything in their power to protect them in the face of this growing threat. Unfortunately, they can't.

LETTERS



KENT NISHIMURA Los Angeles Times
COULD PET-FRIENDLY rental policies help alleviate the housing and animal shelter crises in California? Above, a dog walker in Burbank in 2020.

Pet-friendly, tenant-unfriendly

Re “The housing shortage has dire consequences for our pets too,” Opinion, May 31

BRETT YATES BELIEVES we can alleviate the housing crisis by making all rentals pet-friendly. He makes an unsupported claim about the low frequency of pet-caused damage; his claim of an average of \$210 in repairs is ludicrous.

A typical one-bedroom unit can't be professionally cleaned for that. Furthermore, tenants do not keep their pets in their apartments. Cats spray other tenants' front doors. Pets defecate in common areas. Dogs often bark when alone, bothering everyone in the building except their owners.

Yates believes that pet owners should have no restrictions. So, every apartment should be able to have, say, two dogs and four cats? He lives in a fantasy world where all pets and their owners are well-behaved.

With insurance companies already leaving the state, what happens to a property owner's policy when a pet bites another tenant? Why should the owner have to pay more for insurance because someone wants a pet?

There are valid reasons people want to live in housing without pets. For example, renters with allergies need access to pet-free housing (excepting actual service animals). My husband is allergic to animal dander. He cannot stay in a hotel room that had a pet in it.

Yates' sympathy extends only to pet owners. But in communal living situations, there are many people who understandably cannot tolerate close proximity to pets.

PIER AVIROM, Whittier

Your op-ed article about the need for pet-friendly housing policies could have mentioned specifically that at the city of L.A.'s Chesterfield Square animal shelter, there are about 500 dogs in a facility with only 220 cages.

There, I and a few others spent a few days recently

trying to save one of these dogs, who had been at the shelter for more than 300 days because his family moved away. He was 2 years old, friendly, trained and a staff and volunteer favorite.

He had been red-tagged and cleared to be euthanized within 48 hours. Fortunately,

someone stepped up at the last minute to adopt him. There are hundreds more just like him just languishing and waiting.

In addition to supporting pet-inclusive housing, consider foster or adoption before purchase, spay and neuter your pets, and sup-

port anti-breeding laws. This is a crisis that shelters alone cannot solve.

MELISSA KLASKIN LEVY
Los Angeles

::

Yates needs to meet the real world. He demands that all renters have the right to bring a dog home. I am sure he has never before been faced with a yapping animal all day while the owner is away.

Apartment living by definition is many people sharing a confined space. However, plenty of dog owners show no concern or respect for others, allowing their animals to diminish tenants' quality of life.

This is a real problem in my neighborhood; perhaps Yates has a different experience around his home.

LEE MEISTER
San Pedro

Civil servant's lesson for Alito

Re “What's unethical for a justice?” letters, June 4

The year was 1968, a tumultuous one for our nation. I was 11, living in a small town in Nebraska and becoming politically aware.

My father was an ardent supporter of Hubert Humphrey for president. Noticing the proliferation of political signs in the neighborhood, I asked him why we couldn't have a Humphrey sign in our front yard. My dad, a longtime civil servant, said this to me: “I work for the federal government. If we put a sign in our yard, people who come to see me at work might not think that I could be fair with them because I voted for Humphrey. It's important, because I don't work for a political party, I work for the people and they need to trust that I'm being fair to them.”

That story stayed with

me and guided my own actions as a city and state employee. It's a pity that Supreme Court Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. does not understand what a mid-level civil servant did about professional ethics and the appearance of bias.

JAMES BUGLEWICZ
Los Angeles

Manhattan DA just did his job

Re “The New York trial just made Trump stronger,” Opinion, June 1

Scott Jennings' attempt to prove a political motivation for the prosecution by the Manhattan district attorney's office because neither the Department of Justice nor the Federal Election Commission pursued prosecution is deceptive reasoning.

The proper standard is whether the prosecutor can obtain a conviction based on the evidence. If the Manhattan district attorney believed he had evidence to convict but did not pursue prosecution merely because the federal government did not, that decision could have been suspect as a political decision.

By obtaining unanimous verdicts on all 34 counts, the district attorney proved he was just doing his job.

DONALD PAYNE
Santa Ana

::

Jennings illustrates the problem with media that has led to the political dominance of Trump and his ilk.

Normalizing and justifying Trump's criminal activities by claiming that no one else would be prosecuted or convicted for his fraudulent cover-up of adultery, in service of influencing an election, is like saying that Al Capone should not have been taken off the streets through his indictment and

conviction for tax evasion.

Whatever legal means it takes to remove this proven criminal and traitor from public influence is a moral and ethical imperative for America and democracy.

STEVE LEYTON
Palmdale

::

We must all applaud the courage of 12 citizens who discerned the truth “beyond a reasonable doubt” despite the obfuscation.

Given the history of former President Trump's MAGA followers to threaten anyone who goes against this now-convicted felon, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to these jurors.

The rule of law still stands. Bravo and blessings on the jurors.

EILEEN MCDARGH
Dana Point

::

As a longtime reader, I have always commended The Times for its fact-based reporting and extensive coverage of important events. I know that opinion columnists give their view, and although I might disagree with Jonah Goldberg, I can still appreciate his perspective.

The same isn't true for Jennings, a former Republican operative whose commentary often appears in The Times.

He manipulates facts and bases them on half truths. He specializes in false comparisons. I have no problem with hearing views from the other side as long as the authors are honest and not dabbling in false equivalences.

RICHARD KAUFMAN
Irvine

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OP-ED

How the verdict could cost Trump the election

JONAH GOLDBERG

HOW MUCH will Donald Trump's conviction in the New York hush money case matter come November?

The obvious answer is that nobody knows. Still, I suspect the verdict will matter, just not in ways that are easy or even possible to predict.

A lot of the instant reaction revolves around polls. We talk about polls not because they are so important but because we lack much else to go on. Like the proverbial drunk who looks under the streetlamp for his lost keys because the light is much better there, we look at polls because they at least illuminate *something*, even if it's not very much.

The smattering of surveys conducted since Thursday's verdict show that slightly more than half of Americans think the jury was correct. A CBS poll found that the verdict changed very few minds, though a small number had more negative views of Trump. None of that is surprising given that attitudes about the trial have tracked attitudes about Trump.

Now, if the judge throws Trump in jail for an extended term — which seems both unlikely and

indefensible, given the nature of the crime — it's possible that attitudes will swing more in Trump's favor. But if it's just for a day, attitudes probably won't change so much as intensify.

If the opinions indicated by the latest polling hold constant for the roughly 150 days to Nov. 5, one could plausibly argue that the verdict will cost Trump the election. The consensus among experts across the partisan spectrum is that this election will be decided by a tiny number of votes in a handful of states, so movement of even a couple of percentage points away from Trump could be decisive.

But opinions don't hold constant, at least not among the kind of voters who will decide the election.

Until recently, Trump was enjoying higher favorability ratings than at any time during his presidency. A mixture of nostalgia for the pre-COVID Trump-era economy and dissatisfaction with President Biden has been better for Trump than anything he actually did as president.

No one knows what will happen over the next five months, but it's not unreasonable to assume that the verdict will shrink in importance for everybody over time.

But given the closeness of the



RUTH BROWN Associated Press

NEWSPAPERS on display at a bodega in Brooklyn the day after a New York jury criminally convicted former President Trump.

race and the voters who will decide it, that doesn't mean it won't have lasting consequences.

Many Trump boosters responded to the verdict with declarations such as "Trump just won the election." This wish-casting stems from the belief that outrage over the verdict will cause more voters to rally around Trump. So far, however, the evidence points to the opposite.

It's true that Republican outrage over the verdict has motivated Trump's supporters in much the same way as the FBI search of

Mar-a-Lago. The result has been a windfall of donations to the Trump campaign, including from crucial first-time donors. Given Trump's fundraising difficulties compared with Biden, that could matter.

But one analytical error Trump supporters consistently make is the idea that attitudes about him inside the MAGA bubble extend to voters outside it. Trump's biggest fans believe they represent America generally, which is one reason they still believe America couldn't have voted to oust him in 2020.

We don't know how the verdict will change the behavior of not just the voters but also the candidates. If Biden overplays Trump's status as a "felon," it could underscore the view that he lacks any persuasive arguments for his reelection on the merits. It could also bolster the unfounded charge that Biden orchestrated the prosecution to his benefit.

Meanwhile, if Trump listens to his biggest fans and indulges his own sense of grievance — not a particularly big "if" — he could end up making the election a referendum on him, and the chaos he brings, rather than a referendum on Biden.

I don't think this case ever should have been brought, but I also think it's crazy to say it represents "the end of the country as we know it," as Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance insisted. Indeed, it's remarkable to see so many people who once claimed that the trial didn't matter to voters suddenly insisting that voters will care so much about its outcome.

Voters will care about all sorts of things. And the odds are good that, to the extent Trump's conviction matters at all, it ratifies the opinions most Americans already held.

@JonahDispatch



ANDREW IBARRA National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

CORAL BLEACHING off the Florida coast. The waters off the Florida Keys hit 101 degrees last year. Water that is too warm causes bleaching of 54% of coral reefs globally.

The seas are a hot mess. Why haven't you heard about it?

By David Helvarg

ON MAY 21, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, in Hamburg, Germany, ruled that greenhouse gases are marine pollutants and nations must take action to "reduce, control and prevent" their effects. The tribunal, sometimes called the Oceans Court, was responding to a request from a consortium of small island nations disappearing under rising seas.

The United States is not one of the 169 parties to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, but it abides by its principles. And while the tribunal's unanimous ruling is not legally binding, it will influence national and global court cases now being brought against the fossil fuel industry and its well-funded resistance to a carbon-free, renewable energy future.

Donald Trump offered himself up to that resistance in April when he solicited a billion-dollar donation from oil executives by promising, if re-elected, to reverse President Biden's clean energy rules. Big Oil could certainly afford the bribe. One billion dollars represents about 1% of the profits raked in by Exxon Mobil, Chevron, Shell and BP combined last year under Biden's moderate climate policies.

Which is why the tribunal's ruling may not be enough to halt or even slow the ocean's approach to a literal boiling point.

Climate effects are overwhelming all other marine environmental insults, including industrial overfishing and oil, chemical and plastic pollution. Compounding the danger, unsound floodplain development is destroying coastal habitat in such places as Jakarta, Indonesia; Lagos, Nigeria; Houston; and Florida, where Gov. Ron DeSantis recently signed legislation banning any reference to climate change by state agencies.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is warning of above-normal hurricane activity this year, predicting 17-25 named storms (versus an average of 14), with four to seven major hurricanes.

The culprit is near-record high temperatures in the Atlantic, combined with a La Niña cooling phase in the Pacific. (Fun fact: Water temperatures in recent La Niña years have been hotter than in El Niño years in previous decades, according to NOAA.) And, of course, hurricane damage will only be increased by rising sea levels linked to warming sea water (H₂O expands when heated — boil a kettle of tea if you don't believe me), plus melting sea ice and glaciers.

Scientific reviews have found that the duration of marine heat waves has increased more than 50% since 1925. By 2014, 50% of the ocean was affected, and last year, more than 90% of the ocean hit internal heat wave temperatures, including one day when the temperature of the waters off the Florida Keys measured 101 degrees.

The average *global* ocean surface temperature hit a record of nearly 70 degrees one day last year, the highest ever recorded, and a stark contrast to the 61-degree average throughout the 20th century.

That should be no surprise given that 90% of the heat generated by the burning of fossil fuels — along with about a third of the carbon dioxide — has been absorbed by the ocean. The carbon dioxide, buffered into carbonic acid, increases acidity in ocean water, which is bad news for corals, clams and other shell-forming creatures. Also, a warmer, more acidic ocean contains less dissolved oxygen, expanding hundreds of "dead zones" in coastal waters, as tracked by the United Nations.

Not worried yet? In 1997-98 I

reported on the first global coral bleaching event, caused by too-warm water and affecting 16% of all coral reefs. In April, scientists reported the fourth and largest global bleaching to date, now affecting more than 54% of the world's coral reefs and growing by 1% a week.

Coral bleaching is similar to but more extensive than the kelp forest die-off along the coasts of South Australia and California.

Ninety-five percent of Northern California's kelp forest has been displaced by sea urchin "barrens" since the West Coast's marine heat wave in 2014, '15 and '16, when water temperature averaged 7 degrees above normal. A study done by Oregon State University found that with the destruction of the kelp forests, migrating gray whales are losing weight and energy because kelp helps generate the phytoplankton the whales feed on.

Even if most ocean climate effects remain out of sight and, therefore, out of mind, I've met too many people directly affected by these changes — fishermen, surfers, coastal homeowners, beach town shopkeepers — to not wonder why the Law of the Sea tribunal's ruling wasn't major news around our blue planet. Likewise, why isn't climate change, which is causing warmer, wetter, more extreme weather in nation after nation, a major issue in the 2024 U.S. election?

Perhaps it will be if this year's summer hurricanes take out Miami; Tampa, Fla.; Charleston, S.C.; or Houston, or if shrimp start cooking in the sea before they're harvested. The tribunal's ruling could cool the oceans, if only there were a way or the will to enforce it.

DAVID HELVARG is executive director of Blue Frontier, an ocean conservation group, and co-host of "Rising Tide: The Ocean Podcast."

The House GOP tries to demonize Dr. Fauci, again

ROBIN ABCARIAN

IT HAS become as tiresome as it is predictable: When Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia turns on her microphone during a hearing, it's time to say goodbye to decorum and hello to vulgar personal attacks.

The House's clown princess had quite the forum on Monday, when, as a member of the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic, she got to grill and insult Dr. Anthony Fauci, 83, one of the world's leading public health physicians, who headed the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases from 1984 until 2022 and steered the country through the pandemic.

Ostensibly, the grilling, which was billed simply as "A Hearing with Anthony Fauci," was the culmination of the committee's 15-month inquiry into the origins of the virus and the public health response.

In reality, it was a forum for Republicans to continue their attacks on Fauci. As the committee's ranking Democratic member, Rep. Raul Ruiz of Indio, put it in a news conference before the hearing, Republicans have used the committee to advance the "dangerous narrative that Dr. Fauci somehow funded research that started the COVID-19 pandemic, lied about it and orchestrated a campaign to cover it up."

The truth, as we know, is that then-President Trump dithered, blathered and showboated as Americans were dying. Who will ever forget the pained look on the face of Dr. Deborah Birx, Trump's coronavirus response coordinator, as she watched Trump suggest we "hit the body" with a powerful light or disinfectant to kill the virus? Or the way Fauci face-palmed when Trump went off on a tangent about the "deep State Department" during one of his inane daily briefings?

Monday's hearing was a colossal waste of time and energy. We are no closer to learning conclusively about the origin of COVID-19, nor steps the government can take to strengthen data collection, improve future testing and contact tracing, or address the racial and wealth disparities that were laid bare in that terrible time.

Instead, Republicans, desperate to tarnish Fauci, went to town. Greene took things to absurd lengths.

"You're not a doctor," she fumed. "You're *Mr.* Fauci," she said, her voice dripping with disdain.

Democratic Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland called for a point of order. "In terms of the rules of decorum, are we allowed to deny that a doctor is a doctor just because we don't want him to be a doctor?"

Without waiting for a reply from committee Chairman Brad Wenstrup (R-Ohio), Greene thundered on, "Yes, because ... that man does not deserve to have a license. As a matter of fact, it should be revoked and he belongs in prison."

Greene took a kitchen-sink approach to her hectoring. Holding up a photo of two beagles lying on the ground with their heads tented in mesh, she sneered, "As a



dog lover, I want to tell you this is disgusting and evil, what you signed off on. The type of science that you are representing, Mr. Fauci, is abhorrent and it needs to stop."

(The National Institutes of Health, which has funded research using beagles and has rigorous rules about their treatment, was not involved in the study that Greene was exercised about. The journal that initially promulgated that claim later retracted it.)

"What do dogs have to do with anything we're talking about today?" asked Fauci in frustration.

Amid the blustering, it's important to remember that during the pandemic, as President Trump and his sycophants were suggesting that Americans do dumb things such as inject bleach or ingest anti-parasitics to rid themselves of COVID-19, Fauci was working to understand the novel virus and to promote social rules designed to help prevent transmission.

Did he make mistakes or contradict himself? He did. In the early stages of the pandemic, Fauci suggested that people didn't need to wear masks before reversing himself. As he testified, the six-feet-apart rule for social distancing was not based on scientific studies but seemed to make sense. The editor of the nonpartisan journal the New Atlantis pointed out in a 2022 New York Times essay that a little humility would have served Fauci and the country better. "There was nothing stopping Dr. Fauci in those chaotic early weeks from saying 'Masks might help, but doctors and nurses need them more now,' or even just 'We're not sure yet,'" wrote Ari Schulman. "This would have been far closer to accurately representing scientific understanding and would have done wonders in case the answer later changed, as many elements of guidance were bound to."

Most of us are willing to cut Fauci some slack for the imperfections, but his embrace of masks, social distancing and, of course, vaccines when they became available made him a figure of hatred for those Americans who do not like being told what to do, especially by scientists. "Don't Fauci my Florida" became Gov. Ron DeSantis' ludicrous motto, even as hospitalizations, new infections and deaths per capita soared in his state.

On Monday, Fauci testified that he and his family have been inundated with death threats, two of which were credible enough to have resulted in arrests. " 'Credible death threats' means someone who clearly was on his way to kill me," Fauci said at one point, his voice breaking.

You have to wonder why Fauci even volunteered to appear at Monday's hearing knowing what was in store for him from committee Republicans, who had promised to blow the lid off his mismanagement of the pandemic, but came up with nothing.

"You are an American hero," said Rep. Robert Garcia, a Long Beach Democrat who lost his mother and stepfather to COVID-19, "and your team has done more to save lives than all 435 members of this body."

Amen to that.

@robinkabcarian

Potentially dangerous heat in inland areas

[Weather, from A1] slowly start to diminish as the heat wave progresses, with Los Angeles County valleys seeing more sunshine by Thursday and Friday afternoon. But overall, the moist, low clouds will keep temperatures across much of the Southland near normal for this time of year.

Temperatures Wednesday and Thursday are expected to peak around 70 degrees at L.A. County beaches, hit the mid-70s in downtown L.A. and reach the 80s and low 90s in the valleys, Kittell said — about 5 to 10 degrees warmer than Monday, but only slightly above average for this time of year.

“We’ll never fully shake the marine layer clouds,” Adams said. “This time of year [the marine layer is] a big part of why we’re relatively spared along the coast,” a phenomenon that will be less likely when a heat wave hits in July or August.

But moving inland, a dramatic climb on the mercury is forecast for the majority of the state, with temperatures expected over 100 from Redding down to Bakersfield. Across most of interior Northern California through the southern San Joaquin Valley, officials are warning of a major heat risk Wednesday and Thursday, a level considered “dangerous to anyone without proper hydration or adequate cooling,” according to the National Weather Service. The major heat risk also extends across the Mojave Desert through Friday.

National Weather Service officials are newly highlighting the serious and potentially deadly health effects from extreme heat, which is becoming more frequent and turbulent because of human-caused climate change. The agency’s urgent warnings focus primarily on vulnerable populations, such as newborns, children, the elderly, and those pregnant or with chronic illnesses, reminding residents to stay hydrated, avoid the heat of the day and use air conditioning.

Gov. Gavin Newsom an-



A SKATEBOARDER enjoys Venice Beach Skatepark. Beaches are expected to stay mild, but local deserts could see 100 degrees or more.

nounced Tuesday that the state had activated part of its Extreme Temperature Response Plan, triggered by weather service advisories, which “moves the state into action to coordinate an all-hands response by the state government,” the governor said in a news release.

“Everywhere will see noticeable warming, but the most significant and potentially hazardous heat will be ... inland,” Kittell said.

In Southern California, the Antelope, Coachella, Apple and Lucerne valleys will see the most intense temperatures, with highs expected between 100 and 113 Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

“It’s roughly 10 to 15 degrees above average,” Adams said.

Weather officials upgraded the Antelope Valley and its surrounding foothills to an excessive heat warning

for Wednesday and Thursday, advising that temperatures up to 107 degrees are possible as are “warm overnight low temperatures,” which don’t allow for much recovery at night. The Apple and Lucerne valleys are under a similar advisory, with temperatures up to 106 degrees possible.

“Those temperatures are almost typical for the hottest part of the year out there in the desert, but for early June, it’s abnormal,” Kittell said. “The same temperatures in August, we wouldn’t be warning people about it ... [but now] there’s been less time to get acclimated.”

Lancaster and Palmdale are both forecast to break daily high temperature records Thursday at 105 degrees; both cities have historical highs on June 6 at 103 degrees, according to the weather service.

Farther east, even more intense heat Thursday could also set records, with Death Valley National Park expected to tie its daily historical high at 121 degrees; Needles, close to the Arizona border, could slip past its June 6 record if it hits 115 degrees as forecast; and Bishop, south of Mammoth Lakes, could surpass its record by 2 degrees with its forecasted 104-degree high, according to the National Weather Service in Las Vegas.

Across the San Bernardino and Inyo county deserts, an excessive heat warning is cautioning about “dangerously hot conditions for early June” from Wednesday through Friday. Temperatures are expected to hit 116 degrees around Lake Mead and Lake Havasu City, 114 degrees in the Morongo Valley and up to 122 degrees in Death Valley — highs that

have all inched higher since prior forecasts.

The San Joaquin Valley is also under an excessive heat warning from Wednesday through Friday, with highs from 103 to 108 expected and the possibility for several cities to break or tie some daily records. Fresno is likely to break its historical June 6 high by 1 degree, with its high Thursday forecast at 108 degrees, while Madera could tie its record of 107 degrees.

In Northern California, temperatures began rising Tuesday, with excessive heat warnings in effect through Thursday for the Sacramento Valley and Sierra foothills. Highs there were forecast to reach 95 to 108 degrees. Across inland North and East Bay, as well as into the Salinas Valley and the Sonoma County mountains, highs were expected to reach nearly 100 degrees Tuesday,

Wednesday and Thursday, according to the heat advisory issued for that region.

The hot and dry conditions have raised concerns about fire risk across the state, though officials still say the state’s particularly wet winter will continue to delay the start of the most dangerous wildfires.

“We had a lot of rain over the winter, and the bigger fuels — the trees and the shrubs — are still pretty moist,” Kittell said. “Those finer fuels [mostly grasses], ... they’ve dried out a lot and we’ve already seen significant grass fires.”

Earlier this week, a grass fire broke out in San Joaquin County outside of Tracy.

Firefighters battled the 14,000-acre fire fueled by dry grasses, and crews reported it 90% contained Tuesday, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Hunter Biden is haunted by his words as gun trial opens

BY MATT HAMILTON

WILMINGTON, Del. — Hunter Biden was not on the witness stand, but his voice filled the courtroom.

In the opening day of Biden’s trial on gun charges Tuesday, federal prosecutors projected page after page of his 2021 memoir, “Beautiful Things,” while playing an audiobook of his voice narrating the gritty years of his crack cocaine abuse.

Jurors heard the president’s son describe how he developed a crack habit and learned to cook the drug, which he wrote takes you “into the darkest recesses of your soul, as well as the darkest corners of the community.”

In graphic detail, Biden spoke of dangerous drug deals in Los Angeles’ Skid Row, driving while high and his time as a “bloodhound” chasing crack in Nashville.

His superpower, he wrote, was procuring crack anywhere, shelling out tens of thousands of dollars while taking up residence in a string of L.A. luxury hotels, as well as budget motels dotting the East Coast.

“I could get off a plane in Timbuktu and score a bag of crack,” he wrote.

The president’s son, 54, sat stoically during the airing of his words while First Lady Jill Biden sat in the front row beside her daughter, Ashley, and his wife, Melissa Cohen Biden, along with a coterie of relatives and supporters, including L.A. lawyer Kevin Morris.

Some in the court grew emotional, with Ashley Biden appearing to dab away tears and her mother reaching an arm around her.

The harrowing recounting of Hunter Biden’s descent fueled by drugs and alcohol bore out federal prosecutors’ promise earlier in the morning to delve into his sordid past — summoning his ex-wife and two former girlfriends, including his late brother’s widow, to testify in coming days — as they began the trial in a Delaware

courtroom.

Biden also faces trial on tax charges in Los Angeles later this year.

“No one is above the law. It doesn’t matter who you are or what your name is,” senior assistant special counsel Derek Hines told jurors as Biden sat feet away, flanked by defense lawyers.

In his opening statement, Hines boiled the case down to two elements: that Biden was addicted to crack cocaine for years, and that he had lied about his illicit drug use on a federal background check form in October 2018, when he purchased a Colt revolver at a Delaware gun shop.

“No one is allowed to lie on a federal form like that — not even Hunter Biden,” Hines said, noting that federally licensed gun sellers lack a “crystal ball” to determine whether customers are telling the truth about illegal drug use.

Moments later, defense attorney Abbe Lowell zeroed in on the form that his client filled out in 2018 and, with excerpts projected onto a large screen, asked jurors to study language asking applicants whether they are unlawful users of narcotics or controlled substances.

“It doesn’t say, ‘Have you ever been? Have you ever used?’” Lowell said, and pointed to other questions on the document that did rely on the words “have you ever.”

The distinction was critical, Lowell said, because his client’s years-long drug addiction was punctuated by multiple stays in rehab and periods of sobriety.

At the time of the gun purchase, Lowell said, Biden had completed rehab in Los Angeles — where his uncle James Biden and daughter visited him — and had returned to Delaware.

Lowell urged jurors to be mindful of how Biden would have understood the question about drug use on the form and what he had “knowingly” done.

“What was his state of mind when he walked into the gun store?” Lowell said.

“Did he knowingly think of himself as someone who should not buy that gun?”

David Weiss, the U.S. attorney for Delaware and the special counsel appointed by U.S. Atty. Gen. Merrick Garland to handle the Hunter Biden investigations, sat in the front row of the courtroom with colleagues.

Weiss’ team has charged Biden with three felony counts: two related to lying about his substance abuse to purchase the Colt revolver, and the third for the 11 days he owned — but never fired — the handgun.

If convicted, Biden could face years in prison. But as a nonviolent, first-time offender, he is less likely to end up behind bars.

The same prosecution team has also indicted Biden in Los Angeles on multiple allegations of tax violations, and that trial — a more complex case that will delve into his foreign consulting business — is scheduled for September.

Biden’s fate rests with a jury of 12 Delawareans — six men and six women, with three female alternates — drawn from all corners of the first family’s home state.

The trial is expected to put a harsh spotlight on the Biden family’s secrets, struggles and tragedies.

Prosecutors are expected to show jurors a ream of text messages from Hunter Biden in which he describes his drug use and arranges drug deals — messages intended to bolster the power of his own words in his memoir.

But Lowell urged jurors to scrutinize the timeline of events in the case, telling them in his opening statement to “pay attention to the dates” and to focus on October 2018 and what came before it.

Late Tuesday, while cross-examining FBI Special Agent Erica Jensen, Lowell elicited the investigator’s admission that indeed there were times when Biden was sober.

“I do believe that there were ... periods when there was no usage,” Jensen said.

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No new murder trial for Rebecca Grossman

Citing driver's speed, drinking and more, judge upholds guilt in 2020 deaths of 2 boys.

By Richard Winton

A Los Angeles County Superior Court judge on Monday rejected Rebecca Grossman's bid to overturn her murder convictions in the vehicular killing of two young brothers in a Westlake Village crosswalk, saying the facts and circumstances presented at trial justified the verdict.

Judge Joseph Brandolino upheld the decision in the September 2020 deaths of Mark and Jacob Iskander, saying the evidence was "sufficient to support implied malice beyond a reasonable doubt."

Brandolino found that Grossman knew her actions were a danger to human life and that she acted with conscious disregard, factors required under the law for vehicular murder convictions.

After a six-week trial filled with drama and emotion, a jury of nine men and three women found Grossman guilty in February of two counts of second-degree murder, two counts of gross vehicular manslaughter and one count of hit-and-run in the deaths of the Iskander brothers, ages 11 and 8.

Brandolino said the "totality of evidence" of Grossman's actions before, during and after the fatal collision — including her drinking, speeding and leaving the scene — supported the verdict.

The judge noted that Grossman had been drinking at a Westlake Village restaurant and at a friend's home, and that based on her blood-alcohol level, had likely drunk more than two alcoholic beverages before driving under "slight impairment."

She was driving 73 to 81 mph in a residential neighborhood on Triunfo Canyon Road that had a posted 45-mph limit, the judge said, and was closely following the vehicle of Scott Erickson, her then-boyfriend, before the crash as the two raced home.

Brandolino also noted that Grossman had left the scene. Her SUV stopped three-tenths of a mile from the marked crosswalk where the boys were struck after [See Grossman, B2]



Allen J. Schaben Los Angeles Times

Planters illegally installed to deter RV parking are removed

By Nathan Solis

More than a dozen steel planters illegally bolted to the ground in a Playa Vista neighborhood to deter people experiencing homelessness from parking their vehicles on the street have been removed and those responsible have been cited, according to city officials.

In recent years, the encampment of RVs, campers and other vehicles parked on Coral Tree Lane, behind a Home Depot store, has become a major concern for parents at a nearby private school. Parents say their children have found syringes in and around their campus, and people experiencing mental health crises often scare the elementary-age kids.

Two men wearing orange Home Depot aprons had been seen working with a third person to bolt the metal tubs to the street.

The Los Angeles Department of Public Works cited the responsible parties for placing the planters on the city street, Jonathan Davila, communications deputy for District 11 Councilmember Traci Park's office, said Tuesday. Less than a week after they were installed, the 18 steel tubs filled with fresh soil and green succulent plants have been removed.

But city officials have not disclosed who was cited and who was behind the operation.

It all began May 29, when the men teamed up to bolt the metal tubs into parking spots on Coral Tree Place. They then filled the tubs with soil and plants.

A Home Depot spokesperson said a customer purchased the metal tubs and re- [See Planters, B4]



Sam Lutzker

MORE THAN a dozen steel tubs, top, were briefly installed along a city street behind a Playa Vista Home Depot store. On May 29, two men wearing Home Depot aprons, above, appeared to be part of the operation to take up parking spots used by vehicle dwellers.

Man vs. shark off Del Mar beach

When a swimmer was attacked, others in his group didn't hesitate to pull him to safety.

By Jessica Garrison

Cameron Whiting had just finished an easy 1.5-mile open-water swim and was bodysurfing Sunday morning off Del Mar City Beach when a member of his group began to scream.

At first, Whiting heard only the terror in her voice; then his mind processed that she was screaming, "Shark!"

One of the newer members of the swimming group — a 46-year-old man whose name has not been disclosed — had been attacked. The woman closest to him was yelling for help.

Since it was before 9 a.m. and lifeguards weren't on duty, help would have to come from the swimmers nearest the man in distress. That was Whiting and another member of the group, Kevin Barrett. The pair were about 100 yards offshore, while most of the others were back on the beach and thinking of breakfast.

Barrett took off toward the man — and the shark — as quickly as he could. Whiting, 31, who had trained as an ocean lifeguard, quickly scanned the shore to make sure someone there was summoning help, then began to swim.

As he pumped his arms furiously, two fears battled in his mind.

The first was the realization that he was swimming directly toward an active shark attack. The second was his dread of what he might find when he got there. Would his fellow swimmer have all his limbs? Would he be alive?

"That is what scared me the most," Whiting said. "To get to him and realize ..."

But when he had completed the approximately 50-yard swim, just behind Barrett, they found the victim conscious, limbs intact. He was, however, bleeding profusely.

They were about 150 yards from shore; it was hard to imagine he could make it on his own. When they flipped him over, blood began to gush from his wet suit.

As they started to pull him toward the beach, a surfer paddled over and offered up his board.

They lifted him onto the surfboard, and Whiting [See Shark, B5]

Poor Mexico? Hardly. The U.S. could learn a few things

One of these countries has hit more presidential milestones, and it's not the 'beacon of democracy'

Gustavo Arellano

Of the many terrible things that have been said about Mexico's supposed inferiority to its northern neighbor, the most damning wasn't even uttered by a gringo.

"Poor Mexico: So far from God, so close to the United States."

Attributed to 19th century Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz, the lament first bubbled up in the mainstream American press during the 1940s and has been rubbed in the faces of Mexicans ever since. Even though there's no proof that Díaz actually said the apocryphal quote, I get why it has lingered: It's a great insult on multiple levels.

It portrays the country of my parents as forever lesser than the United States. It makes Mexico out to be lawless and unholy. Putting those words in Díaz's mouth implies that Mexico's government is condemned to lawlessness and strongmen.



Well, who's crying now?

On Sunday, Mexico elected Claudia Sheinbaum as president, and history was made in a way that makes American politics seem as antiquated as the Whigs.

Sheinbaum will become the first female president of a country long cast as a macho wasteland. Of Jewish heritage, she is the first non-Christian to assume the presidency in a nation where Catholicism still holds the country's psyche, if not its pews. She handily beat another woman, Xóchitl Gálvez Ruiz, who made history even while losing by becoming Mexico's first female runner-up in a presidential election.

The United States, by the way, has broken only the last of those barriers.

Sheinbaum will be sworn in Oct. 1. By then, the eyes of the world will be focused on the U.S., where a far different presidential campaign will be wheezing to its end. The top candidates are two old white guys who have held the job before and are repeating their face-off from four years ago. Joe Biden [See Arellano, B2]



Fernando Llano Associated Press

CLAUDIA SHEINBAUM will be the first female president of a country long cast as a macho wasteland. Needless to say, the U.S. hasn't broken that barrier.

Mexico’s not perfect, but it deserves a victory lap

[Arellano, from B1] is running on his fourth Democratic presidential ticket. Donald Trump is the Republican Party’s presidential nominee for the third straight election. It’s the type of hoary leadership that Americans have long associated with Third World countries — but nope, this is the U.S. in 2024.

Americans have snidely looked down on Mexico’s government for decades while holding ours up as a beacon for the rest of the world to emulate. But in 2024, which country can boast of a better track record in its presidential milestones? Mexico elected a Black president, Vicente Guerrero, in 1829, when the U.S. Constitution still considered a slave to be three-fifths of a person and didn’t give freedmen the right to vote. The first Mexican president of Indigenous descent, Benito Juárez, assumed office in 1858, when the U.S. government was still pursuing a campaign of extermination against Native Americans.

Josefina Vázquez Mota became the first female presidential candidate for a major Mexican party four years before Hillary Clinton became the first in the U.S. In 2018, current president Andrés Manuel López Obrador was the first winner who wasn’t a member of Mexico’s two traditional top parties, PAN and the PRI. In this country, candidates who aren’t Democrats or Republicans are treated as weirdos who threaten civilization — as are the people who vote for them.

This weekend, consulates around the U.S. offered in-person voting for a Mexican presidential election for the first time but weren’t prepared for the hours-long lines of people excited to take part.

The election turnout — 60% so far — lags behind the 66% of Americans who voted in the 2020 presidential election. But most Mexicans filled out their ballots with optimism, while we did so with dread. Mexico’s democracy is



Photographs by DANIA MAXWELL Los Angeles Times

ANGELENOS line up at the Mexican Consulate in L.A., the first time its consulates in the U.S. have offered in-person presidential voting.



MOST MEXICANS filled out their ballots with optimism, while Americans in 2020 did so with dread.

nowhere near perfect, of course. Antonio López de Santa Anna served a total of 11 terms as president, while Díaz ruled with an iron fist for 35 years. For most of the 20th century, presidential elections were the domain of

one party, the PRI. In the present day, violence against political candidates, particularly those running for local office, persists. At least 37 candidates were assassinated in the months leading up to Sunday’s elections, and hundreds more were threatened, to the point that López Obrador’s administration assigned them security guards.

Sheinbaum needs to prove she’s more than just an acolyte of her mentor, López Obrador, whom critics portray as a leftist version of Trump for his cult of personality, imperious attitude toward haters and desire to hold onto power even if he’s not officially in office. On social media, Gálvez complained that she faced “unequal competition against the entire state apparatus dedicated to favoring its candidate,” even as she conceded her defeat

because “I am a democrat and I believe in institutions.”

But the fact remains: Mexico’s democracy worked Sunday, at least on the presidential level. Mexicans treated the election as a chance to elect a new leader, not an apocalyptic referendum on the nation’s future, the way too many Americans view the Biden-Trump rematch. Despite her grumbling, Gálvez isn’t crying about a stolen election — something that has actually happened in Mex-

ico — while Trump continues to insist he was the rightful winner in 2020.

Sheinbaum’s opponents aren’t threatening an insurrection, as Trump supporters did on Jan. 6 by storming the Capitol. And never in Mexico’s history has a convicted felon dared to run for the presidency, let alone with a shot of winning, as Trump now does.

Poor Mexico, indeed. So close to the United States, which is so far from a democracy that inspires hope.

Grossman judge upholds guilt in vehicular killings

[Grossman, from B1] the vehicle was powered down by its safety system.

The judge also noted how Grossman had “received a warning that speed could kill” when she was given a speeding ticket from a California Highway Patrol officer in 2013.

James Spertus, Grossman’s new lead attorney, who was hired after her conviction, had argued there was no evidence presented at trial to support implied malice, which is needed for the murder charges.

“She doesn’t have a malignant heart,” Spertus told the judge. “Ms. Grossman didn’t want to go fast and not care. ... It is a tragedy, not a murder.

“This has been an incredibly tragic case,” he continued.

But when Spertus told the court that “Mrs. Grossman suffers every day,” he prompted audible disgust from onlookers, many of whom supported the Iskanders.

Spertus also argued that testimony on Grossman’s 2013 speeding ticket should not have been admitted at trial, saying it was a weak attempt by the prosecution to show implied malice. He said the warning that Officer Robert Leffler had purportedly given Grossman when he ticketed her for driving 93 mph on the 101 Freeway was insufficient.

The lawyer argued that

while prosecutors had promised the officer would say he’d given a warning that “speed kills” specifically to Grossman, he had instead testified that, in general, he gave that warning to all speeding drivers. The prosecution’s argument — that the warning indicated that if she continued to speed, it would be “in conscious disregard for human life” — was misleading, Spertus said.

“You were misled in allowing certain evidence in,” Spertus told Brandolino of the officer’s testimony.

Brandolino countered that while the testimony was not exactly what was proffered, it was not far off.

Spertus also argued that Grossman hadn’t been read her rights during nearly an hour of waiting in a police car after the crash, so her statements at that time were inadmissible.

But Brandolino said that the co-founder of the Grossman Burn Center was not in custody at the time, as a deputy had placed her in a sheriff’s cruiser only for her safety.

The judge also rejected the defense’s request for a new trial based on a plethora of other arguments involving expert testimony and crime lab testing methods.

Grossman, who appeared in court wearing a brown jail shirt and pants, is slated to be sentenced June 10. She faces 34 years to life in prison.



IRFAN KHAN Los Angeles Times

REBECCA GROSSMAN faces prison time for fatally hitting Mark and Jacob Iskander with her SUV.

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<div><div>SUMMONS</div><div>(CITACION JUDICIAL)</div><div>Case Number (Numero del Caso): 23STCV00302</div><div>NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): MEDI ENTERPRISES, INC.; SOUTH BAY TV.COM; SHAHAB SEAN MEDI, an individual, and DOES 1-100, inclusive, YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): NONA MELKONIAN 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. IAVISO! 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 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación 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 telefónica 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 más información 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 más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia. The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): Superior Court of California 111 North Hill Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): Reisner & King LLP 15303 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1260 Sherman Oaks, CA 91403 818-981-0901 Date: (Fecha) 05/29/2024 David W. Slayton Clerk (Secretario) D. Kim Deputy (Adjunto)</div></div>	<div><div>SUMMONS</div><div>(CITACION JUDICIAL)</div><div>Case Number (Numero del Caso): 23SMCV04726</div><div>NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): Jonathan Roudier YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): SM 10000 Property, LLC 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. 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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. IAVISO! 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 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación 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 telefónica 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. 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Slayton Clerk (Secretario) K. Scurlock Deputy (Adjunto)</div></div>	<div><div>SUMMONS</div><div>(CITACION JUDICIAL)</div><div>Case Number (Numero del Caso): 23TRCV04256</div><div>NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): BEMAX TRANSPORT INC., a California corporation; BLMORE 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. 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Ramsaur (SBN 281566), Ramsaur Law Office 3070 Bristol Street, Suite 640 Costa Mesa, CA 92626 949-200-9114 Date: (Fecha) 12/21/2023 David W. Slayton Clerk (Secretario) M. Moran Deputy (Adjunto)</div></div>			

CITY & STATE



MICHAEL PEREZ Associated Press

DEMONSTRATORS carry a Pine Tree flag to support then-President Trump during a visit to the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia to participate in an ABC News town hall on Sept. 15, 2020.

San Francisco removes historical banner now linked to far right

The Pine Tree flag has come to represent the extremism of Jan. 6, Mayor London Breed's office says.

BY SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

A Pine Tree flag, a symbol originally from the Revolutionary War but more recently linked to groups who stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, has been removed from the San Francisco Civic Center Plaza.

The simple white flag with a green pine tree in the center and the words "An Appeal to Heaven" at the top had flown in the city's Pavilion of American Flags for 60 years, but it was taken down after the mayor's office said the flag, and its meaning, was co-opted by extremists. "The Pine Tree flag, or

the Appeal to Heaven flag, has recently been adopted to represent a different meaning by extremists who led the insurrection at the United States Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021," said Jeff Cretan, a spokesperson for San Francisco Mayor London Breed. "This was an abhorrent and disgraceful moment in our country's history that threatened the very fabric of our democracy and continues to affect those who lived through the violence and the assault on our fundamental values."

The decision to take the flag down outside City Hall came just days after the New York Times reported that the flag was flown outside U.S. Supreme Court Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr.'s home in Virginia last year.

The news outlet also reported that in 2020, after the presidential election, the United States flag was flown upside-down outside Alito's home. U.S. flag code, which

is not enforceable, specifies the Stars and Stripes should be flown upside-down only "as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property." The inverted flag was used as a symbol by supporters of former President Trump who contested the results of the presidential election.

The Pine Tree flag has been flown and spotted at right-wing events and was carried by rioters during the Jan. 6 insurrection.

After the New York Times report about the controversial flag being flown at the justice's home, Alito told Congress in a May 29 letter that he would not recuse himself from upcoming Supreme Court cases stemming from the Jan. 6 attack.

In San Francisco, city officials took down the controversial flag over the weekend.

Cretan, the spokesperson for the mayor's office, said there was no legislative

requirement to take the flag down.

In 1964, the city also took down the Confederate battle flag shortly after it was first flown.

The city has flown 18 flags at the Pavilion of American Flags since June 14, 1964, and each is meant to represent a significant moment in American history.

But the Pine Tree flag is not the only controversial flag in the pavilion that has been used by extremist groups.

The yellow Gadsden flag, which has a coiled rattlesnake and the words "Don't Tread on Me," is also displayed at the pavilion.

The flag has been used by right-wing organizations, including militia groups that have been linked to armed standoffs with federal authorities.

A spokesperson for Breed's office said it was reviewing whether that flag should be removed as well.

Check theft ring bragged online, indictment says

Several are accused of taking mail from post offices and seeking people on Instagram to help them cash in.

BY ANDREW J. CAMPA

A group of Southern Californians are accused of stealing mail and checks from post offices throughout Los Angeles and Orange counties, often hitting several locations in a single day — then turning to social media for help cashing in their haul.

Authorities are accusing Antonio Hernandez, Ivan Murillo-Hernandez and Alexis Garcia Martinez of taking mail from unsuspecting venues with the help of four juveniles, whose names were not released. They then allegedly went on social media to solicit people with bank accounts to help them fraudulently cash the stolen checks.

Check amounts ranged from the low four figures — \$1,500, \$1,725 and \$1,800 — to a whopping \$555,099.14 on one light pink business check. Damages to financial institutions totaled more than \$800,000 over a 10-month spree that ended in August 2023, authorities allege.

Sometimes the check crew would even post Instagram reels of their police chases or of them flashing thousands of dollars in cash, asking followers for likes, according to court documents.

A grand jury responded to their attention requests last month with indictments against Hernandez, Murillo-Hernandez and Martinez on felony charges, including bank fraud, conspiracy to commit bank fraud, aggravated identity theft, robbery of a post office and mail theft.

The three are expected back in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles on June 20 for a pretrial conference.

Hernandez and Martinez's legal representation could not be reached. The lawyer representing Murillo-Hernandez did not offer a comment.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service, a federal agency that protects postal facilities and mail carriers and investigates crimes involving mail, anchored the investigation into the check ring with the help of law enforcement agencies from various counties.

The 22-page indictment accuses the crew of various incidents across Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties between Nov. 14, 2002, and Aug. 18, 2023.

Many of the post offices they hit either had unlocked doors, back entrances, docks or unmanned areas that enabled the thefts.

On April 4, 2023, crew members allegedly stole mail from an Upland post office via an open back door, according to court documents.

Hernandez, who the Postal Inspection Service believes is a member of the Northeast Los Angeles Avenues gang, is alleged to have pushed a postal employee who attempted to take a photo of the license plate of the getaway vehicle, a silver Toyota Camry.

That same day, the indictment alleges, Hernan-

dez, Murillo-Hernandez and three co-conspirators stole mail from an Anaheim post office, then drove to a restaurant parking lot on South State College Boulevard and opened the pilfered mail. Envelopes that contained checks were kept while everything else was discarded into a nearby dumpster.

When an Anaheim police cruiser pulled near the silver Camry, the crew fled in what became a high-speed chase on the 57 and 60 freeways, according to court documents.

The crew reached Rowland Heights before stopping, abandoning the vehicle and taking off on foot, the indictment alleges, and Hernandez and one other person successfully evaded capture.

One of the alleged co-conspirators who was caught posted a video that evening of a police car blasting its warning lights, apparently as seen from the passenger-side rearview mirror of the car being pursued. The co-conspirator asked followers to "like" the post, according to court documents.

About a month passed before another duo of co-conspirators stole checks from the docks of a post office in El Segundo on June 8, according to court documents. That day, the indictment alleges, the crew also hit a post office in West Hills.

It's in that theft that the group pilfered a check for \$555,099.25 from a West Hills business' Chase Bank account, the indictment says.

The following day, an Instagram story from a co-conspirator was reposted by Hernandez that showed three stolen pink checks from a Chase account, according to the indictment. A caption read, "The lil homie came through with the slips. Thank you, my boy." Slips, in this reference, is slang for checks.

Despite their brassiness, the gang was also deterred by small measures, authorities say.

They fled a La Mirada post office on March 2, 2023, because a postal employee approached them, the indictment says. Two days later, an attempt to hit a La Cañada Flintridge post office was thwarted by a locked door, according to court documents.

Once they stole checks, however, they turned to social media for a payday, the indictment alleges. The crew looked for people with long-established bank accounts to cash the checks so they could access the money more quickly, according to court documents.

To persuade third parties to cash the checks, crew members often claimed to be the rightful recipients and offered to share a portion of the proceeds, hiding the fact that the checks had been stolen, the indictment alleges.

Some of the crew also sold stolen checks rather than cashing them, according to court documents.

Law enforcement eventually caught up with Hernandez and the one alleged co-conspirator who had evaded capture on Aug. 18, 2023, raiding the home they shared.

Hernandez published one last Instagram story that day, according to court documents, saying, "I got raided by FBI earlier delete anything you got of me."

Cleaners find 235 pounds of meth at Airbnb, police say; 2 suspects arrested

BY ANABEL SOSA

A cleaning crew arrived at an Airbnb residence in Alhambra last month where they found boxes that contained about 235 pounds of methamphetamine, police said Sunday.

Officers arrived at the home in the 1400 block of South Ethel Avenue around noon on May 24, where they discovered boxes full of the drugs, according to an Instagram post from the Alhambra Police Department.

Shortly after they arrived at the scene, police saw a U-Haul van returning to the location, said Alhambra Police Sgt. Effen Tamayo.

Police said the van "quickly" made a U-turn — "thinking they would get away" — but two people were later arrested on suspicion of transporting narcotics.

Tamayo said that details on the case were limited but added that a Ring cam-



Alhambra Police Department

PACKAGES containing 235 pounds of methamphetamine were confiscated from an Airbnb rental in the 1400 block of Ethel Ave in Alhambra last month.

era captured video of the pair allegedly using the same van to transport the narcotics.

"The reported criminal activity has no place on

Airbnb and we have removed a booking guest from the platform as investigations continue," an Airbnb spokesperson wrote in an email to The Times on Mon-

day. "Our team is working closely with the host to provide support, and we stand ready to assist the Alhambra Police Department with their investigations."

Eight girls arrested after school brawl

Police say Bay Area attack sent targeted youth and another who tried to help her to a hospital.

BY SUMMER LIN

Eight girls from a Bay Area middle school were arrested last week after police say they plotted and attacked another student.

The eight students from Sinaloa Middle School, ranging from 12 to 14 years old, were arrested May 28 and booked into Marin County Juvenile Hall on sus-

picion of conspiracy and felony assault, according to the Novato Police Department.

On May 24, the group gathered after lunchtime at the school and planned to assault another student, authorities said.

When they attacked, other children started recording it on their phones and egged on the fight, police said. One student tried to intervene but was also assaulted; both students attacked were hospitalized with moderate injuries.

Video broadcast on KTVU-TV showed a girl on the ground being punched and kicked by three other students.

Novato police, along with

the Novato Unified School District and Sinaloa Middle School administrators, investigated and identified the group responsible for the attack, police said.

Students knew the fight was going to happen the day before it occurred, according to an email sent to parents that was obtained by the TV station.

"This resulted in a very large stampede of our students (several hundreds of them) rushing around the campus to seek out the fight to watch it happen," school officials wrote. "This mob grew in size as they ran through the campus, causing some students to fall and literally be run over by

others."

District officials didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Friday morning.

School principal Christy Stocker and other district administrators spoke with more than 200 parents from the school on Tuesday, according to the Marin Independent Journal. Parents of the students who were injured said that they were doing OK physically but emotionally shaken.

"This was a horrific attack," district superintendent Tracy Smith said during the meeting, according to the outlet. "It's completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated."



Google Maps

A POST OFFICE in Upland. Checks stolen from such offices totaled more than \$800,000, officials say.

Planters briefly placed in spot where RVs park

[**Planters**, from B1] purposed them as planters. The company would not say whether its employees helped install them. However, video shot by homeless activists showed workers dressed as Home Depot employees installing the planters.

The tubs were installed just after Los Angeles city workers cleared the area of vehicles as part of a scheduled sanitation sweep.

Vanessa Garcia, whose 6-year-old and 7-year-old children attend the nearby Westside Neighborhood School, hopes the city will take notice of the encampment now that the planters have drawn so much attention to the street.

One day, her 7-year-old son came home from school and told her that he and his classmates had found a syringe on the campus. They told their teachers. There have also been people experiencing mental health crises right outside the preschool, screaming while class was in session.

“We have a lot of parents who live near the school that would like to walk their kids through the area, but they feel that they can’t,” Garcia said. “It’s just not safe for the kids.”

When the steel planters were in place, Garcia said, she felt like the city had made a positive step to address the RV encampment.

“That’s great, I thought. We’re putting in flower planters, we’re putting in greenery. It’s great for everyone,” she said.

Days after the planters were installed, only a handful of oversize vehicles remained on the street. Handyman and artist Michael Michelangelo’s vehicle was among them.

He has parked near the Home Depot for several months and said he’s noticed that the big-box hardware store has increasingly made the property inhospitable to anyone who wants to park nearby.

“They placed these rocks, boulders really, where there used to be grass,” Michelangelo said. “I used to walk my dog from my van over there.”

Many of the residents who have been staying in their vehicles on Coral Tree Place say they chose it because it is well lit and they don’t have to worry

about residential parking restrictions. But people who work in the area have concerns.

One man who works in the area but was not authorized to speak on behalf of his company said the encampment on Coral Tree Place has grown sharply since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020.

He said there is more trash along the street, people using the street as a bathroom and graffiti on the sidewalk. Some of that graffiti includes positive affirmations and messages to other people in the homeless community.

In December 2021, parents dropping their children off at Westside Neighborhood School witnessed police standing over the body of a dead man who probably had overdosed, according to reporting from the Westside Current.

More than 14,000 people lived in some type of vehicle in Los Angeles County in 2023, including vans and RVs, according to the latest data from the county’s Homeless Services Authority. There are about 1,200 more vehicles than in the previous year and more vehicles than the county has spaces to provide for under its Safe Parking LA program.

When sanitation crews cleared the area last week, homeless advocate and UCLA sociology doctoral candidate Sam Lutzker was there as part of his work, documenting the lives of people living in vehicles in Council District 11.

After the area was cleared, men wearing the signature Home Depot aprons installed the steel tubs and appeared to bolt them to the city street with power tools, according to a post from the X account of Venice Justice, an advocacy group.

Lutzker, a member of Venice Justice, approached the men and asked if they had permits to install the planters. He recorded his interaction with the men, who refused to identify themselves.

One of the men wearing a Home Depot apron told Lutzker they were “authorized by the city” to install the planters, according to video he shared with The Times.

The men installed the planters, then told the re-

maining vehicle dwellers on the street that they planned to install more.

Homeless advocates say city sweeps coupled with citations push vehicle dwellers into neighboring districts and cities, because there are not enough resources to accommodate them. The area around the Playa Vista Home Depot is made up of business parks and the elementary school.

Park’s office said that the sanitation sweep on May 28 was part of “our continued efforts of offering housing solutions to everyone while addressing the health and safety hazards of oversize vehicle dwelling.”

Park’s office would not say whether it was aware of the operation before the planters were installed.

The issue is especially tense in Council District 11,

said Venice Justice member Peggy Lee Kennedy, because vehicle dwellers find themselves being pushed from one encampment to the next.

“The current process in Council District 11 is aimed at permanently removing RVs through creating parking restrictions and ‘No RV Zones’ including bollards, red curbs, planters, fences and no ‘Oversized Parking’

signs,” Kennedy said in an email.

This results in less public parking and, Lutzker said, forced some people to park behind the Playa Vista Home Depot in the first place.

“I’m stuck because I need a new transmission for my van,” said Michelangelo, the artist. “You think I want to stay here? There are opportunities elsewhere.”



Photographs by MICHAEL BLACKSHIRE Los Angeles Times



S-pec-tacular beach bodies

Rebecca Valbuena holds her multiple trophies at the Muscle Beach International Classic bodybuilding contest last week at Venice Beach. Doug Brolus, left, displays his gleaming medal and chest after the event.

LARRY ALLEN, 1971 - 2024

From Compton to NFL Hall of Fame

BY STEVE HENSON

Larry Allen was an enormous man with unsurpassed talent and a ferocious demeanor on the football field. In 14 NFL seasons — 12 with the Dallas Cowboys, two with the San Francisco 49ers — he was a six-time All-Pro and 11-time Pro Bowl offensive lineman.

“I hear people say Larry was the best offensive lineman in the game, and that’s just not right,” Cowboys teammate and fellow Hall of Famer Michael Irvin once said. “Larry was the best player in the league, and it wasn’t even close.”

Yet Allen, who died unexpectedly Sunday at age 52 while on vacation with his family in Mexico, had fears rooted in his upbringing in Compton. At age 9, he was stabbed 12 times in the head and shoulder while defending his younger brother, Von, from an older boy whose mother had given him a knife.

After enduring painful stitching of the wounds, Allen became so frightened of needles that he even refused Novocain before his dentist filled a cavity. As for the kid with the knife, though, Allen found him three months after the stabbing.

“My mother said, ‘I’m not raising any punks, so she made me fight this guy,’” Allen said during his Hall of Fame induction speech in 2013. “She said, ‘You will fight him until you win.’ First day I lost. Second day I lost. The third day I finally won. That was one of the most valuable lessons I learned in my life: never to back down from anybody.”

Larry Christopher Allen was born Nov. 27, 1971, according to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Allen’s mother, Vera, was his guiding force.

“We would hear the gunfire outside our house, we would automatically roll out of the bed, lay on the floor until the shooting stopped, then get back in bed and go to sleep,” she told The Times in 1994. “After a while, we got pretty good at that.”

She moved with her two sons to Northern California a few years later. Allen attended four high schools but didn’t play football until his junior year, when the family returned to Southern California and he enrolled at Compton Centennial.

A year later, Allen bolted due to gang activity and drug dealing near his family’s home, and played his senior year at Vintage High in Napa while staying with the family of a friend, Steve Hagland. Allen didn’t graduate, drifting to tiny Butte Junior College in Chico, where he dominated on the field but didn’t earn the grades to transfer to a Division I program.

He moved back to his mom’s house



TONY GUTIERREZ Associated Press

‘NEVER ... BACK DOWN’ Larry Allen, in 2005, “was the best player in the league,” said fellow Dallas star Michael Irvin.

in Compton, playing pickup basketball and working odd jobs. Football became an afterthought until Frank Scalercio, an assistant coach at Division II Sonoma State, tracked him down and hauled him back to Northern California.

While trying to convince Sonoma head coach Tim Walsh that Allen was worth recruiting, Scalercio repeated a rumor he’d heard that the lineman could dunk a basketball. Walsh rolled his eyes when Allen — all 325 pounds of him — arrived on campus.

“I was bragging about this kid for months, and would always include the fact he could dunk,” Scalercio told Star magazine. “So here we were, the basketball team is in the gym, a few football players, just all watching him. And he throws down this two-handed slam like none of us had ever seen. The ball was just bouncing on the floor for like 10 seconds and no one said a word. I have never heard silence like that in my life.”

Two years later, Allen wasn’t quiet when he got a call from Cowboys owner Jerry Jones on NFL draft day.

Jones asked: “Son, would you like to be a Cowboy?”

Allen replied: “Yes, sir!”

The kid from Compton who’d bounced around four high schools, a junior college and a Division II program was a second-round pick of the reigning Super Bowl champions.

“I ran out of my apartment and jumped into the swimming pool with all my clothes on,” Allen said.

Soon thereafter, he bought Vera a house in Sacramento.

“Everything she gave and did for my brother and me, that was the one gift I was able to give to her,” Allen said. “She did everything for my brother and me. My life could’ve ended up much

differently.”

Yet that life ended prematurely on Sunday. Allen leaves his wife, Janelle, daughters Jayla and Loriana and son Larry III.

“Larry, known for his great athleticism and incredible strength, was one of the most respected, accomplished offensive linemen to ever play in the NFL,” the Cowboys said in a statement after Allen’s death. “His versatility and dependability were also signature parts of his career. Through that, he continued to serve as inspiration for many other players, defining what it meant to be a great teammate, competitor and winner.”

“The Jones family and the Cowboys extend their deepest condolences, thoughts and prayers to the Allen family and grieve along with the many other friends and Cowboys teammates that also loved Larry.”

Allen’s exploits on the field are legendary. He excelled at guard and at tackle, ran a 4.8-second 40-yard dash and was astonishing in the weight room — though he famously didn’t enjoy lifting.

Social media sites were filled on Monday with tributes to Allen and his memorable feats, such as the time he bench-pressed 700 pounds — 300 more than any teammate — and withstood Rocket Ismail falling on Allen’s chest in jubilation. And the time he bench-pressed 225 pounds 43 times.

And the time he chased down New Orleans Saints linebacker Darion Conner 50 yards downfield following an interception.

Allen apparently also was responsible for opponents contracting a unique malady.

“Players will watch him on film during the week and then pull up with some mysterious injury or flu or something,” New York Giants All-Pro defensive end Michael Strahan said. “We call that catching ‘Allen-itis.’”

Allen, who was called for holding only 13 times in 14 seasons, helped the Cowboys win Super Bowl XXX after the 1995 season in a 27-17 victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers. Six years after his 2007 retirement, he rattled off the names of teammates, coaches and family members during his Hall of Fame induction speech in Canton, Ohio.

“My goal was simple: to earn a seven-letter word called respect,” he said. “The respect of my teammates, opponents and the NFL. Today, my mission is complete. I also played hard, whistle to whistle, to make my opponents submit. And today, I’m submitting to you. I just can’t wait to see my buddies.”

“I’ve been blessed to play the game I love. And remember this: It has never been about me, Larry Allen, but the many, many people that helped me out.”



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

A MAN looking for work amid rock landscaping placed around the Home Depot store in Playa Vista.

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Lawrence Mann

June 6, 1927 - May 27, 2024

Lawrence Mann was born in New York, coming to California at the age of 13. He attended Fairfax High School, and got his bachelor’s degree at UC Berkeley, interrupting his college studies for service in the Navy. Larry graduated college and married in 1948, followed by a successful career in life insurance. Larry and Carol had three children, Susie (David), Kathy and Marcy. They were also blessed with grandchildren Judith, Daniel, Robert, Henry, Anthony and Edward, as well as three great grandchildren.

Lois Sayoko Yagi

June 18, 1923 - May 26, 2024

Lois Sayoko Yagi was the second daughter born to Hatsue & Takeshi Yagi. She graduated from Santa Monica High School and shortly thereafter travelled to Japan with two cousins, where they were stranded until WWII ended.

She worked 38 years for Los Angeles County, moving to Las Vegas after the 1994 Northridge Earthquake with her brother Stanley Akira. They returned to Los Angeles and moved into Nikkei Senior Gardens with their sister Frances Kiyoko.

Lois passed away peacefully after a short fight with a fractured pelvis. She is survived by several cousins, niece Karen Yokomizo and nephew Mark Yokomizo.

Only private family services will be held.

For her final request, in lieu of flowers and/or koden, please make a contribution to Nikkei Senior Gardens; 9221 Arleta Avenue; Arleta, CA 91331.

Every ocean swimmer’s worst nightmare: ‘Shark!’

[**Shark**, from B1] climbed on behind to paddle. Barrett swam alongside, stabilizing the victim. The woman who had called for their aid followed behind.

“That’s when I started to see the full extent of the blood,” Whiting recalled. It was “gushing off both sides of the board, leaving a big streak” in the water.

Whiting paddled as quickly as he could. It went through his head that he was “surrounded by blood, and there’s a shark still out there.” The journey to shore “felt like an eternity but was probably a few minutes.”

Finally, they got to a place where they could stand. Rescuers hoisted the man and carried him, still prone on the board, up the beach.

By then, lifeguards — who had been nearby, waiting to go on duty — had come speeding to the scene.

They laid the victim on the back of the lifeguard truck to assess his injuries.

The victim said he had been bumped once by the shark, then bitten. Then the shark came toward him again. He tried to punch it, throwing his fist toward its nose and sustaining deep cuts to his arm in the process.

He also had lacerations to the torso, from where the shark had bitten him on its first pass.

Whiting said he tried to shield the man from seeing the deep cuts in his chest.

They tied a tourniquet around his arm, then applied as much gauze as they could to the lacerations on his chest.

An emergency room doctor who had been walking his dog on the beach joined them, looked at the wounds and advised the rescuers to keep applying pressure.

Finally, the ambulance arrived.

As paramedics hoisted the man in, Whiting tried to offer reassurance, telling him he was going to be OK.

The man thanked him so calmly that Whiting wondered if he was in shock.

He was rushed to a hospital and is expected to survive. On Monday, he was awake and smiling.

In the wake of the attack, lifeguards closed Del Mar City Beach for 48 hours. Officials urged the public to remain calm.

The ocean is full of sharks, and they rarely hurt humans, said John Ugoretz, environmental program manager for the California



K. C. ALFRED Associated Press

THE WATER was off-limits Sunday at Del Mar City Beach after a 46-year-old man was attacked by a shark, sustaining injuries to the torso and arm.

Department of Fish and Wildlife. When they do attack, it is probably because they mistake the human for prey such as a seal or sea lion, scientists theorize.

“Since 1950, there have been 215 incidents in Califor-

nia with sharks,” Ugoretz said. “That’s less than three a year.”

Among them were 16 fatalities.

“It is incredibly rare to even encounter a shark,” Ugoretz said. “You are far,

far, far more likely to be stung by a stingray.”

One thing is true, Ugoretz said: Reports of shark encounters that do not result in injuries are way up, but he doesn’t blame the sharks for that.

“Two decades ago, if someone got bumped and wasn’t injured, they might tell their friends,” he said. “Now they tell the whole internet.”

State data show that shark interactions that did not result in injuries began climbing around 2004, the year Facebook was founded.

Jonathan Edelbrock, Del Mar’s chief lifeguard and community services director, said the conditions Sunday may have been confusing for sharks.

The light was low and the water was cloudy, he said, similar to the last time a shark attacked a human off Del Mar Beach, in November 2022. That swimmer also survived.

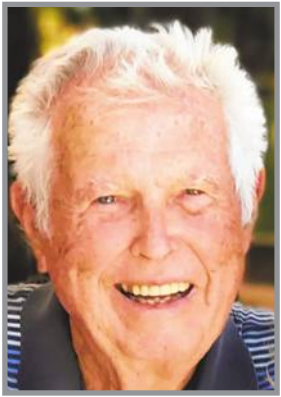
Whiting doesn’t intend to let the incident keep him from the ocean. In fact, he said, some of the swimmers in his group are already planning to get back in the water, albeit at a different beach.

“We’re all passionate about being out in the ocean,” he said.

BOB KELLEY, 1927 - 2024

Publisher of auto guide Blue Book

By SALVADOR HERNANDEZ



Kelley family

‘A TRUE PIONEER’ Bob Kelley expanded the guide to include foreign cars and more.

Bob Kelley, the long-time publisher of Kelley Blue Book who oversaw the publication as it became an indispensable resource for consumers and the auto industry, died May 28 at the age of 96.

He died in his home in Indian Wells in his sleep, his family said.

Kelley joined Kelley Kar Co. — at one point the largest Ford dealership in the world — and Kelley Blue Book shortly after serving in World War II.

The dealership was founded by his uncle, Les Kelley, with three Model Ts in 1918. But the dealership, sitting in the heart of Los Angeles on Figueroa Street, was central to what would become a booming car culture in Southern California.

The Kelley Blue Book, or KBB, would be its bible.

The KBB was started in 1926 but it was under Bob Kelley’s leadership that the publication would expand to include foreign cars, new vehicles, motorcycles, trucks and RVs.

Long used as a vital resource by banks, dealerships and courts, Kelley Blue Book would become not just a go-to resource for the industry, but also the authoritative source in valuing nearly anything on wheels.

“The guy must have been the smartest car person in the country at a moment in time,” said his son-in-law and former KBB editor, Charlie Vogelheim. “It became an important tool in the industry.”

Born in Los Angeles in 1927, Kelley graduated from Los Angeles High School in 1945, then attended the University of New Mexico’s naval aviator training program during World War II.

He joined the Ford dealership and was in charge of appraising and reconditioning used cars there. Used cars were a major part of the dealership because new cars were not built during the war, Vogelheim said.

The Kelley Blue Book had already taken an important role in the industry.

It started out as a publication listing the cars the dealership wanted to buy and the price it would pay for the vehicle.

That was an important factor, Vogelheim said, because it gave authority and legitimacy to the prices listed in the book to banks, financial institutions and competing car dealers.

“The dealership was the largest and they [bought and sold] so many cars,” he said. “They backed it with their behavior.”

The dealership closed in 1962, but KBB lived on.

With Kelley at the helm of Kelley Blue Book, the publication began to use impor-

tant changes and factors in the industry to provide detailed, updated values for vehicles.

Kelley Blue Book began to include mileage as a factor, listing trucks, color, even how current events might affect pricing and values.

“The challenge was having hundreds, and then thousands, of models in a book that fit in your pocket,” he said.

When the internet came along, disrupting the publishing business, Kelley Blue Book saw it as an industry-transforming change.

“It was a difficult business decision, but an easy decision to make information easier to reach,” Vogelheim said. “It could be updated, and be very specific. Our other competitors were saying, ‘No, we’re not going to do that.’ Again, Bob and KBB were looking at it as a practicality.”

In 2010, Cox Automotive’s Autotrader.com bought the publication for more than \$500 million.

“Bob Kelley was a true pioneer in the automotive industry,” Cox Automotive said in a statement. “From its humble beginnings to the comprehensive online resource we know today, Bob’s impact has been immeasurable.”

Vogelheim said Kelley had been in hospice for several months, but his children and grandchildren were able to see him the weekend before he died.

He is survived by his wife of more than 50 years, Wanda; his sister; five children; 12 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

“He was a very nice, wonderful man with a nice sense of humor and a quick smile,” Vogelheim said. “We miss him terribly.”

Even in his later years after retirement, Vogelheim said, Kelley was sharp and quick with numbers, eager to offer his advice on business or anything else.

“You could talk to him about anything beyond car values, and you could hear him using percentages in his head,” he said. “He didn’t have a college degree on the wall, but he was smarter than some of the people that did.”

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L A Times Real Estate Classified
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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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CHARLES REX ARBOGAST Associated Press

SPARKS rookie Cameron Brink blocks a shot by Chicago’s Dana Evans. “We need to work on everything,” Brink said of the 2-6 Sparks. “Physicality, turnovers, the list goes on. ... We are trying to rebuild.”

‘Baptism of fire’ for Sparks’ rookies in a physical league

[**Sparks**, from B10] they have veteran teammates who have made the transition to professional ball a bit easier.

“It’s a very physical league,” Jackson said. “Phoenix was physical and Minnesota will be even more physical, but I feel like I’ve been adjusting. I might wait a little too long sometimes because in college I would get too physical and then get a lot of fouls, so learning that this is a physical league and that’s the way you’re going to get buckets, get screens, get open. Nobody cares that I’m a rookie, so I just have to stay strong and be physical back.”

Foul trouble and physical play has been a topic in the sports world after No. 1 draft pick Caitlin Clark of the Indiana Fever was knocked to the court by the Chicago Sky’s Chennedy Carter on Saturday. For veteran Sparks forward Dearica Hamby, the incident is just another example of the league’s physicality, and that it’s not an anomaly.

“Everyone is getting fouled. I’m not saying she’s not,” Hamby said of Clark, “but you can pull up 50 clips of me getting hammered and nobody is giving me calls. ... It’s a physical league. Everyone is getting beat up. Everyone is bigger, faster, strong-



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

SPARKS veteran Dearica Hamby, left, has acted as mentor and role model for the team’s rookies.

‘Both are so talented with high ceilings. There’s an adjustment period.’

— CURT MILLER, Sparks coach, on Cameron Brink and Rickea Jackson

er. The refs are letting us play a bit more. You’re not seeing as many foul calls. I’ve personally been beat up myself, but you just got to play through it and move on to the next play.”

Hamby, who has had a

stellar start to the season by scoring in double figures in all five of her starts, has acted as mentor and role model for both Sparks rookies. She often checks in on them as they adjust to all the changes that come with pro-

fessional life.

“She’s really like a mom through and through,” said Jackson, who calls Hamby “Mama D.”

“Not everything is just basketball with her; she’s always telling me how proud she is of me, which means a lot coming from vets because they don’t have to do those things. She goes out of the way to do those things for me.”

According to Miller, Brink and Jackson have been adjusting well and a lot of their learning comes from game minutes with such little practice time. Starting Wednesday, the Sparks will be going into a stretch of nine games in 18 days.

With experience, the needed improvements — committing fewer turnovers and playing with more physicality, two issues that plague the Sparks — will come.

“Both are so talented with high ceilings,” Miller said of Brink and Jackson. “There’s an adjustment period of the speed and physicality of the game. There is more physicality than the collegiate level. Everyone’s a star, so they are playing against the best players in the world. What great learning lessons for them. They are learning on the fly. ... It’s baptism by fire.”

NBA NOTES

Porzingis plans to be ready for Game 1 of Finals

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boston Celtics big man **Kristaps Porzingis** plans to be ready for Game 1 of the NBA Finals. His left calf is another issue.

“I don’t know. We’ll see,” the 7-footer said Tuesday. “I have a couple of more days. I’ve done a lot of work up until this point and I’ve done everything needed to get back into playing shape. ... [Being available to play] is the plan right now. But, again, it’s a couple of more days, and I think that can make a difference. Every day gives me a bit more time to get even better.”

Porzingis hasn’t appeared in a game since straining the calf in Game 4 of the first-round series against Miami on April 29. He called the rehabilitation process challenging, despite his team going 9-1 without him and dispatching Cleveland and Indiana to earn a Finals matchup with Dallas, the team he played for from 2019 to 2022.

“It’s been a long process, I’m not going to lie,” Porzingis said. “But I’ve tried to stay as engaged as I can and be around the team and do my work, and hang with the team.”

The Latvian big man has ramped up his participation level on the court this past week, going through light five-on-five workouts. But it’s been limited, with no real scrimmaging.

“So, in that sense, it hasn’t been perfect, obviously,” he said. “But I’ve tried to build up as much as I can.”

Celtics coach **Joe Mazzulla** said Porzingis is “on pace” to be ready Thursday and said he wasn’t worried about his long layoff.

“Obviously, you can’t simulate the intensity and speed of the game. It just comes with a little bit of reps,” Mazzulla said. “KP’s a great player. I think just because you’ve been out for month doesn’t mean you have to relearn how to play basketball. He’s been doing a lot of great things for his career, he’s done a lot of

NBA PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

NBA FINALS

1 Boston vs. 5 Dallas

Best-of-seven series

Gm 1	Thursday at Boston, 5:30
Gm 2	Sunday at Boston, 5
Gm 3	June 12 at Dallas, 5:30
Gm 4	June 14 at Dallas, 5:30
Gm 5	June 17 at Boston, 5:30*
Gm 6	June 20 at Dallas, 5:30*
Gm 7	June 23 at Boston, 5*

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great things for us this season on both ends of the floor. ... I expect him to pick up right where he left off. But, obviously, there will be a little bit of rust. Just not concerned because of the work he’s put in.”

Asked if he’s able to run without pain, Porzingis paused before saying, “Yes.”

“I have to feel confident. I don’t want to go out there and thinking about something,” he said. “Once I’m out there, it has to be full focus on playing my best basketball and trying to help this team win. ... I just try to be the best I can be with the given circumstances.”

Porzingis said he was looking forward to facing the Mavericks. While in Dallas, Porzingis developed a good relationship with Mavericks star **Luka Doncic**. They just didn’t mesh as well on the court.

Porzingis declined to answer a question about why their pairing didn’t produce the success that Doncic has found with **Kyrie Irving**.

“It didn’t work out,” Porzingis said. “I’m not even thinking about that right now. I’m focused on the job at hand. And we can talk about that later.”

Also

Dallas signed general manager **Nico Harrison** to a multiyear contract extension. ... **Scott Foster**, **Tony Brothers** and **Marc Davis** were among the 12 officials chosen to work the Finals. ... Cleveland received permission to interview Denver assistant **David Adelman**, who also interviewed with the Lakers, according to the Associated Press.



MICHAEL DWYER Associated Press

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS hasn’t played since Game 4 of Boston’s first-round series with Miami on April 29.

Hayes’ dream job is one she’s hoping to build on ahead

[**Soccer**, from B10] Canada, the defending Olympic champion, and Spain, the reigning world champion.

After winning its fourth World Cup in 2019, the U.S. stumbled to a bronze medal in the Tokyo Olympics, then exited last summer’s World Cup in the round of 16, its earliest departure from a major international tournament.

Yet it wasn’t just the results that raised eyebrows. In the last Olympics, the U.S. was tactically inept. At the World Cup, the Americans looked over-matched and underwhelmed, failing to score in their last 238 minutes and failing to reach the semifinals for the first time. As a result, the U.S., No. 1 in the world the last eight years, dropped to fourth in the latest FIFA rankings.

“The realities are the world game is where it is and the rest of the world do not fear the USA in the way that they once did,” the London-born Hayes said. “And that’s valid. There are different world champions, there are different Olympic champions. So it’s our job to grasp quite quickly what we need to do to get close again to those levels.”

Since Hayes is a coach and not a miracle worker, that will necessarily take



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI Associated Press

BECAUSE OF HER previous success and her reported \$1.6 million salary, a record for a women’s coach, Emma Hayes figures to have a long leash to succeed.

time. “It’s a process,” she said. “We’ve got to go one step at a time.”

The start of that journey was delayed by Chelsea, the club team Hayes has coached since 2012. It refused to let her out of the last six months of her contract, which kept Hayes in

England through the middle of May. So while she tried, through interim coach Twila Kilgore, to manage the team from afar during that time, only now is she getting the chance to implement her strategy and vision in person.

Doing that, she said, starts with building a founda-

tion of trust, which is why she met individually with each of the 27 players she called into her first training camp as coach.

Next comes the long and complex task of introducing her playing style, one that, at Chelsea, was robust in the attack yet emphasized tactical flexibility.

“A lot of what we’ve done in the past six or seven months with her at Chelsea, you don’t get the on-the-field aspect,” captain Lindsey Horan said. “That’s the one big difference that you feel and you see. You finally get your coach out there on the field and the feeling you get, the leadership you get, that’s exciting.”

How long that honeymoon period will last is unknown, of course. The national team has historically included some of the biggest personalities and that has made it a minefield for coaches. A locker room revolt led to Tom Sermanni’s ouster in 2014 and three years later another group of veterans reportedly went to U.S. Soccer president Sunil Gulati to try to get Jill Ellis fired.

Gulati backed Ellis, who led the U.S. to a second straight world championship in 2019, but that was the last time the Americans climbed to the top of the medal podium at a major tournament. That decline did little to change the power structure around the team, however, so when players complained about difficult training sessions under Ellis’ successor, Vlatko Andonovski made the practices shorter.

The 16 trophies Hayes won at Chelsea plus her

annual salary — reportedly \$1.6 million, a record for a women’s coach — probably will make her immune to any attempted coups. Plus the team she has been handed is one in transition.

In Paris, the U.S. will play in a major tournament without Megan Rapinoe, Carli Lloyd or Becky Sauerbrunn for the first time in two decades. If Alex Morgan, who has been battling an ankle injury, doesn’t make the team, the U.S. would have no players with more than 150 international caps and no former Olympic gold medalists on its roster for the first time since the 1996 Olympics.

In their place will be a squad led by Horan, a week past her 30th birthday, and twentysomethings Mallory Swanson, Naomi Girma, Catarina Macario and Sophia Smith. In fact, the lineup Hayes started in her debut averaged 25.5 years of age and 45 caps per player, making it the youngest starting 11 in more than two years.

“We’ve got a good combination in the group. There’s more experienced, less experienced players,” Hayes said. “This is, for us, a new beginning.”

But is it the kind of beginning she dreamed about? Or the beginning of something else?

STANDINGS

Through Monday

NATIONAL LEAGUE

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
DODGERS	38	23	.623	—	5-5
San Diego	32	31	.508	7	5-5
San Francisco	29	32	.475	9	4-6
Arizona	28	32	.467	9½	4-6
Colorado	21	38	.356	16	5-5
Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Milwaukee	36	24	.600	—	7-3
Chicago	29	31	.483	7	2-8
St. Louis	28	30	.483	7	6-4
Pittsburgh	27	32	.458	8½	4-6
Cincinnati	27	33	.450	9	7-3
East	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Philadelphia	42	19	.689	—	5-5
Atlanta	33	24	.579	7	4-6
Washington	27	32	.458	14	5-5
New York	25	35	.417	16½	4-6
Miami	21	39	.350	20½	5-5

AMERICAN LEAGUE

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Seattle	34	27	.557	—	7-3
Texas	29	31	.483	4½	5-5
Houston	27	34	.443	7	4-6
Oakland	24	37	.393	10	4-6
ANGELS	22	38	.367	11½	2-8
Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Cleveland	39	20	.661	—	7-3
Kansas City	36	25	.590	4	4-6
Minnesota	33	26	.559	6	7-3
Detroit	30	30	.500	9½	7-3
Chicago	15	45	.250	24½	0-10
East	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
New York	42	19	.689	—	8-2
Baltimore	38	20	.655	2½	8-2
Boston	30	30	.500	11½	4-6
Tampa Bay	29	31	.483	12½	4-6
Toronto	28	31	.475	13	5-5

Today's games

Dodgers at Pittsburgh	3:30 p.m.
San Diego at Angels	6:30 p.m.
Atlanta at Boston	10:30 a.m.
St. Louis at Houston	11 a.m.
Cincinnati at Colorado	Noon
San Francisco at Arizona	12:30 p.m.
Milwaukee at Philadelphia	1 p.m.
New York (NL) at Washington	1 p.m.
Kansas City at Cleveland	3:30 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Miami	3:30 p.m.
Minnesota at New York (AL)	4 p.m.
Baltimore at Toronto	4 p.m.
Chicago (AL) at Chicago (NL)	5 p.m.
Detroit at Texas	5 p.m.
Seattle at Oakland	6:30p.m.

Ohtani officially cleared of gambling

MLB announcement comes as interpreter pleads guilty and five players receive bans for allegedly betting.

By BILL SHAIKIN

On the same day Major League Baseball banned a player for life for betting on baseball, the league formally cleared its biggest star of any involvement in gambling.

Within an hour of Shohei Ohtani's former interpreter, Ippei Mizuhara, pleading guilty to bank and tax fraud charges Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Santa Ana, the league issued a statement absolving Ohtani.

"Based on the thoroughness of the federal investigation that was made public, the information MLB collected, and the criminal proceeding being resolved without being contested, MLB considers Shohei Ohtani a victim of fraud," the statement read, "and this matter has been closed."

The player banned for life was utility man Tucupita Marcano of the San Diego Padres, who allegedly bet on games in which his team played. Four other players — including Oakland Athletics pitcher Michael Kelly and Arizona Diamondbacks minor leaguer Andrew Saalfrank, who pitched in the World Series last year — were suspended for one year for betting on baseball games in which their teams did not play.

The lifetime suspension for betting on baseball is the first since 1989, when Pete Rose agreed to such a ban while managing the Cincinnati Reds, and the first time since MLB opened its wallets to an onslaught of advertisements from and partnerships with sports betting outlets.

On Monday, Bloomberg reported that the Bally Sports channels — home to 12 MLB teams, including the Angels — soon could be renamed by FanDuel, which calls itself "the undisputed leader in American online sports betting and daily fantasy sports."

The league said it was tipped off by "a legal sports betting operator"



WALLY SKALU Los Angeles Times

DODGERS star Shohei Ohtani, left, with then-interpreter Ippei Mizuhara in December. MLB said its investigation found Ohtani was the victim of Mizuhara's fraud and embezzling scheme.

in March and corroborated the players' betting with other sports books.

The league also said none of the five players appeared in any games on which they had bet and said no evidence, including betting data and interviews with players, indicates games were "compromised, influenced, or manipulated."

The league continues to investigate former Angels infielder David Fletcher and his association with the illegal bookmarking operation used by Mizuhara.

The federal government alleged Mizuhara stole more than \$17 million from Ohtani to pay off an illegal bookmaker. Mizuhara, who faces up to 33 years in prison, is scheduled to be sentenced Oct. 25.

"Now that the investigation has been completed, this full admission of guilt has brought important

closure to me and my family," Ohtani said in a statement. "I want to sincerely thank the authorities for finishing their thorough and effective investigation so quickly and uncovering all of the evidence."

"This has been a uniquely challenging time, so I am especially grateful for my support team — my family, agent, agency, lawyers, and advisors along with the entire Dodger organization, who showed endless support throughout this process."

"It's time to close this chapter, move on and continue to focus on playing and winning ballgames."

The Dodgers also issued a statement saying the team would "put this entire matter behind them."

Marcano placed 387 baseball bets worth more than \$150,000, most of which came when he was

on the injured list with the Pittsburgh Pirates last season.

"Ultimately, Marcano lost all of his parlays involving the Pirates and only won 4.3% of all of his MLB-related bets overall," the league said in a statement.

Kelly placed 10 baseball bets worth \$99.22 in 2021, as a minor leaguer in the Houston Astros organization.

Saalfrank placed 29 baseball bets in 2021 and 2022, worth \$445.87, as a minor leaguer in the Diamondbacks organization. Said MLB: "Saalfrank only won five of his 28 MLB-related bets and lost his \$180 college bet."

The other minor leaguers suspended for a year: San Diego pitcher Jay Groome and Philadelphia infielder Jose Rodriguez. The league said none of the five suspended players chose to appeal.

BASEBALL: MONDAY FLASHBACK

ANGELS 2, SAN DIEGO 1											
	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.		AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Profar dh	3	0	2	0	.367	Schanuel 1b	4	0	0	0	.219
Tatis lf	4	0	1	0	.261	Rengifo 3b	3	1	1	0	.323
Machado 3b	2	1	1	0	.242	Ward lf	3	0	0	0	.261
Solano 1b	4	0	0	0	.373	Calhoun dh	3	0	2	1	.286
Cronworth 2b	4	0	0	0	.258	1-Tucker dh	0	0	0	0	.195
Kim ss	4	0	2	0	.227	O'Hoppe c	3	0	0	0	.246
Merrill cf	4	0	0	0	.273	Moniak cf	2	0	0	0	.164
Azocar lf	2	0	0	0	.234	d-Pillar cf	1	0	0	0	.384
d-Wade	1	0	0	0	.260	Adell lf	3	1	1	0	.204
Higashika c	2	0	0	0	.151	Neto ss	3	0	0	0	.246
a-Peralta	1	0	0	0	.188	Paris 2b	2	0	0	0	.130
Campiso c	0	0	0	0	.224	c-Gilme 2b	0	0	0	1	.308
Totals	31	1	6	1		Totals	27	2	4	2	
San Diego	100	000	000	—	6	1					
Angels	100	000	010	—	2	4	0				

a-flied out for Higashika in the 7th. b-lined out for Moniak in the 7th. c-sacrificed for Paris in the 8th. d-grounded out for Azocar in the 9th. 1-ran for Calhoun in the 7th.

Walks—San Diego 4: Profar 1, Machado 2, Azocar 1. **Strikeouts**—San Diego 3: Tatis 1, Kim 1, Merrill 1. Angels 4: Schanuel 2, Ward 1, Paris 1. **E**—Kim (8). **LOB**—San Diego 7, Angels 2. **2B**—Kim (2), Tatis (10), Profar (1), Adell (5). **HR**—Machado (6), off Anderson. **RBIs**—Machado (3), Calhoun (7), Guillermo (2), **SB**—Rengifo (13), Machado (4), Azocar (3). **SF**—Guillorme. **Runners left in scoring position**—San Diego 5 (D. Peralta 2, Cronenworth, Solano 2); Angels 0. **RISP**—San Diego 0 for 6; Angels 1 for 3. **Runners moved up**—Merrill, Neto. **GIDP**—Paris. **DP**—San Diego 1 (Kim, Cronenworth, Solano).

San Diego

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Waldron	6½	2	1	1	0	4	95	3.98
Morejon, L, 1-1	1	2	1	1	0	0	15	2.22
Estrada	¾	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.48

Angels

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Anderson	6½	5	1	1	2	91	2.37	
Strickland, W, 2-1	1	0	1	0	1	14	1.75	
Estévez, S, 9-2	1	0	0	0	1	10	4.50	

Inherited runners scored—Estrada 11, Strickland 2. **IBB**—off Anderson (Machado), off Strickland (Machado). **U**—Dan Iassogna, Ben May, CB Bucknor, Edwin Jimenez. **T**—2:17. **Tickets sold**—32,683 (45,517).

BALTIMORE 7, TORONTO 2											
	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.		AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Hendriks ss	5	0	1	0	.267	Schroder 2b	4	0	1	0	.245
Strickland, W, 2-1	1	0	1	0	.301	Janssen c	4	0	0	0	.284
Mintzies 1b	5	0	0	0	.284	Guerro 1b	4	1	2	1	.295
O'Hearn dh	3	1	1	0	.270	Valbuena dh	4	0	0	0	.213
Santander lf	4	2	2	2	.223	Bichette ss	4	0	1	0	.236
Westburg 3b	4	0	1	0	.292	Spingier cf	4	1	2	0	.211
Cowser cf	4	1	1	0	.236	Vasitho lf	3	0	1	1	.215
Hays lf	4	2	3	2	.205	a-Clement	1	0	0	0	.235
Norby 2b	3	0	0	0	.000	Kim-Fafa 3b	4	0	1	0	.267
Urias 3b	1	1	1	1	.239	Kiermaier cf	3	0	0	0	.206
Totals	38	7	10	7		Totals	35	2	8	2	

Baltimore	020	300	101	—	7	10	1
Toronto	010	100	000	—	2	8	1

a-popped out for Varsho in the 9th.

Walks—Baltimore 1: O'Hearn 1. **Strikeouts**—Baltimore 6: Mountcastle 1, Santander 1, Westburg 1, Hays 1, Norby 2, Toronto 5: Janssen 1, Vogelbach 1, Springer 1, Kiermaier 2. **E**—Henderson (7), Bichette (6). **LOB**—Baltimore 5, Toronto 6. **2B**—Cowser (12), Henderson (7), Bichette (10). **3B**—Vasitho (3). **HR**—Santander (1), off Gausman; Hays (2), off Gausman; Urias (3), off Burr; Guerrero (6), off Rodriguez. **RBIs**—Santander (3), Cowser (26), Hays (3), Urias (6), Varsho (3), Guerrero (27). **SB**—Westburg (6), O'Hearn (1). **Runners left in scoring position**—Baltimore 3 (Norby, Mountcastle, Cowser); Toronto 3 (Kiner-Falefa 2, Schneider). **RISP**—Baltimore 1 for 7; Toronto 0 for 6. **Runners moved up**—Cowser. **GIDP**—Vogelbach. **DP**—Baltimore 1 (Norby, Henderson, Mountcastle).

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Rodriguez, W, 6-2	6½	7	2	1	0	4	86	3.28
Kim, H, 1-4	1½	0	0	0	0	0	13	2.67
Alm	1	1	1	0	0	1	14	4.28

Toronto

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Gausman, L, 4-4	6½	6	6	6	1	3	97	4.60
Little	1	2	0	0	1	1	18	10.13
Burr	1½	2	1	1	2	0	32	2.70

Inherited runners scored—Cano 2-0, Burr 1-0. **U**—Phil Cuzzi, Tony Randazzo, Alex Tosi, Alex Mackay. **T**—2:30. **Tickets sold**—23,842 (39,550).

CINCINNATI 13, COLORADO 3											
	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.		AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Friedl cf	4	1	2	1	.200	Tovar ss	5	0	1	0	.295
Hrbtise lf	1	0	1	0	.243	Rodriguez 2b	4	0	2	1	.270
DeLoz ss	4	1	1	1	.233	Eldred c	4	0	0	0	.294
Colino 3b	5	2	2	2	.233	Monteiro 1b	3	1	1	1	.218
Steer 1b	5	1	3	2	.243	Doyle cf	4	0	0	0	.270
Stallings dh	5	1	1	1	.291	Fraley dh	4	0	1	1	.316
Spahn c	5	2	2	2	.253	Gouldman lf	4	0	1	0	.208
Marti dh	5	1	1	0	.200	Bochamir cf	3	0	0	0	.179
Idia 2b	4	2	3	0	.239	Trejo 3b	4	0	0	0	.098
Benson lf	3	2	3	3	.205	Totals	35	9	3		
Totals	41	13	18	12							

Cincinnati	013	313	002	—	13	18	1
Colorado	102	000	000	—	3	9	0

Walks—Colorado 1: Monteiro 1. **Strikeouts**—Cincinnati 3: Steer 1, Martin 1, India 1, Colorado 8: Tovar 1, E-Diaz 1, Doyle 1, Stallings 2, Bochamir 1, Springer 1. **E**—De La Cruz (11). **LOB**—Cincinnati 3, Colorado 7. **2B**—De La Cruz (11), Candelario (14), Martini (3), Rodgers (12), Doyle (11), Tovar (19), 3B—Benson (2), **HR**—Candelario (3), off Feltner; Stephenson (6), off Chivill; Guerrero (6), off Rodriguez. **RBIs**—De La Cruz (25), Candelario 2 (23), Benson 3 (20), Friedl (7), Fraley (9), Steer 2 (37), Stephenson 2 (20), Montero (22), Rodgers (18), Stallings (15). **SF**—Benson. **Runners left in scoring position**—Cincinnati 0, Colorado 4. **E**—Diaz, Bochamir, Stallings 2. **RISP**—Cincinnati 6 for 11; Colorado 2 for 7. **Runners moved up**—Stephenson, Friedl, Steer, Fraley, Rodgers. **GIDP**—De La Cruz, Stephenson, E-Diaz, Trejo. **DP**—Cincinnati 2 (India, De La Cruz, Steer; De La Cruz, India, Steer); Colorado 2 (Tovar, Rodgers, Monteiro; Monteiro, Tovar).

Cincinnati

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Abbott, W, 4-5	6	7	3	1	6	96	3.39	
Soto	2	2	0	0	2	33	4.09	
Wilson	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.40	

Colorado

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Feltner, L, 1-5	4½	10	8	8	0	3	73	6.22
Rogers	2½	4	3	3	0	0	33	5.40
Chivill	1	2	4	2	0	0	30	9.00

Inherited runners scored—Rogers 1. **HBP**—Rogers (De La Cruz, Wilson (Goodman)). **U**—Mike Estabrook, Tripp Gibson, Charlie Ramos, Erich Bacchus. **T**—2:30. **Tickets sold**—25,140 (50,144).

HOUSTON 7, ST. LOUIS 4											
	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.		AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Winn ss	5	0	1	0	.297	Altuve 2b	5	0	1	1	.289
Kutler dh	5	1	1	0	.271	Tucker lf	1	0	1	0	.266
Gidschmidt 1b	4	1	1	0	.222	Dubón lf	3	1	0	0	.298
Gorman 2b	3	2	2	2	.230	Alvarez dh	3	2	2	2	.287
Arenado 3b	4	0	1	0	.257	Bregman 3b	4	1	1	1	.229
Donovan lf	3	0	0	0	.242	Meyers cf	4	1	2	1	.281
Herrera c	3	0	0	0	.269	Peña ss	3	0	1	0	.296
Carpenter dh	4	0	0	0	.188	Singleton 1b	0	0	0	0	.217
Siani cf	3	0	0	0	.205	Alvarez 1b	1	0	0	0	.115
Fermín	1	0	0	0	.143	Diaz c	4	1	1	2	.249
Totals	35	4	8	4		McCormik lf/rf	4	1	0	0	.200

Dodgers see a bit of Hershiser in rookie Stone

[Stone, from B10]
Sunday, five scoreless innings against the Colorado Rockies, helped him improve to 6-2 with a 2.90 ERA — the franchise icon and current television analyst recognized the connection.

Stylistically, they both pitch to contact with athletic deliveries. Competitively, they carry an unflappable edge every time they take the mound.

“I understand why Dave is saying he looks a little bit like me,” Hershiser said, humbled by the comparison.

But, in Hershiser’s eyes, the more impressive contrast is between the struggles Stone endured when he was first called up to the majors last year, and the many ways he has adjusted to suddenly flourish now.

“I always thought he’d be able to do it,” Hershiser said. “Because of the way his body moves. And the way he tries, so hard, to be good.”

When Stone first joined the Dodgers last season, Hershiser saw why club officials were excited by his potential.

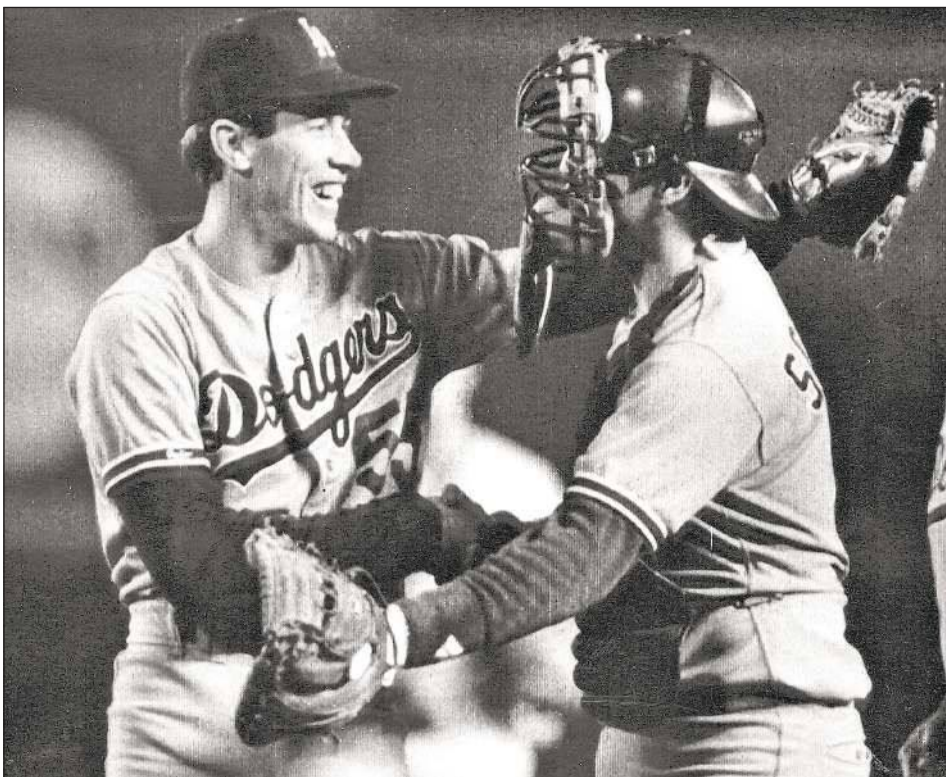
The former fifth-round draft pick had a smooth, natural delivery, generating mid-90s-mph velocity from a relatively undersized frame.

“One of the first things I recognized with him was his athleticism,” Hershiser said. “That really gives me a lot of confidence in a pitcher. Because athleticism then leads to being able to make adjustments.”

Stone also put seemingly effortless movement on the ball, especially with his signature pitch, a changeup, that could flutter out of the strike zone at the last second.

“It was like, ‘Wow. That ball, with that delivery, naturally moves,’” Hershiser recalled of first watching Stone. “I thought [that’s gonna get] a lot of weak contact.”

Four decades ago, Hershiser succeeded in similar ways.



VINCE COMPAGNONE Los Angeles Times

DODGERS pitcher Orel Hershiser, left, with catcher Mike Scioscia after breaking Don Drysdale’s big league record of 58 ⅔ consecutive scoreless innings in 1988.

Like Stone, Hershiser never had “unhittable” velocity. Hershiser wasn’t much of a strikeout artist, either, never amassing more than 190 in a single season.

“My style of pitching, I didn’t really try for a strikeout,” Hershiser said. “Until it was part of the game and necessary, like not letting a runner move from second to third, or not scoring a run from third with less than two outs.”

Instead, Hershiser stuck to his strengths. He attacked the strike zone with late-biting pitches. He kept batters off balance and induced weak contact.

He racked up quick outs and gobbled up innings, leading the National League in innings pitched three straight years from 1987 to 1989 (including his record-setting 59-inning scoreless streak in 1988, the year he won the Cy Young and World Series).

“People never believe how often I tried to just throw the ball down the middle, with movement,” Hershiser said. “Because if you have movement, it’s probably not gonna end up there.”

Last year, Stone failed to replicate any such game plan.

He, too, tried to go after hitters over the plate. He, too, was happy to pitch to contact in search of quick outs.

The only problem: Stone was hammered repeatedly in his first MLB foray, giving up 17 runs and 23 hits over 10 innings in three starts early last season — including a disastrous two-inning, seven-run start against the Tampa Bay Rays.

“At the time, I felt like I couldn’t compete at all,” recalled Stone, who was sent back down following that final appearance on May 28.

“When you give up that

many runs that many times,” he added, “you gotta change something.”

One big issue, the Dodgers realized in hindsight, was that Stone was tipping his pitches, allowing hitters to stay off his changeup and wait for fastballs over the plate.

Equally problematic, though, was that too many of those fastballs — all of them of the more straight-line, four-seam variety — were too hittable at the MLB level.

Stone wasn’t just failing to miss bats. Almost everything he threw, it seemed, was easy for opponents to square up on the barrel.

“He didn’t have the same movement on some of his pitches for various reasons,” pitching coach Mark Prior recalled.

So, when the Dodgers sent Stone back to triple A, their pitching department recommended a significant

arsenal change.

Instead of throwing only four-seam fastballs, Stone added a sinker and a cutter to his repertoire.

The sinker, which utilizes a two-seam grip he previously used in his college days at Central Arkansas, features a late left-to-right break that complements his changeup, making both pitches more difficult to differentiate.

The cutter darts the other direction, giving him a weapon to throw in against left-handed hitters who had previously just looked for off-speed pitches away.

“He almost reverted back to the pitcher he was when he was younger,” Roberts said, describing the new pitch mix as a better fit for Stone’s skill set. “Miss-hit balls, lack of hard contact, getting your defense involved, and then getting swing and miss when you need to, that’s what he’s done. ... It’s just gotten back to like, he feels he can be who he intrinsically is as a pitcher.”

The changes didn’t take right away. Stone gave up 24 runs in his first four starts back in triple A.

He eventually returned to the majors, yet posted a 6.43 ERA over his final five outings.

Entering spring training, it was unclear what kind of role he’d have on a star-studded 2024 Dodgers team.

But — in another callback to Hershiser’s notorious relentlessness — the 25-year-old never wavered.

After Walker Buehler was put on the injured list to start the season, Stone quickly earned the open rotation spot with a strong spring performance. After giving up eight runs in eight innings over his first two starts, he has given up two or fewer in seven of the last nine, and none in each of the last two.

Stone still isn’t striking out a ton of batters (his 18.6% strikeout rate is a slight im-

provement from last year but remains well below the league average). He isn’t suddenly overpowering hitters, either, getting whiffs on only about one-quarter of opponents’ swings (which is right around MLB’s median mark).

However, he is limiting hard contact (less than one out of every three batted balls against him has eclipsed Baseball Savant’s threshold for “hard hit” contact, at least 95-mph exit velocity). He is pitching deep in games (among Dodgers pitchers, only Tyler Glasnow has topped Stone’s average start length of 5 ⅔ innings).

And, entering Tuesday, his 2.90 ERA ranked sixth in the National League, putting Stone alongside Japanese stars Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Shota Imanaga, as well as last year’s No. 1 draft pick Paul Skenes, in the early season Rookie of the Year race.

“We’ve got great coaches,” Stone said, crediting the adjustments they suggested with his breakout form this year. “They give us confidence, one way or another, on the mound.”

Indeed, one year removed from the nightmarish start in Tampa that prompted his arsenal changes, Stone pitched his best game as a big leaguer against the New York Mets last week, spinning seven scoreless innings in the second game of a doubleheader.

When he followed that up with five more scoreless innings Sunday, Roberts couldn’t help but make the Hershiser comparison again. “He’s sort of like a mini-bulldog out there,” Roberts said, noting how — like Hershiser — Stone only seemed to seek strikeouts when runners were on base, or a jam needed to be diffused.

“He competes really well. He’s a smart player,” Roberts added. “He just understands how to kind of play the game within the game.”

T.J. SIMERS | 1950 - 2024

Former Times columnist, known for his confrontational style, acerbic wit

BY DAVID WHARTON

There was no middle ground with T.J. Simers.

If you were a sports fan in Southern California, if you were a big-time athlete or coach — if you were anyone who read his Page 2 column — you either loved him or hated him.

And that was exactly what he wanted.

The acerbic, controversial Simers, who spent 23 years at The Times before leaving in trademark fashion, battling with editors and suing the paper, died Sunday from a brain tumor. He was 73.

“T.J. would turn left when everyone else turned right,” former Times sports editor Bill Dwyre said. “People read him. It was something different.”

A series of newspaper jobs — including stints at the Rocky Mountain News in Denver and San Diego Union-Tribune — led Simers to the Times’ San Diego edition in 1990. He started as the Chargers beat writer, then switched to covering the Rams.

Athletes, coaches and team owners came to know the big guy with glasses, the one who liked to poke fun, the one who could take over a news conference by asking blunt, if sometimes bombastic, questions. He liked to confront people, then write about their responses.

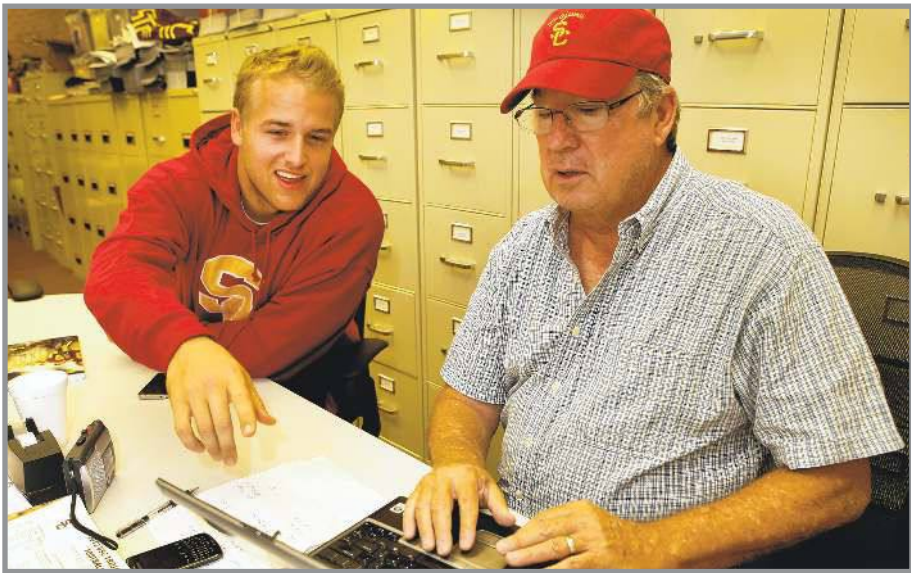
To no surprise, his relationships with sports figures were often rocky.

In 2000, Dwyre and former assistant sports editor Randy Harvey wondered if this unconventional style might be a good fit for the Page 2 spot that had been home to Allan Malamud’s beloved Notes on a Scorecard.

Simers started picking fights with his very first column.

“It’s punishing duty, going to Dodger losses, Clipper losses and events in Orange County,” he wrote. “Someone suggested going to a Sparks game too, but I don’t like being alone in big gyms.”

Arrogant was the word he



AL SEIB Los Angeles Times

‘IT WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT’

That’s how Bill Dwyre described the columns of T.J. Simers, shown above with USC quarterback Matt Barkley in learning how to set up a Twitter account.

usually attached to USC athletic director Mike Garrett’s name. Dodgers player F.P. Santangelo was prodded incessantly despite having a minor role with the team. Chargers quarterback Ryan Leaf was labeled “the punk.”

No one escaped unscathed. Not his family, which included a son-in-law dubbed “The Grocery Store Bagger.” Not his editors, his colleagues or writers at other newspapers.

“TJ Simers was acerbic, witty, cranky and knew how to get a rise out of people,” Southern California sportswriter Janis Carr tweeted Monday. “When he put me in one of his columns I felt honored even though he ripped me.”

Others took offense. Though Simers was named California Sportswriter of the Year in 2000, critics accused him of going after people who weren’t in position to fight back, of crossing the line between humor and being mean-spirited.

“The pushback was incredible throughout the community and the local teams,” Dwyre recalled.

Simers’ abrasiveness also rankled ESPN, which had hired him as a panelist for a new show called “Around the Horn” in 2002. Within a year, Simers pub-

licly blasted the program — “I hate that show. But I hear the cash register going off in my head when I do it” — and was dropped from the lineup.

Still, his columns in The Times each week remained a destination spot for readers who either enjoyed or detested them. It wasn’t until 2013 that a rift arose with the newspaper’s editors, who cut him back to writing twice a week with the stated intention of improving the quality of his work. Some of his pieces, they said, were “poorly written or reflected poorly” on the newspaper.

Simers was then suspended with pay for violating ethics by not fully disclosing a deal to develop a television comedy based loosely on his life. Editors subsequently took away his column, demoting him to reporter. They later offered him a one-year deal to resume the column on the condition that he abide by ethical guidelines.

Instead, Simers resigned on Sept. 6, 2013, after accepting a job at the Orange County Register. He sued The Times for age and disability discrimination, claiming his troubles began after he suffered what was initially diagnosed as a mini-stroke while covering spring training in Arizona. He was

later diagnosed with complex migraine syndrome.

The case went to trial three times over several years, with juries awarding him millions in damages, but twice those awards were overturned by a judge. At the time the lawsuit was filed, The Times was part of Tribune Publishing. When The Times was sold to Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong in 2018, Tribune Publishing assumed liability for the Simers case as part of the sale. The case is currently on appeal.

Once his journalism career ended — he left the Register in 2014 — Simers devoted himself to his wife, Ginny, his two daughters and four granddaughters. He also continued his longstanding support of children’s healthcare.

“We scrapped throughout my Dodgers days,” former Dodgers general manager Dan Evans posted on social media. “But later we found a common bond through [Children’s Hospital L.A.] that completely mended things.”

Last fall, when Simers’ health began to fail, doctors found a tumor in his brain. He spent the final months of his life at home in hospice care, still jabbing at friends and former colleagues through social media.

PRO CALENDAR

	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	5	6	7	8	9
 DODGERS	at Pittsburgh 3:30 SNLA	at Pittsburgh 3:30 SNLA	at N.Y. Yankees 4 SNLA Apple TV+	at N.Y. Yankees 4:30 Ch. 11	at N.Y. Yankees 4 ESPN
 ANGELS	SAN DIEGO 6:30 BSW, FS1		HOUSTON 6:30 BSW	HOUSTON 7 BSW	HOUSTON 1 BSW
 SPARKS	MINNESOTA 7 SpecSN		DALLAS 7 Ion		LAS VEGAS 6 SpecSN
 GALAXY	JUNE 15: VS. KANSAS CITY, 7:30 P.M., APPLE TV				
 LAFC	JUNE 15: AT ORLANDO, 4:30 P.M. PDT, APPLE TV				
 ANGEL CITY				at NJ/NY Gotham 9:30 a.m. Ch. 2, Paramount+	

Shade denotes home game.

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
BASEBALL		
10:30 a.m.	Atlanta at Boston	TV: MLB
11 a.m.	St. Louis at Houston	TV: ESPN+
12:30 p.m.	San Francisco at Arizona (in progress)	TV: MLB
3:30 p.m.	Dodgers at Pittsburgh	TV: SNLA R: 570, 1020
3:30 p.m.	Tampa Bay at Miami	TV: MLB
6:30 p.m.	San Diego at Angels	TV: BSW, FS1 R: 830, 1330
BASKETBALL: WNBA		
5 p.m.	Las Vegas at Dallas	TV: NBA
7 p.m.	Minnesota at Sparks	TV: SpecSN
COLLEGE SOFTBALL		
5 p.m.	Women’s College World Series finals, Game 1, Oklahoma vs. Texas	TV: ESPN, ESPN+
COLLEGE TRACK AND FIELD		
4:30 p.m.	NCAA outdoor championships, Day 1	TV: ESPN2
CYCLING		
3:45 a.m. (Thurs.)	Criterium du Dauphine: Stage 5	TV: Peacock
GOLF		
4 a.m. (Thurs.)	World Tour, Volvo Car Scandinavian Mixed, first round	TV: Golf, Peacock
RUGBY		
2:30 a.m. (Thurs.)	Women’s State of Origin, New South Wales vs. Queensland	TV: FS2
SOCCER		
11:30 a.m.	Men’s international friendly, Belgium vs. Montenegro	TV: FS2
6 p.m.	Men’s international friendly, Mexico vs. Uruguay	TV: Univision, FOXD
6 p.m.	USL, San Antonio vs. El Paso	TV: CBSN
TENNIS		
6 a.m.	French Open, quarterfinals	TV: Tennis
6 a.m. (Thurs.)	French Open, mixed-doubles final; women’s semifinals	TV: Tennis

SPORTS EXTRA

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Doggone apt comparison for pitchers



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

The original ‘Bulldog’ sees similarities in approach of rookie Stone.

By Jack Harris

Dave Roberts ran out of superlatives recently when praising the performance of rookie starting pitcher Gavin Stone, and the transformation he has undergone in the last calendar year.

So, as he extolled Stone at length during a scrum with reporters last week, the Dodgers manager racked his brain for a lofty comparison instead.

“I’m not saying he’s Orel Hershiser,” Roberts cautioned, before evoking the nickname of a club legend to describe its new breakout star. “But he’s a bulldog. ... It’s a little Orel Hershiser-esque.”

No one will confuse Stone with Hershiser, the original Dodgers “Bulldog,” by appearance. Stone is listed at 6 feet 1, lacking the physical stature of Hershiser’s lanky 6-3 frame on the mound.

There is certainly no mistaking their career accolades, either. Hershiser was a Cy Young Award winner, three-time All-Star and 1988 World Series champion with the Dodgers, with whom he spent 13 of his 18 major league seasons. Stone has 19 MLB outings under his belt, still barely a year removed from his big league debut.

An apples-to-apples analogy, this is not.

However, when Hershiser was asked about the comp this weekend — a few days before Stone’s latest masterpiece performance [See Stone, B9]



LENNY IGNELEZI Associated Press

DODGERS manager Dave Roberts says he sees similarities in rookie pitcher Gavin Stone, top, who has had two straight scoreless outings, and 1988 World Series hero Orel Hershiser, above. “I’m not saying he’s Orel Hershiser,” Roberts said. “But he’s a bulldog.”

Not quite Orel yet

Comparing Gavin Stone’s 2024 numbers to those of Orel Hershiser in 1984, the year in which he became a full-time starter.

Stone		Hershiser
6-2	W-L	9-6
2.90	ERA	2.19
1.19	WHIP	0.97
62	IP	147 ² / ₃
55	H	112
4	HR	5
19	BB	31
47	SO	109
.237	AVG.	.206

Note: Hershiser’s numbers are only from games in which he started

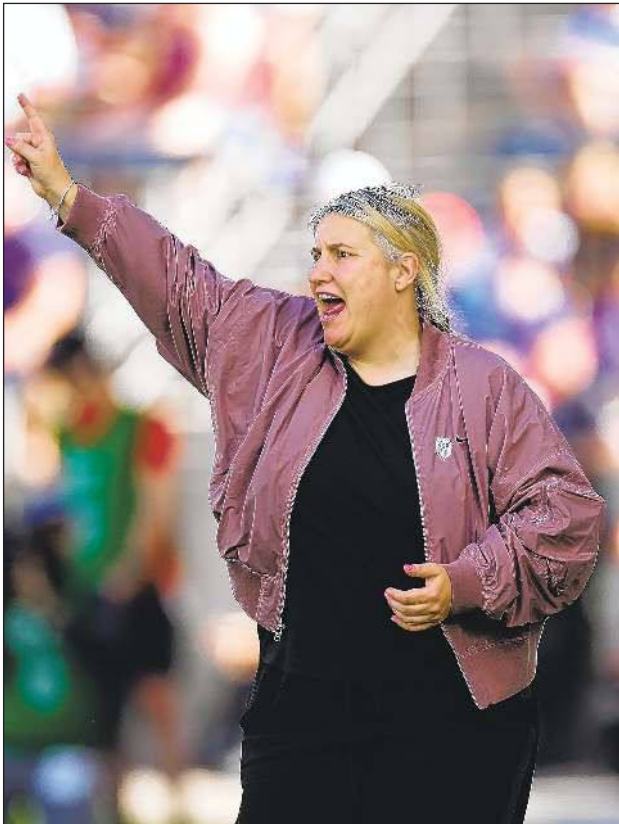
Hayes’ coaching dream is one she’s hoping to keep alive

New U.S. women’s boss knows there’s a lot of work ahead to get things right again.

KEVIN BAXTER
ON SOCCER

For Emma Hayes, the chance to coach the U.S. women’s soccer team is a dream come true. It’s the biggest job in the sport, one her father, Sid, pushed her to pursue for more than a decade — and one she finally landed two months after his death. “I’m doing the job I love,” she said last week. “I get to enjoy these amazing players.”

Yet dreams, as Hayes also knows, can sometimes turn into nightmares. So she’s under no illusion that reviving a national team that has fallen to its lowest point in decades will be easy. “There’s lots of work to do,” she said after Saturday’s 4-0 win over South Korea in her first game with her new team. “There’s lots of holes in our play.” With precious little time to repair them, Hayes has less than four weeks to settle on an 18-player roster for next month’s Paris Olympics, where the U.S. will face what looks to be the deepest field in women’s soccer history, one that includes seven of the world’s top 10 teams, including [See Soccer, B7]



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI Associated Press

EMMA HAYES is expressing optimism as she takes over the U.S. team. “This is, for us, a new beginning.”

Sparks’ rookies learning at school of hard knocks

Eight games into their WNBA careers, Brink and Jackson adjust to a more physical style.

By Marissa Kraus

The morale was low on Tuesday after a particularly intense practice at USC’s Galen Center, with Sparks players eyes’ downcast amid looks of frustration as coach Curt Miller told them they needed to do better. With a 2-6 record and a game against the Minnesota Lynx, one of best teams in the league, on Wednesday, the feeling of urgency to improve was palpable.

“We need to work on everything,” first-year forward Cameron Brink said. “Physicality, turnovers, the list goes on. But you know, it’s a young team and we are trying to rebuild. We are always going to work our hardest, always.” That’s just how it is for young teams sometimes. New players bring a period of adjustment for the whole team, and the Sparks are no exception with a squad that includes two first-round picks from this year’s draft. Brink and fellow rookie forward Rickea Jackson are going through their own period of adjustment, particularly to the physicality of play in the WNBA. Luckily, [See Sparks, B7]

Remembering T.J. Simers

Former Times columnist, known for confrontational style and acerbic wit, died of a brain tumor at 73. **B9**

Betting on baseball

MLB clears Ohtani as interpreter Mizuhara pleads guilty and five players receive bans — one for life. **B8**

Djokovic out of French Open

Knee injury forces defending champion to withdraw a day after he survived his fourth-round match. **B6**



GENE J. PUSKAR Associated Press

DODGERS DH Shohei Ohtani went one for four on Tuesday against Pittsburgh, having entered the game batting just .193 over his previous 15 games.

Scandal behind Ohtani, not hitting slump

By JACK HARRIS

PITTSBURGH — As a reporter noted the considerable amount of conversation dedicated to the scandal surrounding Shohei Ohtani's ex-interpreter, Ippei Mizuhara, Dodgers manager Dave Roberts cut the query off mid-sentence.

"I know we've talked about this a lot..." the question began.

"Yes," Roberts replied, flatly. "We have."

After Tuesday, Roberts, Ohtani and the entire Dodgers organization are hoping they won't have to waste such breath again.

Hours before the Dodgers lost 1-0 to the Pittsburgh Pirates, in yet another quiet day at the plate for the two-way star, Ohtani at least seemed to receive some official closure off the field in the scandal involving Mizuhara.

On Tuesday afternoon, Mizuhara pleaded guilty in federal court to bank and tax fraud, admitting to stealing nearly \$17 million

from his former employer and close friend to pay off gambling debts with an alleged illegal bookmaker. Shortly after, Major League Baseball announced its investigation into the incident — the last major probe into Ohtani's involvement in the situation — had been closed, with Ohtani cleared of any wrongdoing.

"Based on the thoroughness of the federal investigation that was made public, the information MLB collected, and the criminal proceeding being resolved without being contested, MLB considers Shohei Ohtani a victim of fraud," the league said in a statement.

Ohtani declined to answer questions from reporters in the PNC Park visitors' clubhouse before the game, but released a statement of his own earlier in the day.

"It's time to close this chapter," it read, "move on and continue to focus on playing and winning ball games."

During Roberts' pregame scrum, the manager echoed the

same forward-looking tone.

"It's a formality, I guess," Roberts said of Mizuhara's plea and MLB's announcement — two developments that had been expected after a federal investigation in April blamed only Mizuhara for wire transfers from Ohtani's bank account to an allegedly illegal bookmaker.

"Honestly, we haven't been following it," Roberts added. "So I hope it's closure. That'd be great if it's closure. We've all been ready to move on."

In Ohtani's case, this might be a good time to open a new chapter on the field too.

Entering Tuesday, the slugger had been mired in a two-week slump, batting just .193 over his last 15 games, during which he also dealt with minor back and hamstring ailments. Then, Ohtani epitomized the Dodgers' continued struggles while going one for four at the plate Tuesday night.

Ohtani struck out in his first at-bat against flamethrowing South-

land native Jared Jones, a former second-round draft pick out of La Mirada High who spun six scoreless frames with six strikeouts.

Ohtani's other at-bats against Jones weren't much better: a double-play grounder in the third inning and another strikeout in the fifth.

Ohtani did produce a leadoff single in the eighth inning, eventually advancing to third in the Dodgers' best chance to tie the game.

But the club failed to take advantage, one of many missed chances on a night the Dodgers went 0 for 12 with runners in scoring position.

Over their last 18 games, the Dodgers have scored four runs or fewer 13 times; that happened only 18 times in their first 44 games.

And of all the problems behind that inconsistent output, Ohtani's extended slide has become particularly glaring, with his batting average dropping from .364 on May 15 to .321 at the end of play Tuesday. It all left Tyler Glasnow's strong

return to Pittsburgh wasted. While the right-hander struck out nine in a six-inning start — becoming the first pitcher in baseball to eclipse 100 strikeouts in the process — Glasnow still took the loss in his first trip back to PNC Park since the Pirates traded him to Tampa Bay in the middle of the 2018 season.

One mistake — a third-inning home run by Jack Suwinski — cost him.

Glasnow has dropped his last three decisions, largely because of a lack of support from his offense.

Tuesday marked his fifth straight start in which the Dodgers failed to score while he was on the mound. In those five games, the team has mustered just eight runs — further symptoms of an offensive decline that has impacted almost everyone in the lineup.

The Dodgers' pitching was so solid that they actually outthit the Pirates 5-4; they just had nothing to show for it in the opener of a six-game trip.

Angels stifle Padres to clinch first home series win of season

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zach Neto had a tiebreaking, two-run double in the seventh inning, and the Angels won their first home series of the season with a 4-2 victory over the San Diego Padres on Tuesday night at Angel Stadium.

Luis Rengifo drove in an early run for the Angels, who will win a series for the first time in 10 tries after back-to-back victories over the Padres.

The Angels improved the majors' worst home record to 9-21 after holding San Diego to three runs in 18 innings.

Adam Mazur pitched six innings of one-run ball in a strong major league debut for the Padres, who have lost three straight for only the second time since April. Manny Machado had an early run-scoring single, but San Diego's powerhouse lineup struggled against the Angels. Machado went three for four.

After managing only two hits against Mazur, the Angels broke through with three runs in the seventh against San Diego's bullpen.

The Angels loaded the bases on two walks and an infield single off Yuki Matsui (3-2), and Neto drilled a bases-loaded double over the head of Jurickson Profar in left off Enyel De Los Santos. Mickey Mo-

niak scored moments later on a wild pitch for a key insurance run.

Fernando Tatis Jr. and Machado then singled leading off the eighth for San Diego, and Jake Cronenworth drove in Tatis with a two-out single off Luis García, who spent the previous two seasons with the Padres.

But Hunter Strickland escaped his third jam in two days, getting Ha-Seong Kim to pop up.

Matt Moore (2-2) pitched the seventh for the Angels. Carlos Estévez pitched the ninth for his second save in two days and his 10th overall.

Mazur is a 23-year-old former second-round pick from the University of Iowa who made only four starts for triple-A El Paso before getting called up to fill the hole in San Diego's rotation created by injuries to Yu Darvish and Joe Musgrove.

Mazur walked four but gave up only two singles while repeatedly pitching his way out of trouble.

Patrick Sandoval yielded one run and four hits with seven strikeouts over six innings in his second straight solid start for the Angels, throwing 100 pitches, 70 for strikes.

The Angels had four baserunners without a hit against Mazur before finally scoring. Luis Guilmorme walked, advanced on a groundout and scored on Rengifo's single in the third.



ERIC THAYER Associated Press

PATRICK SANDOVAL had another solid start for the Angels in a 4-2 victory over the Padres. Sandoval threw 100 pitches and gave up one run and four hits, striking out seven in six innings.

Notes

Anthony Rendon will resume baseball activities soon, manager Ron Washington said. The \$245-million third baseman with a lengthy injury history has been out since April 20 because of a strained

hamstring. ... MLB batting leader Luis Arraez returned to the lineup for the Padres as the designated hitter after sitting out Monday's game. Arraez jammed his right shoulder and neck on a slide Sunday. "He's still got some soreness in there," manager Mike Shildt said.

"Trying to take a little stress off that." Arraez went 0 for 4 and scored a run. ... The Angels will look to sweep the series Wednesday night when José Soriano (2-5, 3.86 ERA) takes the mound against San Diego's Dylan Cease (5-4, 3.42 ERA) in a battle of right-handers.



Los Angeles Times

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CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/CALENDAR



MICKALENE THOMAS makes monumental portraits of Black women such as “Afro Goddess Looking Forward” (2015, rhinestones, acrylic and oil on wood).

Sex, drugs and a haunting madness

In ‘Drums & Demons,’ author Joel Selvin looks at drummer Jim Gordon’s tragic fall.

By Marc Ballon

The year was 1970, and Jim Gordon was in rock ‘n’ roll heaven. The drummer was a part of Joe Cocker’s infamous Mad Dogs and Englishmen revue, a traveling circus of sex, drugs and legendary music, featuring bandleader and keyboardist-guitarist Leon Russell; saxophonist Bobby Keys, a sideman for the Rolling Stones; and singer Rita Coolidge. The bacchanalian troupe astonished audiences with their transcendent performances, leaving fans wanting more. For Gordon, not yet 25, the moment was particularly sweet. A well-known session musician whose inventive percussion helped propel songs by the Beach Boys, the Byrds, Paul Revere and the Raiders and Glen Campbell to the top of the charts, he relished stepping out of the studio’s shadow. [See [Drummer](#), E3]

QUEER BLACK WOMEN AT WORK

Misogyny is deeply embedded in American life, but these two artists are not having it

CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT
ART CRITIC

Last week two solo exhibitions bearing voluminous — and timely — insight arrived at Los Angeles museums. Each is a midcareer survey of feminist painting, sculpture and video from the past 20 years, representing two very different artists for whom women’s place in the world is key. “Mickalene Thomas: All About Love” is a vibrant show of more than 80 paintings, drawings and mixed-media installations downtown at the Broad. Her work builds on a simple but trenchant observation: In the long history of Western painting, monumental portraits of Black women are almost nonexistent. Most of Thomas’ paintings pile on vivid color, brash patterning and lots of sparkling rhinestones, taking an exultant step toward rectifying the omission. “Simone Leigh,” which is divided between the California African American Museum in Exposition Park and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in Mid-Wilshire, features 27 sculptures and three projections. Sober history is essential to Leigh’s often elegant work, which gives equal



CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT Los Angeles Times
SIMONE LEIGH’S bronze “Sentinel” (2019) transforms a traditional sphinx motif.

weight to the two adjectives joined in the term “African American.” Women’s images are abundant, and multiple artistic traditions gracefully entwine. The fact that both artists are Black adds to the timely relevance. During the Jan. 6 domestic terrorist attack on Capitol Hill, a few Black faces were glimpsed amid the scandalously waved Confederate, Gadsden and “Appeal to Heaven” flags, but it is worth [See [Art](#), E2]

JANIS PAIGE,
1922 – 2024

Versatile performer endured over time

Paige was a key star of Hollywood’s Golden Age and performed on film, TV and stage.

By Gina Piccalo

The versatile and enduring performer Janis Paige, known for her starring role in the Tony-winning 1954 musical “The Pajama Game” and her scene-stealing performance in the 1957 movie musical “Silk Stockings,” has died. A key star of Hollywood’s Golden Age, Paige died Sunday of natural causes in her Los Angeles home, her longtime friend Stuart Lampert confirmed to the Associated Press. She was 101. A redheaded triple-threat, Paige spent the 1940s as one of the busiest actors in Jack Warner’s stable. By the 1950s, she was as famous for her sex appeal as she was for her sass, on Broadway, television and touring nationally as a singer on the nightclub circuit. Born Donna Mae Tjaden on Sept. 16, 1922, in Tacoma, Wash., Paige was a gifted singer as a child, performing at local amateur shows. Her parents divorced during the Depression, and Paige’s mother raised her and her sister alone. Paige performed in theater productions in high school, then after graduation she and her mother moved to Los Angeles to see whether she could make it as a performer. She took a job serving sandwiches and coffee at the Stage Door Canteen in Hollywood and one night was asked to fill in for an absent [See [Paige](#), E3]

MUSIC REVIEW

Bryan breathes in rarefied air at Crypto

Monday’s concert was the second of three for the country singer at the Lakers’ home.

MIKAEL WOOD
POP MUSIC CRITIC

Dressed in jeans and a sleeveless Lakers T-shirt, his wispy mustache face slick with sweat, Zach Bryan recalled the recording of his song “Condemned” on Monday night as though it had taken place in some previous life: He was all of 23, he told the capacity crowd before him at Crypto.com Arena, when he and a buddy used the mattresses in an Airbnb to convert the place into a makeshift studio. In fact, Bryan cut the raw

and plaintive “Condemned” a mere five years ago. Yet so much has happened so quickly to this former Navy weapons specialist — now one of music’s biggest stars — that you can’t blame him for looking back like a tattooed grandpa doling out old war stories. Monday’s concert was the second of three at the Lakers’ downtown home behind last year’s “Zach Bryan,” which debuted atop Billboard’s album chart the same week it spun off a No. 1 single in “I Remember Everything,” a mournful duet with Kacey Musgraves. In February, “I Remember Everything” — still a fixture today in the upper reaches of the Hot 100 and Spotify’s U.S. Top 50 — earned Bryan his first Grammy Award; in [See [Bryan](#), E6]



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times
ZACH BRYAN wore a vintage Lakers T-shirt Monday night while performing before a packed house at Crypto.com Arena in support of his self-titled album.

Directors put a twist on horror

Two new films cleverly disrupt the tried-and-tested ways of their respective subgenres. **E3**

Comics **E4-5**
Puzzles **E5**

Two new films challenge the rules of horror

Directors of ‘Handling the Undead’ and ‘In a Violent Nature’ aim for more than gore.

BY CARLOS AGUILAR

A masked murderer trudges through the woods, Jason Voorhees-like, but instead of springing out at us like a surprise, we permanently stay by his side, a companion to his lonely blood-soaked quest for vengeance. A decomposing zombie boy returns home to his grieving mother and religious grandfather, but instead of screaming in terror, his relatives care for him with tenderness.

A pair of new horror films cleverly disrupt the tried-and-tested ways of their respective subgenres.

Told from the point of view of the killer, Canadian filmmaker Chris Nash's newly released feature debut “In a Violent Nature” is a slasher movie that patiently follows a mute, burly revenant named Johnny (Ry Barrett) from one kill to the next, as if in a first-person shooter game. Though he includes some gruesome showstoppers, Nash intentionally avoids a traditional catharsis.

The other one, “Handling the Undead” by Norwegian director Thea Hvistendahl, which opens Friday, is a sorrowful, moody twist on the zombie film starring Renate Reinsve and Anders Danielsen Lie from “The Worst Person in the World.”

Here, the groggy undead aren't after people's brains nor do they infect anyone else with a virus. They simply come back to their loved ones, confused. Grief-stricken, the living take care of these sentient corpses, hoping to find signs of who they once were.

“It's much less of a roller coaster and more of a tour bus,” says Nash, 42, on a video call about “In a Violent Nature.” Similarly, “Handling the Undead” is meditative in tone. Hvistendahl, 35, refers to it over Zoom as “a drama with a horror premise” and “a melancholic horror.”

They both exude an unassuming playfulness. And if you look through their filmmaking backgrounds, neither explains the thoughtful concepts that

have emerged in their breakthroughs, both of which premiered at this year's Sundance Film Festival in January.

Nash grew up infatuated with the VHS cover art for horror titles and reading Fangoria magazine as he dabbled in amateur makeup effects. Hvistendahl, for her part, didn't envision a path in horror until she directed the 2019 short film “Children of Satan,” actually about two girls at a Christian summer camp.

“I set out then to make a poetic thriller and when it was done, people called it a horror,” Hvistendahl says. “It was when I was making that film that I found that I really enjoyed using genre in my films.”

Nash cites some unusual influences for a midnight moviemaker, primarily Gus Van Sant's methodical, early-2000s “death trilogy” — “Gerry,” “Elephant,” and “Last Days” — respectively, about a pair of friends lost in a desert; a school shooting inspired by the incident at Columbine; and Kurt Cobain's suicide. Those movies address tough subject matter with a stark pragmatism.

In all of them, the camera prowls behind the characters, a seemingly objective witness. Nash believes that by doing so Van Sant relinquishes ownership of the narratives, opening them up to interpretation.

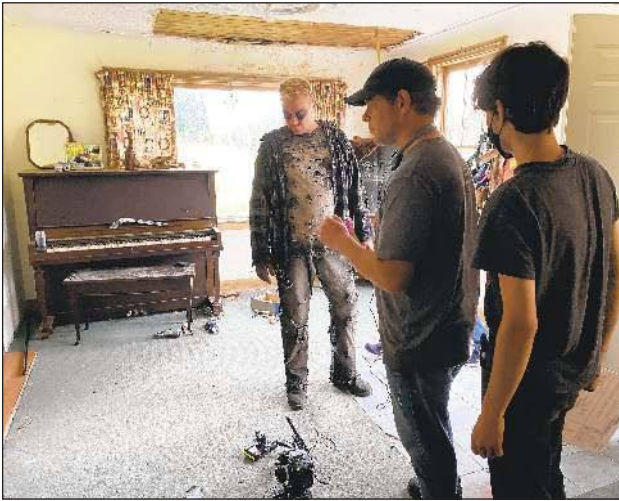
“I liked the fact that I never felt pushed by him as a filmmaker,” says Nash. “I felt very much like I was being carried by the characters.”

The concept of a slasher in the wilderness was the ideal format for Nash to replicate that formula, affording long stretches of silence.

“There is a slight documentary feel to it that fools you into feeling there's some authenticity to what you're watching, even if it's a zombie monster walking through the woods,” he says.

For Hvistendahl, her main source of inspiration was a book, “Handling the Undead,” the 2005 Swedish novel by John Ajvide Lindqvist, best known for writing the vampire drama “Let the Right One In.”

The singularity of Lindqvist's universe — somehow both grounded and otherworldly — inspired the filmmaker to make her “Children of Satan,” and when the rights for “Handling the Un-



IPC Films / Shutterstock

DIRECTOR Chris Nash, center, on the set of feature debut “In a Violent Nature,” an offbeat slasher tale.

dead” became available, she jumped at them.

“What I really enjoy about a lot of his work,” the director says, “is how instead of treating it as purely supernatural, it's treated a bit more like magical realism.”

Inheriting a screenplay by the author, Hvistendahl rewrote it, keeping its mournful essence but removing most of the bureaucratic elements detailing how the government, quite literally, handles the undead by isolating them in a housing complex.

To break the rules of their cinematic predecessors, both Nash and Hvistendahl devised new parameters to adhere to in the making of their projects.

In direct defiance of so many slashers of the past (all the way back to John Carpenter's “Halloween”), Nash opted for no score and instead let environmental sounds take its place. Additionally, he tried to include Johnny in every shot, whether just his hand, a foot or a piece of his clothing.

“It was important that Johnny's presence was felt in every frame until the pivotal moment in the climax,” Nash explains.

From Hvistendahl's perspective, her most daunting concern was to avoid humor, despite the example of “Shaun of the Dead” and so many successful zom-coms. While doing her research, she realized that zombies could trigger laughs when attacking or moving fast — a no-no.

“For the atmosphere that I wanted to create, where we have to care for the undead and understand how the liv-

ing feel for them, I thought that making them funny would be taking the film to a different place,” Hvistendahl says, also elaborating on her reason to cut the novel's sparing use of zombie dialogue. “It would have been hard to have them talk without making them silly.”

Another challenge for Hvistendahl was to find the correct look for the undead. The intent was for them to appear unalive while still getting across a sense of the person they used to be.

“We did a lot of research on dead people and what it looks like when they start to rot,” she adds. “But those details are also very difficult to find because no one has really dug up a two-week-old body.”

Worried about the physicality of her undead, Hvistendahl worked with a movement coach who developed theories about bodily separation in the afterlife. Now back in their mortal bodies, zombies would move differently since they were used to walking through walls weightlessly.

Inconsistent on-screen movement was one of the key reasons Nash decided to reshoot his film from scratch after completing nearly 80% of principal photography during the fall of 2021 in Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, the director's hometown eight hours northwest of Toronto.

Within the first week of shooting, Nash had to recast the actor playing Johnny after the original performer had an unexpected medical issue. Upon receiving the assembly cut, the director noticed the subtle difference between the two actors he



MORTEN BRUN

“HANDLING the Undead,” from director Thea Hvistendahl, center, is a moody twist on the zombie film.

used to embody the monster.

“With a character that doesn't speak, everything is about how he moves, so you pick up on all the minute differences between the two performances,” Nash says. “It became really clear that, ‘Oh, this isn't the same person.’”

Modestly, Nash ultimately attributes his do-over to a lack of confidence and communication skills after mostly working in special effects and makeup for several years. “The real reason it had to be shot twice was because it had been too long since I directed any bit of fictional narrative,” he admits. “I got way too rusty with being able to convey how I wanted something portrayed.”

In the end, the two movies feel like formal gambles that succeed in throwing the viewer off balance. For Nash, his contemplative approach to “In a Violent Nature” gives the audience space to thoughtfully consider what they're looking at, and why the artist would want to point their gaze there.

Hvistendahl was interested in articulating the human desire to hold on to those we love even after they are gone. Horror served as the vehicle to create a singular metaphor out of tropes most are familiar with.

“Death is the one thing we as humans have yet to fully understand,” she says. “It's so hard for the brain to understand that they will not come back.”

Both filmmakers expect polarized reactions from audiences for their unconventional horror outings.

Hvistendahl knows hers

is a tricky sell. “If I say it's a horror film to some people, they'll say, ‘I don't want to see that,’” she says. “For others, if I say it's horror, they are expecting more gore or jump scares.”

Nash believes there will be two audiences for “In a Violent Nature.” The first is the one that is deeply familiar with the genre, made up of those who will appreciate that the story takes the killer's point of view for a change.

“There's also going to be an audience that is expecting a very straightforward ‘Friday the 13th’ clone,” says Nash. “And I could see them being either pleasantly surprised or incredibly disappointed with the speed at which my movie runs. Hopefully everybody gives it a chance and either likes or dislikes it for the movie that it is and not the movie that it isn't.”

And no matter where you may fall along that spectrum, you can't fault him for trying something different.

“Genre is an open playground,” Nash notes. “It's the one area of culture where there are no hard and fast rules. You can make a genre film that has zero scares in it, but it's still a genre film and I find that immensely interesting.”

He's not talking about his own movie, though. “In a Violent Nature” isn't devoid of scares, nor is “Handling the Undead.” But both challenge the way we've been conditioned to expect our shocks.

Watching them, we must surrender to their uniquely unnerving pace — as good a definition of horror as any.

Paige starred on film, TV and stage

[**Paige**, from E1] singer. An assistant for studio chief Louis B. Mayer saw her perform, and the next day she had a contract with Metro Goldwyn Mayer — and a new name.

Paige was immediately cast opposite Red Skelton in a high-profile dance number in the 1944 Esther Williams musical “Bathing Beauties.” As was customary with studio contract players, Paige was entered in a series of beauty contests to build publicity.

In no time at all, she was signed away to Warner Bros. and cast as a studio guide in the Oscar-nominated hit “Hollywood Canteen.” There she made more than a dozen films, including portraying a saloon singer in the 1947 western “Cheyenne” and a suspicious wife in Doris Day's 1948 film debut, “Romance on the High Seas.”

But Paige thrived in musicals and struggled to find satisfying roles as the genre fell out of favor. The studio dropped her in 1951.

“One day I was asked to come in and see Mr. Warner,” she recalled to the New York Post in 2016. “He said, ‘Janis, I just wanted to let you know we're letting you go when your contract is up in May. We just don't know what to do with you, because you're so offbeat.’ I burst into tears.”

But Paige was nothing if not a survivor. Broke and newly divorced, she toured her own nightclub act to pay the bills and soon landed on Broadway, where she became a star on her own terms in the well-received comedy-mystery “Remains



WARNER BROS. PICTURES

SCENE-STEALER
Janis Paige starred opposite Fred Astaire in the musical movie “Silk Stockings” in 1957.

to be Seen” opposite Jackie Cooper in 1951 and “The Pajama Game” in 1954.

When the lead roles in the screen adaptations of those productions went to other actors, Paige went to television, appearing in her own CBS sitcom, “It's Always Jan.” She continued to tour as a singer, performing with Bob Hope's USO shows and taking regular gigs in Las Vegas, in New York and at the old Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

While headlining at that hotel's Cocoanut Grove nightclub, Paige was offered a starring role in the 1957 Fred Astaire musical “Silk Stockings.” In that film, Paige was cast as the fiery leading lady to Astaire's producer and in one number found herself literally swinging from a chandelier.

“I wouldn't dare say no to Fred Astaire,” she told the Miami Herald in 2016. “Especially when ... you have to catch the chandelier and swing out over all those people. He showed me and said, ‘You think you can do that?’ And I said, ‘Sure, I can do that.’ Not knowing if I was going to fall on my face or not, I didn't.”

Though Paige's leading film roles continued to wane, she starred twice on Broadway in the 1960s, in the musical “Here's Love” and the original 1968 Broadway production of “Mame.” She also toured with productions of “Annie Get Your Gun,” “Sweet Charity” and “Guys and Dolls.”

In the 1970s, Paige managed Ipanema Music Corp., the music publishing company she inherited from her late husband, Oscar-winning composer Ray Gilbert. She also guest-starred on high-profile TV shows, famously playing a diner waitress who kisses Archie Bunker on “All in the Family.”

In the 1980s and 1990s, Paige co-starred on daytime soap operas “Capitol,” “General Hospital” and “Santa Barbara.” In 2012, at 89, Paige performed an autobiographical one-woman cabaret show in West Hollywood, San Francisco and New York.

In a 2017 guest column in the Hollywood Reporter, Paige alleged that department store heir Alfred S. Bloomingdale had sexually assaulted her in 1944. She wrote the column to show support for other women who had come forward with their own stories of sexual harassment in Hollywood during the early days of the #MeToo movement.

“The unrelenting barrage of sexual-abuse accusations levied at the uber-rich and all-powerful Harvey Weinstein opened up my own memories,” she wrote. “Even at 95, I remember everything. Closure is never complete.”

Paige was married three times, divorcing twice. Her husband died in 1976. She had no children.

Piccalo is a former Times staff writer.

A musician's mad and violent fall

[**Drummer**, from E1] ows onto a larger stage. Gordon would go on to play drums for Eric Clapton's Derek and the Dominos, adding the song's indelible piano coda to “Layla,” and record with John Lennon and George Harrison. Clapton and Ringo Starr considered him the best drummer in rock.

But beneath the sunshine, storm clouds lurked.

One night after a Mad Dogs and Englishmen show, Gordon was hanging out in a hotel room with his girlfriend Coolidge and bassist Carl Radle, his future Derek and the Dominos bandmate. After drinking and snorting coke, Gordon asked Coolidge if he could speak to her in the hall. Given how close they had become, she thought he might propose. Instead, he punched her in the face, knocking her unconscious.

Mad Dogs and Englishmen members chalked up Gordon's erratic behavior to the craziness surrounding the tour. But there was more to it. “For Jim, it was a crack in the mask he wore,” wrote Joel Selvin, the former San Francisco Chronicle music critic, in his deeply reported and well-written book “Drugs & Demons: The Tragic Journey of Jim Gordon.” “His herculean self-control had failed him, letting the dark forces he had kept under tight wraps peek out, dark forces that would have shocked anyone who knew sunny Jim.”

As recounted by Selvin, Gordon heard voices that would only grow more hostile and dangerous over time, even causing him intense physical pain if he dared to disobey them. Years later, Gordon would commit one of the most horrific acts in the annals of rock history: On June 3, 1983, he murdered his 71-year-old mother by bludgeoning her with a hammer and stabbing her repeatedly in the chest. Gordon said her voice had



BRIAN COOKE Redferns

JIM GORDON rehearsed with Traffic in south London in 1971.

ordered him to commit the grisly act.

Gordon died in 2023 at 77 after nearly four decades in prison, still haunted by voices, still harboring resentment toward his long-deceased mother for her “controlling” behavior.

In “Drums & Demons,” Selvin aims to restore Gordon's humanity and reputation by showing his professional triumphs in the context of his struggles with addiction and mental illness.

Selvin largely succeeds by adding flesh, blood and soul to the Gordon story. He does an especially nice job of capturing the optimism and creative explosion of the Southern California pop scene in the 1960s and Gordon's role in it. Selvin shows the handsome, blond, 6-foot, 4-inch drummer in the studio playing on Brian Wilson's masterpiece “Good Vibrations” and driving the beat of a 24-piece orchestra on the Mason Williams 1968 instrumental hit “Classical Gas.”

In one memorable scene, producer Richard Perry tapped Gordon to play drums on Carly Simon's “You're So Vain” after two other drummers failed to give him the sound he wanted. “The drum kit was an extension of his being, and he danced all over it,” Selvin writes. Gordon

“made the track sound like a big, juicy hit record on the first take, and at the end of the evening, he left no doubt in the minds of everyone in the room that was exactly what they now had.”

Selvin vividly charts Gordon's decline in harrowing detail, including his alarming violence toward women, myriad psychotic episodes and banishment from rock royalty because of his increasing unreliability and frightening behavior. In the months before murdering his mother, for instance, a bloated, dull-eyed Gordon had been reduced to playing four sets a night for \$30 with a faceless outfit called the Blue Monkeys in a gritty Santa Monica bar. The voices in his head continued to torment him.

The biggest problem with the book is that despite Selvin's laudable efforts to make Gordon whole, the drummer just wasn't that interesting, especially compared with the artists he worked with.

“Jim moved through life like a ghost. He was friendly, but he had no friends,” Selvin writes. “He hid himself from close observation. His smile served him; it kept him safe and unchallenged. Nobody really knew him.”

That this is such a strong book reflects Selvin's prodigious journalistic talents. The author of more than 20 works including “Altamont,” which chronicles the ill-fated 1969 rock festival headed by the Stones, he is one of the best rock writers out there. Still, I'm not convinced that session-man Gordon merits a 250-page biography. John Bonham, the thundering soul of Led Zeppelin, certainly does. So too does Starr, the heart-beat of the Beatles. But Jim Gordon? Perhaps a long magazine piece.

Ballon, a former Times and Forbes reporter, teaches an advanced writing class at USC. He lives in Fullerton.

COMICS

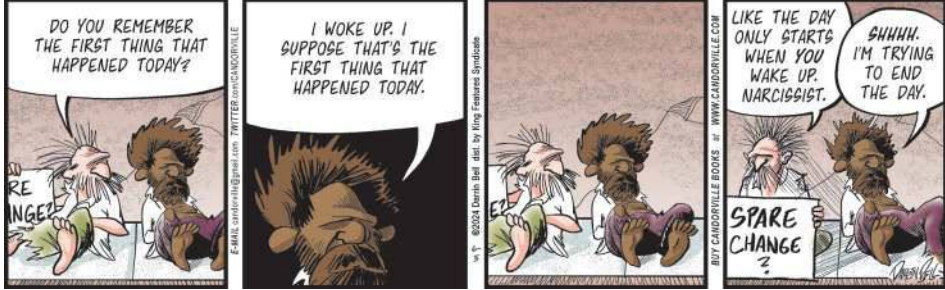
LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz



CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia



CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell



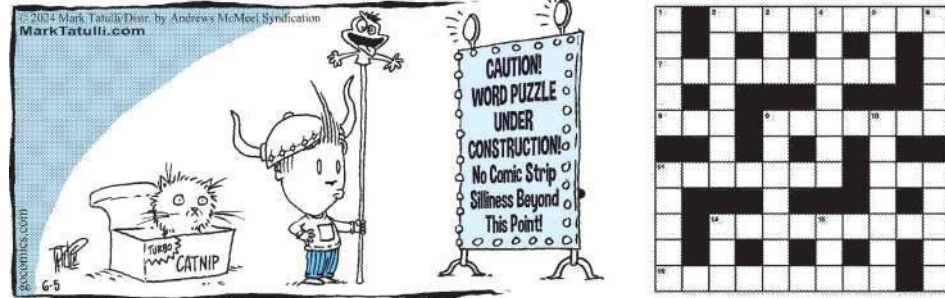
LOOSE PARTS By Dave Blazek



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis



LIO By Mark Tatulli



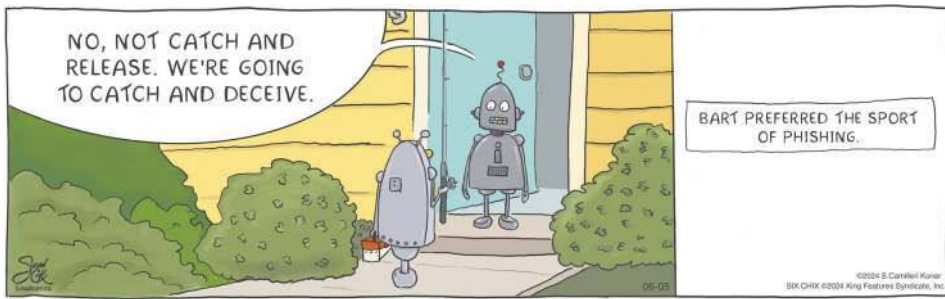
ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter



SIX CHIX By Susan Camilleri Konar



FRAZZ By Jef Mallett



NON SEQUITUR By Wiley



PICKLES By Brian Crane



BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



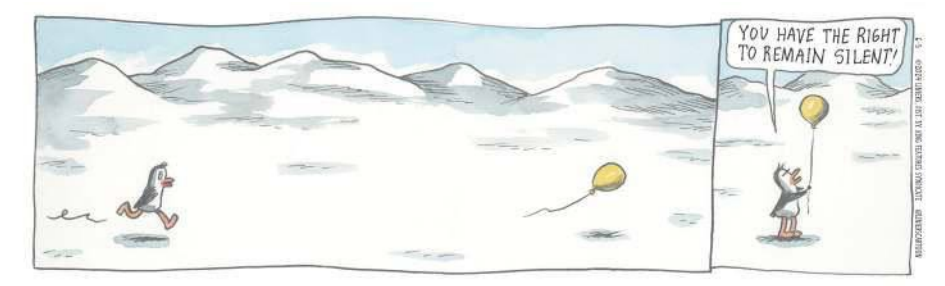
CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers



JUMP START By Robb Armstrong



MACANUDO By Liniers



BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall



BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy



BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro



DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan



MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell



PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz



COMICS

SUDOKU

1					2			6
							3	
	6			4	3		1	
8	9			1				3
			2	9	5			
2				3			4	9
	3		8	6				9
	5							
9			7					2

Level: Moderate

				5	3			
				2				
			1			4		
4				6				
1				5				
				4				

Level: Gentle

6	9	2	4	5	1	8	7	
8	7	9	6	1	2	5	3	4
1	4	5	3	7	6	2	9	
3	6	9	7	8	4	1	2	
9	7	4	3	8	6	5		
2	8	4	5	6	1	9	7	3
4	2	1	7	3	5	3	9	6
7	5	8	3	9	6	2	4	1
5	9	6	1	2	4	7	5	8

1	2	6	3	4	5
4	5	3	6	1	2
2	6	4	1	5	3
5	3	1	4	2	6
6	1	2	5	3	4
3	4	5	2	6	1

8/5/24

Solutions to Tuesday's puzzles

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. A number can be repeated within a cage as long as it is not in the same row or column.

EASY

2÷	3-			2-
		6x		
3+			1-	
1-			2÷	

CHALLENGING

6x			18+	
11+		2÷		5-
6+	1-	2-		11+
			17+	
24x				1-
12x		6x		2-

PREVIOUS ANSWERS

6x	3x	2x	4x
1	3	2	4
3	4	1	2
2	1	4	3
4	2	3	1

6x	3x	2x	4x
4	5	2	3
5	3	1	4
3	1	5	2
2	3	4	1

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6/5/24

HOROSCOPE

By HOLIDAY MATHIS

Aries (March 21-April 19): You see deeper and more personal reasons for the pursuit, and eventually, you will have what you desire.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): You'll get someone laughing about the very thing they may have been trying to hide just moments before.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): Your wishes, including and especially the goodness you want for others, will be promptly delivered upon.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): Considering the bent points of view you're up against today, seeing eye to eye on anything is a wonder worth celebrating.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): The word "caper" can refer to a goofy prank or an unopened flower bud used in Mediterranean dishes. Either sort can add a burst of fun to the day, so why not in-

corporate both?

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A sense of personal responsibility speaks to the very core of humanity. Those without it should be avoided today.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): It's a little hard to appreciate the things that are readily available to you, and this does not make you a bad person; it just makes you a person.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): In the days to come, you'll meet people worth paying astute attention to so you may learn the deeper facets over a long period of time.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You are upfront about your intentions to have fun, which is in and of itself an act of responsibility.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You sense when people want something from you, and you don't rest until you figure out what it is.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb.

18): Love is a creative endeavor. From clothing to lighting to casting, you'll plot the action to support your unfolding love story.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): You'll find workarounds to bring comfort to yourself and your people.

Today's birthday (June 5): You've been holding back on a big move, but no more. Opportunity is ripe and for the seizing. You'll meet people worthy of a deep investment of time and energy, and you'll proceed in fascinating dance, weaving together shared aims and mutual appreciation. More highlights: proud trophies, epic gatherings of loved ones, and a new talent that takes you places. Virgo and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers: 2, 22, 19, 4 and 16.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol
By Joe Deeney

- ACROSS**
- 1 Yoda trainee
 - 5 Superhero accessory
 - 9 Bar food?
 - 14 Got rid of
 - 15 Smell
 - 16 Overacts
 - 18 No matter the outcome
 - 20 San Francisco-to-Salt Lake City interstate
 - 21 Pig's digs
 - 22 Make yawn
 - 23 Fingers
 - 24 Actor Cariou
 - 25 Pairing at a cocktail party
 - 28 Nevada whose mystery novels are set in national parks
 - 31 Udon alternative
 - 32 Trivial objection
 - 33 Irrefutable statement
 - 36 Greens over
 - 38 Presidential warm-weather getaway
 - 43 Stew
 - 44 Chestnut horse
 - 45 "And there you go!"
 - 46 Photoreceptor cell
 - 48 Jeans line
 - 49 Peripheral with a dongle
 - 54 Spanish "that"
 - 55 Minecraft material
 - 56 "¿Qué ___?"
 - 57 One in a zillion?
 - 60 Shape on a bingo card
 - 62 Snappy remark, and a feature of four long answers in this puzzle
 - 64 Toyota full-size pickup
 - 65 Diva's time to shine
 - 66 At some point in the past
 - 67 Unsuccessful Ford
 - 68 Costner's "The Untouchables" role
 - 69 Went green?
- DOWN**
- 1 Spielberg thriller set on Amity Island
 - 2 Stage direction
 - 3 Publicist's recommendation, perhaps
 - 4 Unmarried person's last words
 - 5 Subtitle intro
 - 6 Dig a lot
 - 7 Pretend to be
 - 8 Bardly before

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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		
	67							68				69		

9 Some pods

10 Sect that adheres to Ordnung

11 Piece of firewood

12 Style that includes designer yoga pants

13 More than loathe

17 "Auld Lang ___"

19 Stat for a slugger

23 "Seems highly likely"

25 "Keep in touch!"

26 Sushi wrapper

27 Back

28 "Speaking of which," briefly

29 MSNBC host Melber

30 Chases a toddler, say

34 "Catch my drift?"

35 Onetime breakfast option marketed by a 1980s TV icon

37 "There it is!"

39 "___ side are you on?"

40 Farm layers

41 Neptune's domain

42 Tree with serrated leaves

45 Langoustine soup

47 Red Delicious kin

49 Dominic of "The Crown"

50 "Casablanca" actor Peter

51 Spot for a much-needed drink, perhaps

52 "___ directed"

53 Cul-de-___

57 Amusingly unconventional

58 "Behold!" of old

59 ___ out a living

61 App annoyances

62 Pallid

63 Photoreceptor cell

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

G	A	M	E	S		G	O	T
I	R	A	N		N	O	O	L
E					A	R	I	
G	A	R	D	E	N	S	A	I
A	B	A		L	O	A	I	
T	I	C	O	S		H	O	
O	C	A	N	A	D	A		
N	A	S	T	E	N	A	M	E
L								
T	R	E						
O								
F	I	Z	Z	A	R	A	T	
P	I	Z <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td>						
L	I	B						
F	S	I						
S	H	E						

BRIDGE

By FRANK STEWART

"I had a heart-to-heart with my youngest daughter," Unlucky Louie told me. "I said I didn't want her making the same mistakes I made at her age."

"How'd she take that?"

"She said, 'Dad, don't worry. I'll probably make mistakes that weren't invented back then.'"

Today's North should have bid 3NT at his first turn. Against five diamonds, West led a heart: king, ace. East returned the jack, and South threw a spade and took the queen. He next led a club: seven, king, four.

South then ran his trumps, and East smoothly let go two spades. His last three cards were the king of spades and A-10 of clubs. At

the end, South erred by leading a club for a nonexistent endplay. Down one.

South should ruff the second heart, delaying his discard. He draws trumps and leads a club from dummy. If East ducks, South wins — and can discard his last club on the queen of hearts. If instead East grabs his ace, South pitches two spades on the queen of clubs and queen of hearts.

You hold: ♠ A 6 5 ♥ K Q 4 ♦ Q 9 6 2 ♣ Q 3 2. Your partner opens one club, you bid 2NT and he rebids three clubs. What do you say?

Answer: Partner has doubts about notrump. He may have slam interest, but your first duty is to look for the best game. Bid three hearts to show heart strength. If partner holds 3, A 9 3, A 10 4, K J 10 8 6 4, he will

avoid notrump. (Some use a 2NT response to a minor-suit opening as invitational; I dislike that treatment.)

East dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH

♠ A 6 5
♥ K Q 4
♦ Q 9 6 2
♣ Q 3 2

WEST

♠ 10 9 3 2
♥ 8 7 2
♦ 8 5
♣ 9 8 5 4

EAST

♠ K 8 4
♥ A J 10 9 6 3
♦ None
♣ A J 10 7

SOUTH

♠ Q J 7
♥ 5
♦ A K J 10 7 4 3
♣ K 6

EAST

1 ♥
3 ♥

SOUTH

2 ♠
Pass

WEST

5 ♦

NORTH

2 ♥
All Pass

Opening lead — ♥ 8

Tribune Content Agency

ASK AMY

Friend just wants the truth

Dear Amy: Two years ago, my friend "Kim" said that she had cut alcohol out of her life after her brother died due to his alcoholism.

I thought this was great; we have enjoyed doing things without alcohol.

A couple of times I suspected she'd been drinking.

Last summer I took my suspicions to her sister-in-law, "Bea," who's a friend.

Bea confided that Kim is in group therapy for drinking but she went on a bender and got her second DUI.

I was asked to keep this confidential, so I decided to act oblivious around Kim.

This month, Kim's lies got bigger. When she did not return any of my text messages I again reached out to Bea. I was told that Kim had to spend 30 days in jail for her drinking episode.

Kim texted me within hours of being released, saying she had to care for her ailing dad out of town.

Because I was asked to keep this information confidential, I again chose to go along with Kim's lies.

Now Kim has told me that she needs a ride each time we are together. She's obviously lost her driver's license but made up a lame reason for needing rides.

I understand why she would not want people to

know, but I am caught in the cross-hairs of her lies.

She is a beautiful person with an ugly disease, and it has to be a heavy burden to be hiding behind those lies on top of trying to stay sober.

I want to let Kim know that she has no need to lie to me anymore.

She won't lose my friendship. More important, I'd be happy to help her through this difficult time. It is not the drinking problem that bothers me. It's the lying.

However, I do not want to go back on my word with Bea, who has asked me to keep quiet.

If I approach Kim, it will be obvious that the only way I found out was from Bea.

How do I proceed without making matters worse?

WORRIED FRIEND

her drinking, don't push. Being honest about her drinking will be a big part of supporting her sobriety, but she might not be there yet.

Dear Amy: I am a relatively healthy 81-year-old retired university professor.

I hike over eight miles per day. I am happily married with one daughter and two grandchildren.

I was recently diagnosed with preliminary Alzheimer's disease. I've told my wife and daughter about this, but no one else.

I am fully aware of my memory problems, but they are not yet obvious to others.

I presume I will get worse with time. How do I handle revealing the diagnosis to folks as time passes?

CALL ME SAM

Dear Worried: Kim has been lying to you. And you have been lying to her. You've trapped yourself by involving a third party, then agreeing to keep this quiet.

Try a version of this: "Kim, I've suspected that you've relapsed a couple of times and I want you to know that if that's true, you can tell me the truth and count on my support. I know this is a really tough disease. No judgment from me."

If she continues to deny

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane

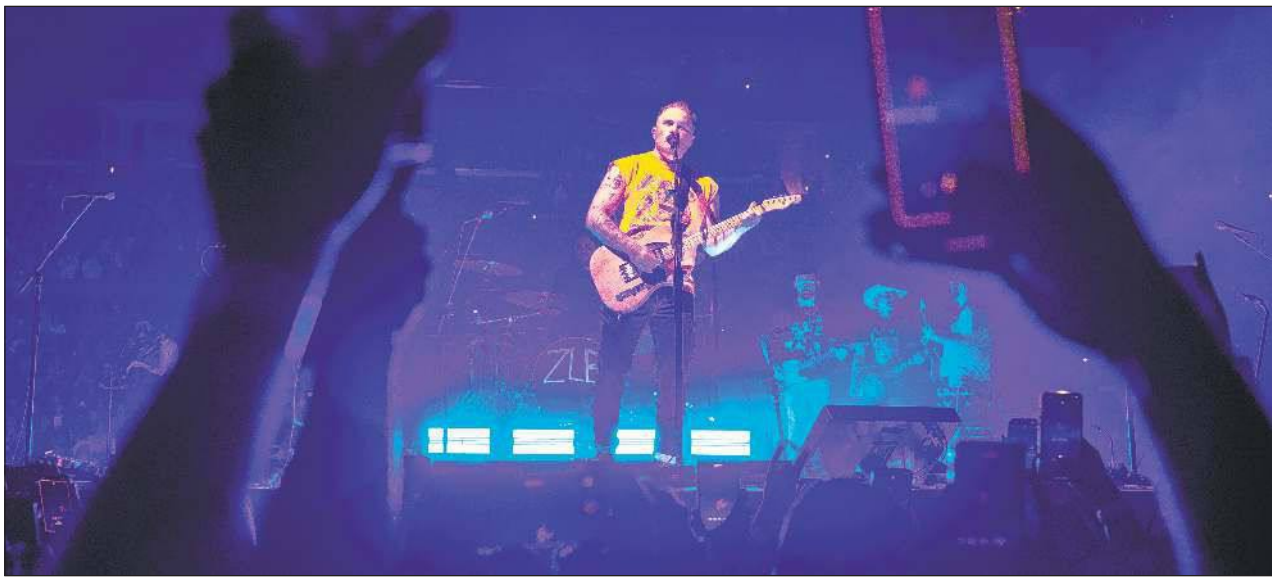
DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham

FREE RANGE By Bill Whitehead

MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson

BLISS By Harry Bliss

SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly



ZACH BRYAN invited the audience to sing along for his entire two-hour show Monday at Crypto.com Arena.

JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

Bryan leads a two-hour sing-along

[**Bryan**, from E1] March, no less an admirer than Bruce Springsteen flew to New York amid a string of West Coast dates to join the 28-year-old singer and songwriter onstage at Brooklyn's Barclays Center.

The huge success Bryan has found since he started posting bare-bones country-folk tunes on Twitter and YouTube has helped open a path onto the pop charts for other rock-leaning white dudes — think Noah Kahan and Hozier and Benson Boone.

Indeed, Bryan's own audience has shifted remarkably in just the past two years or so, from a crowd long on middle-aged Wilco dads to a much younger following split about evenly between men and women. (If you were tempted in 2022 to think of Bryan and Morgan Wallen as representing opposing constituencies, you're not tempted anymore.)

Closely observed and starkly phrased — "18 years old, full of hate / They shipped me off in a motorcade," goes the vivid opening of "East Side of Sorrow" — Bryan's songs are intimate meditations on work, family, romance and the peculiar desperation of longing to leave a small town you love. Yet he's figured out how to super-size them for the arenas and stadiums he plays now: Backed by a rowdy seven-piece band at Crypto, where a cross-shaped stage was positioned in the middle of the floor, he invited the audience to sing along at top volume for the entire two-hour show, transforming private confession into an opportunity for shared catharsis.

In a sense, that's a deflection of the personal scrutiny involved in pop stardom — a move in keeping with Bryan's general disinclination to fulfill the rituals of celebrity on any platform beyond his own.

Again and again Monday night the house lights would come up at precisely the moment when you might've expected Bryan to strike some rock-god pose, drawing your eye instead to the thousands of others watching him watch them. At one point, he even brought a fan onstage to sing and play guitar on his song "Heading South," passing the baton to a version of the kid he used to be.

Yet Bryan also took clear pleasure in having reached such rarefied air: His vintage Lakers shirt commemorated the team's early-2000s NBA Finals three-peat; the night before, he wore one from the second of those three championships. And for all the intensity of the crowd's howling, their voices never quite drowned out the ragged power of Bryan's singing, which if anything has gotten more unruly as his success has brought him closer to the center of pop.

He ended the show, as he has most of those on his current tour, with a boisterous run through his song "Revival," for which he was joined by a handful of friends and famous(-ish) people that included his girlfriend, the podcaster Brianna "Chickenfry" LaPaglia, and the UFC star Nate Diaz. As they wandered around the stage, pumping their fists and taking an endless series of selfies, Bryan beckoned Diaz close to his microphone — a guy who couldn't believe where he'd found himself, eager to share the disorienting view.

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