



Photographs by GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

RETIRED DMV worker Patricia Payan has leased her home in El Sereno since 1986. She is now in escrow to buy her house from the state. But many renters fear they may remain in escrow for as long as two years.

As fires ravage the Southland, experts warn of a worse autumn

Dry vegetation abounds, and Santa Ana winds could arrive early this year.

BY HAYLEY SMITH

For the first time in years, Southern California has found itself once again besieged by wildfire. In recent days, multiple blazes have exploded across heat-seared hillsides, blanketing the region in ash and smoke, threatening homes and communication towers and sending thousands of residents fleeing for their lives.

But as crews struggle to contain the 37,000-acre Line fire in San Bernardino County, the 23,000-acre Airport fire in Orange and Riverside counties, and the 51,000-acre Bridge fire in Los Angeles and San Bernar-

Evacuees wait and wonder

More than 19,000 Riverside County residents are under evacuation orders. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

dino counties, experts warn that the season is just getting started.

The impending arrival of hot Santa Ana winds — combined with two years of overgrown vegetation — all but ensure that this fall will be fraught with danger.

“The odds definitely favor a continuation — and maybe even an escalation — of Southern California fire season over the next couple of months,” said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with UCLA.

The worst setup for wildfire conditions in Southern [See Fires, A7]



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

THE LINE fire left behind a scorched hillside along Highway 330 in San Bernardino County on Sunday.

Pocketbook woes may sway Nevada

Harris has a thin edge over Trump in the key state, but the cost of living has some voters doubting Democrats.

BY JAMES RAINEY

LAS VEGAS — Vice President Kamala Harris has never met Maria Rodriguez. She probably never will. But the Democratic presidential nominee should be worried about Rodriguez, and voters like her.

The single mother of three from Henderson, Nev., is a onetime Democratic voter who frets about the economy (meaning: the price of just about everything) and says she plans to vote for former President Trump.

Rodriguez cast her ballot for Joe Biden four years ago, hoping for better times. But, regardless of what government statisticians might say about the economy, the 36-year-old finds it's harder to pay the bills today, even though she is working two or three jobs as a nurse and home healthcare worker.

“Going to the market is really hard right now,” Rodriguez said as she pushed a mostly empty cart up an aisle of a Dollar Tree discount store last week. “Sometimes, before, you would go in with 100 bucks and come out with a full cart. It was pretty OK. Now, with 100 bucks, you can get maybe 10 things. It's living paycheck to paycheck.”

“I was potentially a Democrat,” she said. “But I have changed my way of [See Nevada, A6]

Waiting for their slice of the American dream

Tenants in Caltrans-owned homes want to be owners, but the pace of sales is still a source of frustration

BY LIAM DILLON



CALTRANS sold this vacant property in El Sereno to San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity, which will remodel it.

For nearly four decades, Patricia Payan has lived in a leased version of the suburban ideal, a two-bedroom, one-bathroom home on Sheffield Avenue in El Sereno.

Payan rents the house from the state of California, one of hundreds publicly owned in the community because of a freeway that was planned but never built. Living there for so long, Payan has made countless memories and put personal touches on the property. Her son and daughter had their birthday parties in the same backyard where her grandchildren now do. She redid the floors in the kitchen herself and paid for her own gardener.

The one thing missing for Payan was the home's title. That's now changing. Six years after the freeway was officially declared dead, Payan is in escrow to buy her house from the California Department of Transportation.

“I've always wanted this,” said Payan, 77. “It's a dream to be a property owner.”

Sales of the homes, apartments, lots and other properties owned by Caltrans are the final step toward healing the wound opened in the mid-20th century by plans to complete the 710 Freeway through the San Gabriel Valley. Decades of [See Property, A9]

Trump's golf course flirts with disaster

Known for landslides, scenic Rancho Palos Verdes is also home to club

BY HAILEY BRANSON-POTTS

A mile west of Trump National Golf Club in Rancho Palos Verdes, a road sign warns: “Use Extreme Caution. Constant Land Movement.”

A few blocks away, a sign just off Palos Verdes Drive South touts the Estates at Trump National Golf Club Los Angeles, where potential residents can “build your custom dream home.”

Those signs sum up the promise and the peril of Trump's clifftop, open-to-the-public golf course, which he bought from bankrupted developers in 2002 after the 18th hole slid into the ocean. The club has even played a role in Trump's New York fraud trial.

On Friday morning, Trump is scheduled to hold a news conference at his club [See Golf course, A6]



CAROLYN COLE Los Angeles Times

FORMER President Trump purchased his golf course in Rancho Palos Verdes, seen in 2022, after the 18th hole fell into the ocean. Now, the city is a disaster zone.

Unusually active year for L.A. quakes

Thursday's magnitude 4.7 temblor north of Malibu is the region's latest moderate event. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Pac-12 rebuilds with four schools

Conference adds Boise State, Fresno State, Colorado State and San Diego State. **SPORTS, B7**

Weather

Turning sunny. L.A. Basin: 80/63. **B6**

Tech billionaire takes spacewalk

Jared Isaacman carries out first private mission hundreds of miles above Earth. **BUSINESS, A8**

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PERSPECTIVES

How to de-normalize Trump in less than 2 hours

At the debate, Harris shows politicians and pundits how it's done — and without any yelling

MARY McNAMARA

In Tuesday night's presidential debate, Vice President Kamala Harris may or may not have increased her chances of becoming the 47th president. But she did what so many have tried, and failed, to do.



She de-normalized Donald Trump.

For years, various politicians and pundits have yelled themselves hoarse over the danger of normalizing Trump's chicanery, casual mendacity, outrageous divisiveness and outright criminal behavior. For years, the media have attempted to contextualize a candidate/president/insurrectionist/candidate who often dismisses the most time-honored rules of American politics (including the peaceful transfer of power) and continues to feed his not-inconsiderable number of supporters a diet of self-aggrandizement and grievance.

Not surprisingly, outrage itself has become normalized too. For President Biden and now Democratic nominee Harris, every word, action and expression is analyzed with granular intensity. Meanwhile, Trump's familiar litany of untruths and increasingly nonsensical speeches is regularly glossed over as "Trump being Trump."

MSNBC's Lawrence O'Donnell recently called out the New York Times and other media outlets for surrendering to "sane-washing," which is how he described attempts to "edit Donald Trump's crazy statements down to a shape that allows them to then make sense of them."

So what do you do with a man who believes that if you repeat a series of lies often and loudly enough they will somehow become truths?

You get him a room and you make him do it on live television.

In less than two hours this week, Harris showed America that it is not normal for a candidate to be more concerned about the size of his rallies than he is about women bleeding out in parking lots because restrictive abortion laws



HANNAH BEIER/BLOOMBERG

AT TUESDAY'S debate with Donald Trump, Vice President Kamala Harris made it clear with an admirable range of facial expressions and rejoinders that Trump's lies and statements should not be considered normal.

have made doctors skittish about treating miscarriages. That it's not normal for a former American president to praise dictators and deride NATO, to promote the racist lie that Haitian immigrants are eating dogs and cats in Ohio, to continue to insist that he won an election he lost. That it's not normal for a man convicted of 34 felonies to claim to believe in law and order.

Harris set traps for Trump so obvious that a child, never mind a man who has participated in three sets of presidential debates, could have seen them a mile away. And, like a child, he walked into each and every one confident that he could talk his way out.

Which he definitely tried to do. During the debate, hosted by ABC and moderated by David Muir and Linsey Davis, Trump spoke for five more minutes than Harris, often pushing back against the moderators' attempts to cut him off, and managed to get the last word on every topic.

But when that talk forced the moderators to step in and point out that um, no, infanticide is not legal in any state (after Trump once again insisted

that some abortion rights-advocating politicians are in favor of executing babies after birth) and that there have been no actual reports of Haitian immigrants eating dogs and cats in Ohio (which even Trump's running mate had agreed was false), it was difficult to see the former president as anything but, well, weird.

Along with the more mundane lies about skyrocketing crime rates (they are at record lows) and countries illegally sending mental-hospital patients into the United States (no evidence of this), Trump also managed to say things like: "She wants to do transgender operations on illegal aliens in prison" and "All I can say is I read where she was not Black, that she put out, and, I'll say that. And then I read that she was Black, and that's OK."

For people who are too young to remember a time when Trump was just a rich guy who cheated on his wives, there was a time when remarks such as these would have never been part of a presidential debate. And as Harris made clear with an admirable range of facial expressions and come-to-Jesus rejoinders,

they should not be considered normal now.

This is precisely what Harris and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, have been trying to do over the last two months: Persuade voters that Americans deserve a president who does not view the United States as a post-apocalyptic hellscape over which to reign but as a place with problems that can be fixed if we start treating one another with respect.

That's not just a vibe. Harris came to the debate determined to break through the almost decade-long attempt to defend, defuse or otherwise accept Trump's norm-breaking words, actions and expressions by proving that it isn't just dangerous. It's also absurd.

As Trump seemed determined to prove, he can't keep himself from personal attacks (e.g., that President Biden secretly hates Harris, and Harris hates both Israelis and Arabs), or trying to gaslight voters (i.e., that overturning Roe made everyone happy and Trump had nothing to do with the Jan. 6 insurrection), or align himself with authoritarian figures (e.g., Hungary's

Viktor Orban). Even when avoiding all of the above is in his own best interest.

Harris did nothing more, or less, than allow Trump to be Trump, un-sane-washed, while offering a very clear alternative. Her first action was to introduce herself to him and shake his hand, a professional courtesy that clearly took Trump by surprise and one he did not extend to her. Throughout the debate, Trump referred to the sitting vice president almost exclusively as "she" or "her" — though he did manage to name Biden often enough for Harris to remind him, "Clearly, I am not Joe Biden." He rarely if ever looked at her, choosing to glower at the moderators or the camera as if she were not there.

Harris, on the other hand, addressed Trump by his name or his title and often turned to speak to him directly.

When, apropos of nothing, Trump offered the tired canard that Harris wants to "confiscate your guns," Harris admonished him to his face: "Tim Walz and I are both gun owners," she said, with an exasperated firmness. "We're not taking anyone's guns away, so stop

with the continuous lying about this stuff."

That moment alone was worth cheering for. Even as the nation reels from yet another school shooting, Trump continues to insist that any form of increased gun control will lead to people being stripped of their legally obtained weapons, despite the fact that, like Harris and Walz, most gun owners support some amount of more stringent measures.

Unlike Trump, who was easily baited into defending everything from attendance at his rallies to his negotiations with "Abdul ... the head of the Taliban" (Haibatullah Akhundzada was and remains the leader of the Taliban), Harris appeared to take nothing personally. She responded to Trump's repetition of remarks about whether or not she is Black not with a rebuke but with the reminder that most Americans are tired of divisiveness and just want to get along with their friends and neighbors.

She saved her anger and passion for when she spoke about women and girls suffering under increasingly restrictive abortion laws, the importance of supporting Ukraine and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and how many former military leaders who served under Trump now consider him "a disgrace."

If the debate was short on policy details, well, Harris offered more than Trump, who answered a question about healthcare by trashing the Affordable Care Act and then, when asked if he had an alternative, saying he had "a concept of a plan." (Harris answered the same question by saying she will grow ACA and continue her and Biden's success with capping out-of-pocket drug costs and capping insulin prices.)

After the debate, Trump claimed he won, but even the most dedicated sane-washers, including prominent Republicans, had to concede that Harris had dominated. Which made Trump's familiar day-after drumbeat — the moderators were biased, the debate rigged — feel less infuriating than embarrassing.

It really is time to stop with the continuous lying about this stuff.

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U.S. acknowledges Egypt's role in Gaza talks

Despite human rights concerns, Washington sends full military aid to Cairo, citing efforts to mediate conflict.

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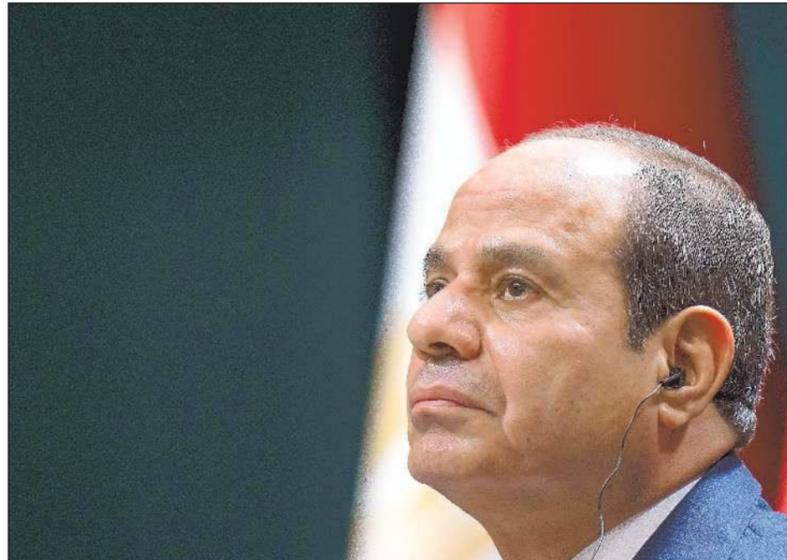
WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is sending Egypt its full \$1.3-billion allocation of military aid, setting aside conditions placed by Congress on some of the money over human rights concerns and citing Cairo's role as a mediator in the Israel-Hamas war.

The State Department said Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken used his authority to waive those conditions on \$225 million, saying the move is important for Mideast stability and Egypt's ability to help with U.S. national security priorities, including trying to broker a cease-fire and hostage deal in Gaza and increasing humanitarian assistance for Palestinians in the territory.

Blinken also told Congress this week that Egypt has made progress in freeing political prisoners and preventing Americans from being harassed, meeting benchmarks to gain \$95 million in assistance.

"The United States is also continuing a rigorous dialogue with the Egyptian government on the importance of concrete human rights improvements that are crucial to sustaining the strongest possible U.S.-Egypt partnership," the State Department said.

The decision shows the weight given to Egypt's role



FRANCISCO SECO/Associated Press

THE GOVERNMENT of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, shown this month in Ankara, Turkey, is alleged to be behind a litany of human rights abuses.

as a key mediator in a conflict that threatens to expand into a regionwide war and pose risks to the U.S., even as allegations persist that President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's government is behind a litany of human rights abuses.

The State Department and rights groups have said those allegations include numerous credible reports of arbitrary killings, torture and detention as well as systematic repression of civil society, free press and free expression.

The U.S. withheld \$85 million last year from the Egyptian government and \$130 million in 2022.

Human Rights Watch says Sisi's administration has released hundreds of detainees but has arrested

many more, and that thousands of journalists, activists and others are still behind bars.

Democratic Sens. Chris Coons of Delaware and Christopher S. Murphy of Connecticut decried the release of the millions of dollars, saying Egypt has failed to make progress.

"Over the last year, for every single political prisoner Egypt has released, it has jailed two more," they said in a statement. "That's not clear and consistent progress — it's one step forward and two steps back."

Murphy, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee with oversight of the Mideast, said the U.S. has been able to maintain strategic ties with Egypt when withholding

money before over human rights concerns.

He said he saw no reason for the change now when "it's no secret that Egypt remains a deeply repressive autocratic state."

The State Department points to steps that Egypt has taken, including releasing more than 950 political prisoners since September 2023 and moving forward with a proposal to reform pretrial detention. But the department said it made clear to Egyptian officials that "more action is needed."

Sisi has previously denied that his country has political prisoners, and he justified government measures by saying they are needed to fight the spread of terrorism.



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THE WORLD

U.S. sanctions 16 Maduro allies in disputed vote

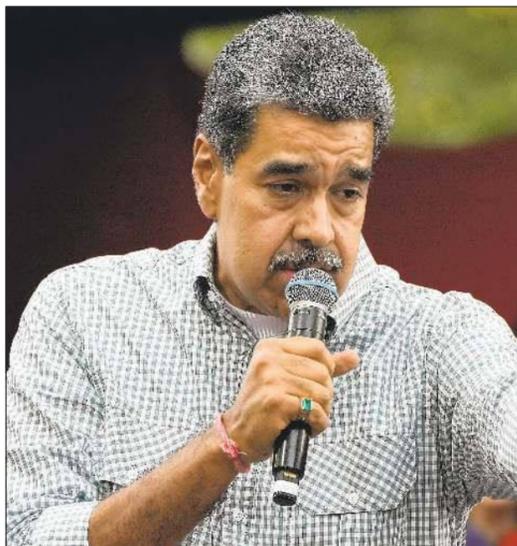
List includes heads of Venezuela's judiciary and security forces, accused of abuses and election obstruction.

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO

MEXICO CITY — The U.S. government on Thursday responded to Venezuela's disputed July presidential election by imposing sanctions against 16 allies of President Nicolás Maduro, accusing them of obstructing the vote and carrying out human rights abuses.

Those targeted by the Treasury Department include the head of the country's high court, leaders of state security forces and prosecutors. The move came days after the departure into exile of Edmundo González Urrutia, the former diplomat who represented the main opposition parties and claimed to have won the July 28 presidential election by a wide margin.

Venezuela's electoral authorities declared Maduro the victor hours after polls closed; but unlike in previous presidential elections, they never released detailed



ARIANA CUBILLOS Associated Press

VENEZUELAN President Nicolás Maduro falsely claimed victory in a bid to stay in power, the U.S. said.

vote tallies to back up their claim, arguing that the National Electoral Council's website was hacked.

To the surprise of supporters and opponents, González and opposition leader María Corina Machado shortly afterward announced not only that their campaign had obtained vote tallies from over

two-thirds of the electronic voting machines used in the election, but also that they had published them online to show the world that Maduro had lost.

Global condemnation over the lack of transparency prompted Maduro to ask Venezuela's high court, stacked with party loyalists, to audit the results. The

court reaffirmed his victory.

Experts from the United Nations and the Carter Center, which observed the election at the invitation of Maduro's government, determined the results announced by electoral authorities lacked credibility. The U.N. experts stopped short of validating the opposition's claim to victory but said the faction's voting records published online appear to exhibit all of the original security features.

"Rather than respecting the will of the Venezuelan people as expressed at the ballot box, Maduro and his representatives have falsely claimed victory while repressing and intimidating the democratic opposition in an illegitimate attempt to cling to power by force," Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken said in a statement.

The State Department said it is placing new visa restrictions on Maduro allies who are accused of impeding the vote and repressing Venezuelans. The department did not name those individuals.

The potential effect of the individual sanctions and visa restrictions announced Thursday is unclear. Previously punished Maduro loyalists still play key roles in

Venezuela's government, including as vice president, attorney general and defense minister.

A senior Biden administration official told reporters that the U.S. expects the latest announcement to "prompt deeper reflection" among the Maduro allies about how far they will go to help him in his effort to stay in power. The official spoke on condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the administration.

The Treasury has penalized more than 140 current or former Venezuelan officials. The State Department has identified nearly 2,000 people as possibly facing visa restrictions over allegations of corruption, undermining democracy or violating Venezuelans' human rights.

Venezuela's government released a statement that characterized the latest set of sanctions as a "rude act that seeks to ingratiate itself with a political class that has resorted to fascist and violent practices to overthrow [Maduro], without success."

A joint statement from more than 50 countries that was delivered Thursday at the United Nations by Panama's foreign minister, Javier Martínez-Acha Vásquez, called on Venezuela's Na-

tional Electoral Council "to immediately publish" the tally sheets and "allow for the impartial verification of results by independent observers to promote credibility, legitimacy, and a transparent electoral process."

The signatories, including the U.S., Spain, Chile and South Korea, also denounced the repression measures that Maduro's government has been accused of carrying out after the election, including arbitrary detentions, intimidation tactics and killings.

"We express deep concern with the politically motivated arrest warrant by Venezuelan authorities" that was issued Sept. 3 for González and "has forced him into exile," according to the statement.

González, in a statement posted on the social site X, tried to reassure voters of his pledge to see a government transition in Venezuela.

"My commitment to the mandate I have received from the sovereign people of Venezuela is unwavering," he wrote. "The battle that María Corina Machado and I have led remains unwavering."

Garcia Cano writes for the Associated Press.

Family of slain activist calls for U.S. inquiry into shooting by Israel

Father of the Turkish American citizen welcomes Ankara's investigation into her West Bank killing.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DIDIM, Turkey — The father of the Turkish American activist killed by Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank on Thursday welcomed Turkey's decision to initiate an independent investigation into her death and called on the United States to do the same.

Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, who held Turkish and American citizenship, was fatally shot Sept. 6 during demonstrations against Jewish settlements in the West Bank. A witness, Israeli protester Jonathan Pollak, said that Eygi posed no threat to Israeli forces and that the shooting came during a moment



KHALIL HAMRA Associated Press

TURKISH FLAGS adorn the ancestral home of slain activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi in Didim, an honor that is usually bestowed on Turkish soldiers killed in conflict.

of calm between stone-throwing protesters and Israeli troops firing tear gas

and bullets.

Turkish Justice Minister Yilmaz Tunc announced

Thursday that his government had begun its own investigation into her death

days after the Israeli military said in a preliminary report that Eygi was probably shot "indirectly and unintentionally" by its soldiers.

Eygi's father, Mehmet Suat Eygi, who is based in Seattle but spoke in western Turkey, said he was very happy to learn that Turkey had opened an investigation into the "arbitrary murder" of his daughter.

"I hope that the American government does the same," he said.

He said his daughter was 10 months old when the family left Turkey for the United States. "She studied in the schools there, she grew up with freedoms there. She is a citizen of that country," he said. "I hope the American government will show the same sensitivity."

He was speaking in the Aegean coastal town of Didim, where Eygi used to come for vacations and spend time with family members — and where she is expected to be buried. Eygi's

grandfather's home — and the street where the house is located — was adorned with Turkish flags, an honor usually bestowed on Turkish soldiers killed in conflict.

The Ankara chief prosecutor's office was leading the Turkish inquiry, Tunc said, adding that Turkey would seek international arrest warrants for those responsible for her death. He also said Turkey would present findings to a U.N. court overseeing a genocide case against Israel filed by South Africa over the war in Gaza.

"We will take every judicial step for our martyred daughter, Aysenur," Tunc said.

Mehmet Suat Eygi said his daughter was a "special person" who cared about nature and human rights and traveled to Brazil, Australia and Mexico to campaign for environmental and human rights issues.

Eygi, who attended Seattle schools and graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in psychology this year, was married and was financially comfortable, her father said. "She could have enjoyed a comfortable life, but she pursued her ideals. She left everything and went to the hell of the Middle East. She was that idealistic," he said.

Another relative, Ali Tikkin, told the Associated Press that Eygi's family believes she was deliberately targeted by Israeli soldiers.

"There was no error or accident," he said. "I think it was a message to the world."

Tikkin, who is married to Eygi's aunt, described the activist as a "free-spirited person" who began traveling the world at an early age.

"Even at the age of 18 or 19, she went to different countries of the world on her own. First she started traveling out of curiosity. Later she took part in organizations by the United Nations," he said. "She was sensitive to events happening around the world."

A statement released by the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Justice and signed by two forensic doctors said Eygi was brought to Rafidia Hospital in Nablus, in the West Bank, after she was hit with a bullet fired by the Israeli army. The young woman had no signs of life as her heart was not beating, the statement said, adding that the bullet entered from behind her left ear, causing damage to the brain.

Medical staff tried for a sixth time to reactivate her heart with no luck and she was declared dead at 2:36 p.m. Friday. The statement said the bullet damaged the brain and the skull and shrapnel caused tears and bruises.

Turkish Foreign Ministry officials said Eygi's body was expected to be flown from Tel Aviv to Baku, Azerbaijan, and arrive in Turkey on Friday. Burial was likely to take place Saturday.

Alberto Fujimori, Peru's populist ex-president, dies at 86

Leader credited with tackling economic chaos and insurgency later served prison on rights abuses charges.

BY CHRIS KRAUL

Alberto Fujimori, the once popular Peruvian president credited with rescuing his country from economic chaos and leftist insurgency but who was later disgraced and sentenced to prison on charges of human rights abuses, has died.

His daughter Keiko announced his death Wednesday in a post on the social media platform X.

Fujimori, who had been pardoned in December, died Wednesday in the capital, Lima, his daughter announced. He was 86.

The first man of Japanese heritage to become leader of a Latin American nation, Fujimori was a university administrator who came from nowhere to win the presidency in 1990. Re-elected in 1995 and 2000, he resigned in November 2000 after fleeing ignominiously to Japan after videos emerged showing Vladimiro Montesinos — Fujimori's trusted intelligence czar — bribing other politicians.

An attempted comeback went awry when he was arrested in Chile in 2005 after arriving there from Japan. Chile extradited him to Peru, where he was tried and convicted twice, in 2007 on illegal search charges and again in 2009 on corruption and human rights charges in connection with two mass murders. He was sentenced

to 25 years in prison in the latter trial.

When Fujimori took office in 1990, Peru was Latin America's basket case. Hyperinflation ran at more than 2,000%, the Maoist insurgency called Sendero Luminoso, or Shining Path, controlled half the country, Peru had suspended payments on its foreign debt and the country produced more coca, the base material of cocaine, than any other country.

With tough and unrelenting measures, Fujimori faced down the rebels, greatly reduced coca cultivation and instituted economic reforms that started Peru on the growth path that made it one of Latin America's fastest-growing economies at the time. His storming of the Japanese Embassy in 1997 to free 72 hostages held by terrorists burnished his tough-guy image.

But, in the end, Fujimori was a victim of his own ego and his conviction that he was "Peru's indispensable man," said Shane Hunt, a Boston University economics professor emeritus and Peru expert. An unabashed authoritarian, Fujimori dissolved Congress and suspended the constitution in 1992 to assume powers he said he needed to save the country from ruin.

"He emasculated any public agency that might put a brake on his power," Hunt said. "He corrupted the promotions process in the armed forces to put his favorites in key commands. He kept judges on interim appointments to remove them if they gave unfavorable rulings. He attempted to amass all power in his own



ROBERTO CANDIA Associated Press

IN 1990, Alberto Fujimori became the first man of Japanese heritage to lead a Latin American nation.

hands."

Fujimori was broadly accused of sanctioning human rights violations and putting his complete trust in Montesinos, a shadowy character later jailed on embezzlement, bribery and arms smuggling charges. The human rights charges that sent Fujimori to prison were connected to a de facto death squad that prosecutors claimed he had authorized.

His daughter Keiko, one of his four children, served as part-time first lady in her father's administration and ran unsuccessfully for president in 2011. After her defeat, she led a campaign for the release of her father, saying he should not be permitted to die in prison. His son Kenji is a former congressman who was expelled from office in a bribery scandal.

Fujimori was born July 28, 1938, in Lima, the son of Japanese immigrants who arrived in Peru four years earlier and ran a tire repair shop.

He was an unlikely politi-

cian. Holder of a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Wisconsin, he was an agronomist and president of the National Agrarian University with no electoral experience when he decided to oppose center-right novelist Mario Vargas Llosa in the 1990 election.

Fujimori capitalized on voters' disgust for politicians and leveraged Japanese Peruvians' image of efficiency and honesty. Raised Catholic, he drew support from evangelical Christians and lower-middle-class voters for his blunt talk and optimistic approach, playing off Vargas Llosa's identification with the country's wealthy white elite and the writer's unsettling promise of a "shock" austerity program to rescue the country's dismal economy.

Against all odds, Fujimori won with a 60% majority and soon adopted many of the shock economic measures that he had disparaged Vargas Llosa for advocating. He deregulated in-

dustries and eliminated subsidies of gasoline and other goods and services in hopes of turning the tide on inflation.

As daunting as hyperinflation was when he took office, so was the breakdown in security and the growing strength of the Shining Path guerrilla group, which embraced Maoism. He countered the rebels with a massive public works program, establishing the presence of the state in remote towns the government had largely ignored, building post offices, roads, clinics and new schools at a furious rate.

He armed peasants to defend themselves and dealt a blow to the rebels' morale in 1992 when he captured the Shining Path's leader, Abimael Guzman.

He easily won reelection in 1995 against former U.N. Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar.

In 1997, Fujimori directed a commando attack on the Japanese Embassy where guerrillas had held 72 hostages captive for four months. Fourteen rebels, two soldiers and one hostage were killed in the operation, but the bloody rescue might well have marked the high point of his popularity.

Fujimori, who won a third term in 2000, sent in his resignation by fax that November during a trip to Japan.

After his arrest in Chile, he was extradited to Peru in 2007. He was sentenced in 2009 to 25 years in prison and released last year.

Kraul is a former Times correspondent. Former Times staff writer Steve Marble and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

THE NATION

GOP targets voting practice that rarely happens

Election experts say noncitizens casting ballots is already illegal, but that hasn't stopped Republicans.

BY ANDREA CASTILLO

WASHINGTON — Heading into what is expected to be another tight presidential race, Republicans are laying the groundwork for an updated version of the false “voter fraud” claims made four years ago after then-President Trump lost the election.

This time their target is so-called noncitizen voting, a practice dismissed by experts on both sides of the aisle as rare and inconsequential. But it's one Republicans hope will resonate with voters frustrated by illegal immigration.

By law, only U.S. citizens are eligible to vote for president and other top federal offices.

But claiming — without evidence — that the practice could undermine U.S. elections, GOP officials in states including Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma have initiated reviews of voter rolls, issued executive orders and placed constitutional amendments on ballots that aim to curb the potential for noncitizen voting.

This week House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) tried to tie a bill to extend government spending and avert a federal shutdown to a controversial GOP proposal — the SAVE Act — that would require states to obtain proof of U.S. citizenship when people register to vote.

Johnson pulled the idea Wednesday due to lack of support from even his own members. But the issue isn't likely to go away.

Last month, the Supreme Court's conservative majority ruled that Arizona may require proof of citizenship when registering new voters for future elections. It was an emergency order unlikely to affect this year's election, but it broke new ground by affirming that states may require proof of citizenship when they register all new voters through their state system.

Trump nodded to the issue at Tuesday night's presidential debate, suggesting the Biden administration has brought in migrants to drum up votes for the Democratic Party.

In California, Republicans don't have enough power to shape state policy. But California House Republicans are joining with the majority to draw attention to the issue at the federal level.

In a House Judiciary sub-



UNDER a law enacted in 1996, noncitizens who vote in federal elections face fines and imprisonment.

committee hearing Tuesday, Rep. Tom McClintock (R-Elk Grove), noted that Vice President Kamala Harris leads Trump by 1.1%, according to the most recent Real Clear Polling average. With such a tight race, he said he worries that illegal votes could decide the presidential election.

“And even if this was not happening, the mere perception of it is enough to destroy public confidence that the vote will accurately reflect the will of the American people,” he said.

“In California, you can't prosecute somebody for voting illegally unless you can prove they actually knew it was illegal,” McClintock continued. “All a defendant would need to say is ‘Hey, they handed me a registration form, they sent me a ballot. How was I to know?’ And that's a valid point. How many people are in legal jeopardy and don't even know it?”

Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Bon-sall) took to X to share his critique that “Democrats preach voter integrity and then oppose things, like the SAVE Act, that would help accomplish it.”

Congress has until Sept. 30 to approve a stopgap funding bill and avoid a government shutdown.

On Wednesday, Johnson said he pulled the spending bill — with the SAVE Act attached — from a scheduled vote to “work through the weekend” to build consensus for it. Several Republican lawmakers have said they oppose the measure.

Democrats slammed the move, saying the spending bill should not include partisan policies and that the SAVE Act would only complicate voter registration.

“I actually did voter protection work during the 2012 race in Tampa, Fla., and what we saw there were senior citizens who were no longer getting driver's licenses, or they'd expired,” said Rep. Nanette Diaz Baragán (D-San Pedro), chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. “So guess what? They couldn't vote. When you have restrictions

like this, it does disenfranchise certain people. What they're trying to get at here is really more about the political season and creating doubt about who's voting.”

Under a 1996 law, noncitizens who vote in elections for president or members of Congress face fines, imprisonment and possible deportation. Federal law also requires states to regularly remove anyone who is ineligible from voter rolls.

Republicans in some states have pointed to voter registration reviews that turned up potential noncitizens.

In Texas, for example, Gov. Greg Abbott said more

than 6,500 potential noncitizens were removed from the state's voter rolls of nearly 18 million since 2021. That includes 1,930 people with “a voter history” who were referred for investigation by the attorney general's office.

But data indicate that voting by noncitizens is rare. A study of the 2016 election by the Brennan Center for Justice found that officials referred about 30 cases of suspected noncitizen voting for investigation or prosecution.

A review by the American Immigration Council of the right-wing Heritage Foundation's database turned up 68 cases of noncitizen voting since the 1980s.

David Becker, founder of the nonpartisan Center for Election Innovation and Research, said the SAVE Act, which only applies to voter registrations after it goes into effect, would have no impact on November's election.

“Registration deadlines start kicking Oct. 6, so virtually no voters who are registered for 2024 would be affected by the SAVE Act,” he said. “Why are you raising claims about noncitizens being on the lists where House Republicans have controlled Congress since January 2023, when Donald Trump was the president of

the United States for four years and could have done something about this?”

The answer, he said, is because the issue is manufactured.

“This isn't about fixing a perceived problem — even if those problems existed — because there's no time to do it,” he said. “It's about fueling perceived claims of an election being stolen in anticipation of what they may believe is going to be a defeat for their preferred candidate.”

In California, the racist myth of immigrant voter fraud goes back at least to 1988, when Republicans in a battle over a state legislative seat hired security guards to police Latino neighborhoods, holding up large placards that said “Non-citizens Can't Vote!”

In 1998, nearly 750 immigrants were removed from the Orange County voter rolls after being improperly registered to vote before they were sworn in as U.S. citizens. The incident triggered an investigation by a House committee and created for the first time in California a procedure to remove noncitizens from voter rolls.

Riverside County prosecutors found one undocumented immigrant voting for more than a decade in 2019, but investigators said

there was no evidence to support widespread fraud.

In Santa Ana, a November ballot measure would grant noncitizens limited voting power in local elections by 2028, but has drawn intense opposition from those who think only citizens should be allowed to vote.

“It's not like these localities are going rogue,” said Mindy Romero, founder of the Center for Inclusive Democracy at USC, noting that it's not unconstitutional for noncitizens to vote in local elections. “That's a policy conversation that will continue as more communities might decide to take on this issue.”

Romero said the few cities that have opened up certain local elections to noncitizen voters still struggle with turnout because, like many other groups, they too need to be mobilized.

She said the concern about voter fraud is fueled by misinformation, fear and demonization of immigrants. Saying immigrants are coming to the U.S. with the intention to influence politics also makes people distrustful of the entire political structure, she said. “It's just another thing to be fearful of: immigrants trying to take my vote away from me,” she said.

Judge overturns North Dakota abortion ban

Procedure would be legal under his ruling, but Republican-led state has not had a provider since 2022.

BY JACK DURA AND JOHN HANNA

BISMARCK, N.D. — A state judge struck down North Dakota's ban on abortion Thursday, saying that the state constitution creates a fundamental right to access abortion before a fetus is viable.

In his ruling, state District Judge Bruce Romanick also said that the law violates the state constitution because it is too vague.

Under the judge's order, abortion would be legal in North Dakota, but the state has no clinics performing them, and the Republican-dominated Legislature would be expected to appeal the ruling.

The state's only abortion provider had been the Red River Women's Clinic in Fargo, but it moved a few miles to Moorhead, Minn., in 2022, after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe vs. Wade and allowed states to ban abortion.

Director Tammi Kromenaker said there are no plans to reopen a clinic in North Dakota but Thursday's decision “gives us hope.”

“We feel like the court heard our concerns and the physicians in North Dakota's concerns about a law that we felt went too far,” she said.

The offices of Gov. Doug Burgum and state Atty. Gen. Drew Wrigley, both Republicans, did not immediately respond to the ruling, though Wrigley's office said he would issue a statement Thursday.

Romanick was ruling on the state's request to dismiss a 2022 lawsuit filed by the Red River clinic. After the clinic's move, the state argued that a trial wouldn't make a difference. The judge had canceled a trial set for



BRAD NYGAARD Bismarck Tribune

JUDGE Bruce Romanick concluded that vagueness in the state's law leaves doctors open to prosecution.

August.

But Romanick cited how the North Dakota Constitution guarantees “inalienable rights,” including “life and liberty.”

“The abortions statutes at issue in this case infringe on a woman's fundamental right to procreative autonomy, and are not narrowly tailored to promote women's health or to protect unborn human life,” Romanick wrote in his 24-page order. “The law as currently drafted takes away a woman's liberty and her right to pursue and obtain safety and happiness.”

Meetra Mehdizadeh, staff attorney at the Center for Reproductive Rights, which supports abortion rights and challenges state bans, said the ruling “means it is now much safer to be pregnant in North Dakota.” But she said clinics can take years to open.

“The destructive impacts of abortion bans are felt long after they are struck down,” she said.

North Dakota elects its Supreme Court justices and district court judges, but those contests are nonpartisan. Romanick was first elected a judge in 2000 and has been reelected every six

years since, most recently in 2018. Before serving as a judge, he was an assistant state's attorney in Burlingame County, home to the state capital of Bismarck.

The judge acknowledged in his ruling that in the past, the North Dakota courts had relied on federal court precedents on abortion, but said those state precedents had been “upended” by the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark 2022 abortion decision.

Romanick said he'd been left with “relatively no idea” how the North Dakota Supreme Court would address the issue, and so his ruling was his “best effort” to “apply the law as written to the issue presented” while protecting the fundamental rights of the state's residents.

“Pregnant women in North Dakota have a fundamental right to choose abortion before viability exists under the enumerated and unenumerated interests provided by the North Dakota Constitution,” the judge wrote.

In many respects, Romanick's order mirrors one from the Kansas Supreme Court in 2019, declaring access to abortion a funda-

mental right under similar provisions in that state's constitution, though the Kansas court did not limit its ruling to before a fetus is viable. Voters in Kansas affirmed that position in an August 2022 statewide vote.

Romanick concluded that the law is too vague because it does not set clear enough standards for determining whether exceptions apply, leaving doctors open to being prosecuted because others disagree with their judgments.

In 2023, North Dakota's Republican-controlled Legislature revised the state's abortion laws, making abortion legal in pregnancies caused by rape or incest, but only in the first six weeks of pregnancy. Under the revised law, abortion was allowed later in pregnancy only in specific medical emergencies.

Soon after that, the clinic, joined by several doctors in obstetrics, gynecology and maternal-fetal medicine, filed an amended complaint. The plaintiffs alleged the abortion ban violates the state constitution because it is unconstitutionally vague about its exceptions for doctors, and that its health exception is too narrow.

Romanick acknowledged that when North Dakota became a state in 1889, its founders probably would not have recognized abortion access as a right under the state constitution, but added, “women were not treated as full and equal citizens.”

The judge said that in examining history and tradition, he hopes that people would learn that “there was a time when we got it wrong and when women did not have a voice.”

“This does not need to continue for all time, and the sentiments of the past, alone, need not rule the present for all time,” he wrote.

Dura and Hanna write for the Associated Press. Hanna reported from Topeka, Kan. AP writer Jim Salter in O'Fallon, Mo., contributed to this report.

FALL-WINTER 2024 COLLECTION



Bubble Sofa, designed by Sacha Lalik

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PARIS

Trump claims he won debate, declines rematch

Republican nominee criticizes Harris after top polls roundly show her beating him by roughly 20 points.

BY JAMES RAINEY

Two days after his widely panned performance in a debate against Vice President Kamala Harris, former President Trump on Thursday declared that he would not

participate in another debate with the Democratic presidential nominee.

Trump used his Truth Social platform to declare that he won the first debate and to hurl insults at Harris and President Biden, while also suggesting that it was his opponent who had avoided scheduling a second debate.

“Two nights ago, Donald Trump and I had our first debate,” Harris responded on the social media platform X. “We owe it to the voters to have another debate.”

Trump used a sports analogy in his announcement. “When a prizefighter loses a fight, the first words out of his mouth are, ‘I WANT A REMATCH,’” Trump said on Truth Social. He contended that polls “clearly show” he won the televised Tuesday night encounter with Harris.

Trump did not specify which polls he was referring to, and the claim strained credibility, since the best-known national polls all showed the opposite — that a wide majority of viewers

said Harris won the 105-minute debate on ABC News.

Polls taken by CNN, YouGov and a consortium including SoCal Strategies showed a majority favoring Harris' performance by a roughly 20-point margin in each.

Trump's campaign released its own internal polling data Thursday afternoon, contending that after the debate the Republican had gained a few percentage points in the swing states likely to determine the outcome of the election.

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Battle for Nevada voters' economic hearts

[Nevada, from A1] thinking [because] this country is going downhill."

Views like Rodriguez's go a long way in explaining why Nevada, which Democrats have won in the last four presidential races, remains up for grabs in the 2024 election. Harris holds a narrow 0.6% advantage in recent polls, according to an aggregate by Real Clear Politics. That's a marked improvement for the Democrats, given that Trump led in the high single digits in polls before President Biden left the race in July.

The Silver State is one of seven states thought to hold the key to victory in 2024. And it usually picks the candidate the rest of America favors. In the 28 presidential elections since 1912, the winner of Nevada has won the presidency all but two times.

Trump will count heavily on Nevadans' discomfort with the economy to help him grind out a victory in a state that most experts expect to be closely contested through the Nov. 5 election.

The former president has a rally scheduled Friday night in Las Vegas. He has an ad on Las Vegas television stations that features another former Republican president, Ronald Reagan.

"I think when you make that decision, it might be well if you would ask yourself, are you better off than you were four years ago," Reagan says in video of his closing 1980 debate against President Carter. "Is it easier for you to go and buy things in the stores than it was four years ago?"

That question might serve Trump well this year, as national and state polls continue to show that the economy remains the top issue for voters. The party in power usually pays the price for such sentiments.

Nevada's elasticity in presidential politics owes partly to the large share of voters — 34% — who don't identify with either major party.

"That large bloc of independent voters makes the state unpredictable," said Thom Reilly, a former public official in Nevada's Clark County and now an academic. "They were supporting Trump by 10% in January, and now the polling is all over the map, and they might be in Harris' camp. I think those voters make it more volatile."

Frustrating to Democratic stalwarts is the fact that not all voters have been moved by improving economic indicators, with the buying power of "real wages" growing nationally over the last year.

The state's unemployment rate of 5.5% in August put it higher than the national average of 3.7%, but the Las Vegas metropolitan region's 4% jobless rate nearly matched the U.S. as a whole.

Annual inflation peaked in 2022 at about 9%, and had declined to 2.6% for the



JULIA NIKHINSON Associated Press

KAMALA HARRIS has shaken up the race for Nevada, which voted Democratic in recent presidential elections. The state is up for grabs as many voters say they're struggling to get by despite recent economic gains.



JOHN LOCHER Associated Press

DONALD TRUMP led in Nevada polls during this Las Vegas rally in June, before President Biden quit. A TV ad for him in Vegas shows Ronald Reagan telling voters in 1980 to ask if they're better off than four years ago.

American West (including Nevada) by this summer, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. Prices even dropped in some categories, including dairy, fruits and vegetables.

And although gasoline in Nevada is costing an average of \$3.98 per gallon this month, above the national average of \$3.27, that represents a substantial drop from the \$4.62 one year ago, according to AAA.

The boom-bust cycles that Nevadans know too well — with particularly deep holes during the Great Recession and early in the COVID-19 pandemic — have been particularly painful in the housing market.

Apartment rents jumped dramatically in 2022, with the typical rental rate of \$1,805 in the Vegas metro area marking a nearly one-third increase from just two

years prior. The median rent today stands at \$2,070, so increases have slowed but still leave some people struggling to pay their rent.

::

An intake worker at a senior center in the working-class northwest section of Las Vegas said that her clients have been forced to rely on family members, while others have been evicted and forced to move into their cars. Or onto the streets.

"The rent has gone up since Biden's been in office. It went up when Trump was in office," she said, the worker, who asked to go only by her first name, Karen. "We don't know where the blame lies."

She said she hadn't known much about Harris but liked what she saw at the Democratic National Convention.

"She has a lot of new ideas, things that would help," including proposals for an expanded child-care tax credit, Karen said.

In interviews with 17 people in Henderson and Las Vegas last week, Trump backers tended to stress his background as a businessman and to focus on the bottom line. Prices for most things were lower when the Republican was in the White House, so it's time to bring him back, they said.

Some also seconded Trump's frequent complaint that immigrants crossing the border illegally from Mexico are harming the U.S. (Border crossings have decreased in recent months.)

Most Harris supporters said they trusted her to make the kind of changes she promised; such as imposing sanctions on retailers and others determined

to be engaged in price gouging. Those who like the Democrat said they were sick of the demonizing of immigrants.

Rodriguez, a mother of three, said her parents came from Mexico legally. She complained about those who come without authorization and then get government benefits.

"You have people coming into this country, and basically everything is handed to them," said Rodriguez, who grew up in Orange County. "To me, I don't think that's fair."

One aisle over at the Henderson Dollar Tree, Monica Silva expressed a different view. She said Trump "is always talking about the Mexican issue."

She added: "He is always criticizing them and blaming them. And that is not true. That is not the problem

in our country."

Silva, 77, who immigrated more than half a century ago from Chile, sees Harris as someone who will rein in price gouging.

"I think she's just powerful, and she has the experience as the lawyer, you know?" Silva said. "I think she can get things done, more than most people can."

Shara Rule, who works for an electric scooter business, doesn't feel Harris or the Biden White House are to blame for higher prices. And she sees prices coming down.

"Trump is just greedy. He is helping himself," said Rule, 61. "She's smart and got a good head on her shoulders. I think she's going to lead us in the right direction, economically."

Susan Kendall, a director of medical records for a nursing facility, felt that Trump got more done, while the Democrats mostly talked.

She fondly recalled the "economic impact payment" of \$1,200 in COVID-19 relief she got when Trump was still in office.

"That made a big difference for people, and Biden didn't even try any of that," said Kendall, 56. (Actually, Biden signed the American Rescue Plan shortly after taking office, sending payments of \$1,400 per person to middle-class families.)

"I don't know exactly what Trump did. But whatever he did, it worked," Kendall said.

Mandy, a 35-year-old stay-at-home mom, said prices have gotten so high that she no longer grabs all of the snacks and extras she would like in the supermarket.

"I can't afford that right now," she said.

"I just think that the country needs to be run like a business," said Mandy, a two-time Trump voter who declined to give her last name. "Not so much like Biden is running it now. He's not like a businessman. He's a politician."

Shopping for yarn to crochet hats for friends and family, Kathleen Clark said she sees both political camps as misguided in thinking any president can change economic conditions in the short term.

The 66-year-old Clark, a day trader on the stock market, said long-term micro and macro-economic forces control the economy. She also doesn't believe campaign promises, like Trump and Harris promising to eliminate taxes on tips.

Clark, one of those ubiquitous Nevada independents, said her vote will be guided by one factor that is beyond argument.

"I'm voting for Harris. Why? Strictly because she's a woman," she said. "I don't believe in Biden. I don't believe in Trump. I don't believe in any of the rest of it. But it's about time [for a woman.] There is nothing else."

Known for slides, Rancho Palos Verdes is home to Trump club

[Golf course, from A1] in the beautiful and beleaguered city, which is under a state of emergency issued by Gov. Gavin Newsom this month because of extreme land movement triggered by back-to-back rainy winters.

In recent weeks, hundreds of homes have had their electricity and gas cut off. Neighborhoods near the golf course are under a city-issued evacuation warning, with the fissured land moving about 9 to 12 inches a week and houses cracking and sliding off their foundations.

Last month, a small fire in the Portuguese Bend neighborhood, which was ignited by a power line that fell because of shifting land, underscored the danger.

It is unclear whether Trump will acknowledge the ongoing catastrophe during his visit. City officials say the club is about a half-mile from the active slide area. In an email, his campaign said it was "monitoring" conditions in the city.

Rancho Palos Verdes Mayor John Cruikshank said he is trying hard to get on Trump's radar.

"My hope is that when he is in town, I can get on his schedule and give him a debrief," Cruikshank said. "It would be great to get the attention, no matter who it is."

As of Thursday after-

noon, Cruikshank still had nothing lined up.

Trump is in California this week for a pair of high-dollar fundraisers, including a Thursday night event where tickets were going for \$250,000 apiece. He is scheduled to attend a Friday afternoon fundraiser in the Bay Area — hosted, notably, by relatives of Newsom's wife. The cost: as much as \$500,000 per couple.

This week, there was a dissonance between Trump's club — where the smoothly paved parking lot was filled with Porsches, Teslas and BMWs — and the disaster unfolding just outside it.

On Palos Verdes Drive South, the only way to access the club by car, traffic was brought to a crawl by orange cones, lane closures and flashing utility trucks.

The two-lane road has long been a bumpy, oft-patched asphalt roller coaster. It is paralleled by an above-ground sewage line rigged with flexible pipes designed to move along with the land — but ground movement has left the road marred by cracks, ripples and steep dips.

Just off Palos Verdes Drive South, the sign for the Estates at Trump National Golf Club Los Angeles invites potential future residents to build luxury houses.

Two newly built cul-de-sacs lead to empty, graded lots, where Trump's company is actively pursuing plans to build up to 23 homes, said Amy Seeraty, a senior planner for the city.

The Trump Organization, she said, has been working through an extensive list of requirements — like working with the city's geologist to make sure irrigation does not exacerbate land movement — before it can sell and develop the lots. "They're checking them off," she said of the requirements. "I don't have an exact date, but they're getting closer."

In 2002, Trump paid \$27 million for the deeply discounted property, then called Ocean Trails Golf Club. The original developers had gone bankrupt after the 18th hole fell into the Pacific during a 1999 landslide while the course was still under construction.

In 2015, Trump announced he would forgo his plans to build homes on 16 additional lots, instead granting an 11.5-acre conservation easement to the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy.

In a news conference at the time, Trump told officials with the conservancy: "It is my great honor, and enjoy it for infinity, I guess."

Trump still owns the land, and golfers still use it as a driving range. But the move was praised by community leaders happy to preserve open space on the coastline.

Trump said the donated land was worth "much more than \$25 million." Although he framed the donation as charity, it was in his interest for the land to be valued as high as possible because it would have affected the size of the tax break he could claim.

In 2022, the New York state attorney general sued Trump, three of his children and his company, alleging they fraudulently inflated the value of the Rancho Palos Verdes club and conservation easement — along with other Trump properties across the nation.

The aim, the attorney general alleged, was to receive favorable loans and other economic benefits. In February, a judge ordered Trump to pay more than \$450 million in penalties in the civil fraud case. Trump has appealed.

In Rancho Palos Verdes, Trump has repeatedly squabbled with locals planting a row of ficus trees without authorization to block the sight of homes he thought were ugly, and battling the California Coastal Commission and the city for

a decade over a 70-foot flag pole he erected without a permit.

During the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee this summer, his son Eric Trump told hundreds of California delegates and their guests that the club had "the most beautiful views anywhere, the most perfect weather anywhere."

"Every time I go out there I go, 'Man, if it wasn't for the taxes, if it wasn't for the taxes and the lunacy, I would probably live out here.'"

On Wednesday, the day after Trump's debate with Vice President Kamala Harris, the formal dining room at the club's Cafe Pacific was mostly empty.

There, dolphins and seashells are painted on the ceiling, the \$25 Trump Burger comes with Thousand Island dressing on a Trump-branded brioche bun, and picture windows offer resplendent views of the Pacific Ocean.

Inside the clubhouse store, visitors posed for photos beside \$50 red MAGA hats. Framed on a clubhouse foyer was a racy 1990 Playboy magazine cover featuring Trump and Playmate Brandi Brandt, who has his tuxedo jacket wrapped around her otherwise nude body.

He also displays the 2007 resolution — signed by then-

Los Angeles City Council President Eric Garcetti — congratulating him for receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Meanwhile, Mayor Cruikshank has turned to a man even wealthier than Trump to ask for help for his troubled city: tech billionaire Elon Musk.

"While our community is resilient, this situation presents a unique opportunity to turn a setback into a showcase of sustainable living," Cruikshank wrote in a letter to the Tesla founder on Aug. 8 and posted on X, which Musk also owns. Could Tesla, he asked, partner with the city to power the afflicted homes with solar panels and batteries?

Musk's company responded within three days and quickly set up a meeting, Cruikshank said. City officials are now evaluating proposals for solar-powered batteries and other off-the-grid options to power homes, he said.

As for Palos Verdes Drive South, along with the signs warning of landslides and encouraging people to build their dream homes, there's yet another sign:

"Emergency sewer repair. Expect delays."

Times researcher Scott Wilson contributed to this report.

Increased fire risks in Southland this fall

[Fires, from A1]

California is an especially wet rainy season followed by an extremely hot and dry period — exactly what's happening now after back-to-back rainy winters, an arid summer and a record-shattering heat wave, Swain said.

What's more, there is some indication that fire-fanning Santa Ana winds could arrive as soon as mid-September — well before California's traditional rainy season. The winds will meet with not only dried vegetation, but also vegetation that hasn't burned in years, making it all the more primed for combustion, Swain said.

"We're going to have this condition of unusually abundant grass and brush — plus the legacy of this recent record heat — until it rains, and the problem is most of Santa Ana wind season is likely to occur in Southern California before it does so," Swain said. "That's the big concern. That's why this fall, there does appear to be an increased likelihood of above-average fire conditions throughout much of Southern California."

The region has seen bad fire seasons before, including in 2003 and 2007 — fire-filled years that wrought considerable death and destruction.

The region also saw devastation in 2017, when the Thomas fire tore through 282,000 acres in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties; in 2018, when the Woolsey fire destroyed more than 1,600 structures in Malibu and surrounding areas; and 2020, when the Bobcat fire nearly burned down the Mt. Wilson Observatory in the Angeles National Forest.

All three of those fires started later in the year — between September and December — which is in keeping with traditional patterns in the region, said Robert Foxworthy, a spokesperson with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

"Normally what's the most damaging and destructive time of the year for Southern California is a little further into the season — that's when we usually see those Santa Anas starting," he said. "We're a little ahead of schedule with seeing a lot of that activity. What the fires we're seeing now are showing us is that those fuels are primed and ready to burn, and receptive and showing very large growth."

But there remains cause for optimism.



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

A CHOPPER carrying retardant battles the Airport fire Tuesday. Experts say crews are becoming more adept at fighting Southland fires.

Crews are becoming ever-more adept at fighting fires, and have begun rolling out new helicopters that enable them to battle blazes overnight and new technology that can catch ignitions sooner, Foxworthy said.

"As we advance, everything advances, including weather forecasting, fire prediction, all those things," he said.

The same is true for California residents — who are much more likely to evacuate ahead of a fire now than they were in decades past — and for crews, who are becoming more accustomed to battling the kinds of blazes that formerly may have come around only once or twice in a career, Foxworthy said.

"Californians are very savvy to fire because they're very experienced with fire, so the more that the public and firefighters experience those conditions, honestly, the better that they are at tackling those conditions as we move forward," he said.

Planned power shutoffs from utility companies have also helped reduce the overall number of fires started by their equipment in recent years, according to data

from the California Public Utilities Commission.

But the Airport fire was unintentionally started by public works crews using heavy equipment in the area while trying to reduce the fire risk, underscoring how flammable the vegetation is.

Southern California conflagrations can pose a particular risk because of their proximity to dense population centers. In such instances, the potential for wind-driven fires is even more worrisome "because they can occur with the least amount of warning and move into populated areas even faster than the fires we're seeing right now," Swain said.

He said Southern California is so primed to burn that the odds of seeing an unusually high number of large and destructive fires this fall are greater than usual — even accounting for the "trend toward more extreme autumn fire conditions in California in a warming climate."

The warnings dovetail with the latest seasonal outlook issued by the National Interagency Fire Center, which forecast increased wildfire activity in Southern California in September due

to the combination of weather and vegetation.

There is also a tilt in the odds toward above-normal fire potential across most of Southern California in October and November — and even into December along the South Coast due to "an increasingly likely dry fall and a delayed start to the wet season," the outlook says.

Piper Brandt, a public affairs specialist with the center, said fuel loads — the amount of grasses and other flammable vegetation — are in some places as high as 198% of normal, even in deserts and dry valleys that often don't have sufficient vegetation for wildfires.

"This, combined with above-normal temperatures and below-average precipitation expected to continue into October, means that California can expect to see increased fire potential," Brandt said.

Climate models also suggest that La Niña will develop and bring a warmer and drier pattern to Central and Southern California during the fall and winter months, according to the fire center's outlook. The agency has issued a fuel and fire behavior

advisory for Southern California that warns of "a highly flammable fire environment where rapid fire growth has been observed and is expected to continue for initial attack fires."

Indeed, the Line, Airport and Bridge fires have already exhibited dangerous behavior, including rapid growth that prompted mandatory evacuation orders across the region. The fires are spewing dense canopies of smoke, and the Line and Airport fires have caused injuries, officials said.

The National Interagency Fire Center has also set the current national preparedness level to 5 — the highest possible — indicating that federal resources are fully committed and that the potential for significant wildland fires to emerge is expected to remain high across multiple geographic areas.

"There's increased fire activity, there's more fires, and resources are spread thin just based on the needs of all those fires," Brandt said, noting that there are active blazes across the West, including in Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Nevada.

There are indications that some Western wildfire activity will die down with changing weather soon, she said, "but for now we're doing our best to prioritize resources and send them where they're needed most."

But as with any weather- or climate-related prediction, there are no guarantees.

It's too soon to say how strong or how frequent Santa Ana winds will be this year, or whether Southern California will see a lucky burst of fire-season-ending rain, as it did with Tropical Storm Hilary last year.

What is clearer, however, is that vegetation is abundant and dry, and that fall in Southern California is likely to see continued dryness and warmth, according to the latest seasonal outlooks from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"We could get lucky with the pieces that are not so predictable," Swain said. "But right now the predictable pieces align in a way that strongly points toward a very active, above-average, potentially problematic fire season this autumn."

Francine leaves flooding and power outages in Louisiana

Storm brings high water to New Orleans, other coastal areas. Some 450,000 lost electricity at peak.

BY JACK BROOK AND SARA CLINE

MORGAN CITY, La. — Francine weakened Thursday after striking Louisiana as a Category 2 hurricane that knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses, sent storm surge rushing into coastal communities and raised flooding fears in New Orleans and beyond.

As the system moved inland, emergency crews began clearing roads, utility workers started restoring electricity and neighbors helped pick up the pieces. There were no immediate reports of deaths or injuries, Gov. Jeff Landry said.

"The human spirit is defined by its resiliency, and resiliency is what defines Louisiana," Landry said at a news conference. "Certainly there are times and situations that try us, but it is also when we in this state are at our very best."

At the peak of the storm, 450,000 people in Louisiana were without power, the state Public Service Commission reported. Many of the outages were linked to falling debris, not structural damage. At one point, about 500 people were in emergency shelters, state officials said.

"The amount of money invested in resilience has really made a difference, from the power outages to



JACK BROOK Associated Press

NATIONAL GUARDSMEN work to clear fallen trees from a road Thursday in Morgan City, La. The former hurricane weakened as it moved inland.

the number of homes saved," said Deanne Criswell, the administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, who attended the governor's news conference.

The storm drenched the northern Gulf Coast. Up to 6 inches of rain was possible in parts of Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee and Georgia, with up to 10 inches possible in areas of Alabama and Florida. Flash flooding threatened cities as far away as Jackson, Miss.; Birmingham, Ala.; Memphis, Tenn.; and Atlanta.

Francine slammed the Louisiana coast Wednesday evening with 100-mph winds in coastal Terrebonne Par-

ish, battering a fragile coastal region that has not fully recovered from a series of devastating hurricanes in 2020 and 2021. The system then moved at a fast clip toward New Orleans, lashing the city with torrential rain. The city awoke to widespread power outages and debris-covered streets. Home generators roared outside some houses.

Rushing water nearly enveloped a pickup truck in a New Orleans underpass, trapping the driver inside. A 39-year-old emergency room nurse who lived nearby grabbed a hammer, waded into the waist-high water, smashed the window and pulled the driver out. It was

all captured on live television by a WDSU news crew.

"It's just second nature, I guess. Being a nurse, you just go in and get it done, right?" Miles Crawford told the Associated Press in a telephone interview Thursday. "I just had to get him out of there."

He said the water was nearly up to the driver's head and rising. Crawford told the man to move to the back of the truck's cab, which gave him more room, and since the front end of the pickup was angled down, into deeper water.

"I wasn't really questioning whether I should do it — it was just who is going to get it done," he recalled, adding

that he never caught the man's name.

News footage from coastal communities showed waves from lakes, rivers and gulf waters thrashing seawalls. Water poured into city streets in blinding downpours. Oak and cypress trees leaned in the high winds, and some utility poles swayed.

By early Thursday, water was receding from flooded streets in Jefferson Parish, but canals were still high, parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng said in a social media post. Pumps that operated through the night could not keep up with the storm, causing drainage problems, she said.

She asked residents to give the parish time to clear the streets, noting that the hazards after a storm can sometimes be more dangerous than the storm itself.

As the sun rose in Morgan City, about 30 miles from where Francine made landfall, residents gathered tree branches that were strewn across their yards, where water rose almost to their doors. Pamela Miller, 54, stepped outside to survey the damage after a large tree fell on the roof of her home.

"It was a really loud noise, a jolt, and that's when we realized the tree had come down," she said. "Luckily it did not go through the roof."

Jeffrey Beadle, 67, emerged from the hotel room where he sheltered for the night.

Beadle left his home Wednesday in a low-lying area about 10 miles outside town as the rain picked up. He lived there for 30 years without any major damage, but he was worried this time would be different because

his home was right in the hurricane's path. He loaded his car in preparation to check on his home.

"There's nobody over on that end I can call," he said, explaining that he did not know what he would find. "Hope everything's good."

Sheriff's deputies helped evacuate dozens of people, including many small children, who were trapped by rising water Wednesday evening in Thibodaux. Lafourche Parish Sheriff Craig Webre said deputies also rescued residents in the community of Kraemer.

The National Hurricane Center downgraded Francine from a tropical storm to a tropical depression with maximum sustained winds of 35 mph as it churned north-northeast over Mississippi.

The system was expected to continue weakening and become a post-tropical cyclone later Thursday before slowing down and moving over central and northern Mississippi through early Friday.

The sixth named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, Francine drew fuel from exceedingly warm Gulf of Mexico waters.

In addition to torrential rains, there was a lingering threat of spinoff tornadoes from the storm Thursday in Florida and Alabama.

Brook and Cline write for the Associated Press and reported from Morgan City and Baton Rouge, La., respectively. AP writers Kevin McGill in New Orleans, Curt Anderson in St. Petersburg, Fla., and Russ Bynum in Savannah, Ga., contributed to this report.

BUSINESS

Warner, Charter agree to new distribution deal

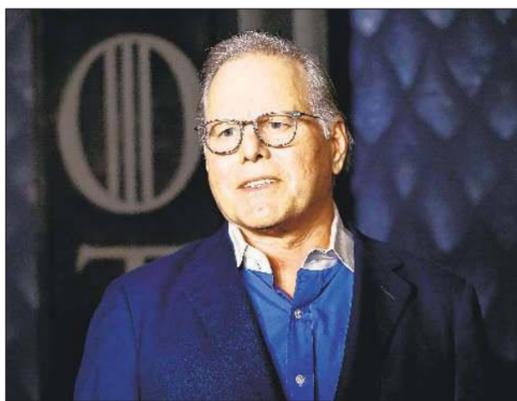
CEO of media giant touts the contract as a win for its channels. Cable firm's customers will get free Max.

By MEG JAMES

Warner Bros. Discovery and Charter Communications agreed to a new distribution deal Thursday, shoring up a key revenue source for the beleaguered David Zaslav-run media company.

The new pact comes a year before the previous contract was set to expire. The Warner Bros. Discovery chief executive was motivated to prove his company and its TNT cable channel would do fine despite losing NBA games.

Warner Bros. Discovery's stock plummeted in May when investors recognized the NBA broadcast deal had become too rich for the company, which has prioritized paying down debt.



EVAN AGOSTINI Invision / Associated Press

"IT'S a great deal for Charter and it's a great deal for us," Warner Bros. Discovery CEO David Zaslav said.

Warner Bros. Discovery sued the NBA over the loss of its TV rights. The company also took a \$9-billion write-down on the value of its cable channels, including TNT.

Still, the Charter deal demonstrates that Warner Bros. Discovery has maintained market muscle. The agreement also gives Charter an incentive to promote

Warner Bros. Discovery's streaming service, Max, to its Spectrum customers.

Warner Bros. Discovery's stock rose more than 10% to \$7.66 a share Thursday.

The two companies were eager to reach an early agreement and avoid further turmoil in the pay-TV industry. Walt Disney Co. channels, including ESPN and ABC, have been

dropped from satellite TV provider DirecTV and U-Verse amid contentious negotiations over a new contract.

That blackout reached its 12th day Thursday. DirecTV has been seeking flexibility to offer its customers smaller channel bundles without having to pay steep penalties to Disney for not reaching the company's "minimum penetration" thresholds.

People familiar with the deal terms said Charter agreed to pay higher rates for Warner Bros. Discovery's channels. Its portfolio includes CNN, HGTV, TBS, Food Network, Animal Planet and TLC.

However, Charter won't pay higher rates for TNT, which already is a higher-priced channel due to its sports rights, including NBA and professional hockey. (TNT has rights to the NBA for one more season.)

Zaslav declared victory while speaking at a Goldman Sachs investor conference. "We held [the] price on

TNT," he said. "There were no channels that were dropped."

He added, "Overall, it's a great deal for Charter and it's a great deal for us."

The Stamford, Conn., cable TV and broadband provider came away with a few wins too.

Since last year, Charter has been focused on making sure that it doesn't enter into contracts that force customers to pay twice for the same content. A tussle over that issue led to a nearly 12-day blackout of Walt Disney Co. channels for Spectrum customers in September 2023.

Since then, Charter has structured distribution deals with Disney, AMC Networks and now Warner Bros. Discovery that allow Spectrum subscribers to watch those companies' programming on related streaming apps without paying extra.

Charter has offered its video subscribers the HBO linear channels — along with the option of adding the streaming app Max — for

about \$15 a month, with most of that money going to Warner Bros. Discovery.

With the new deal in place, such Spectrum customers could eliminate HBO charges by switching to the ad-supported version of Max, which includes the HBO shows. The Discovery+ streaming service also will be offered to Spectrum subscribers at no additional charge.

Charter said the new arrangement with Warner Bros. Discovery allows Spectrum to offer \$60 a month of streaming service products to its customers for no extra charge.

"The inclusion of the ad-supported version of Max and Discovery+ in our most popular packages at no additional cost ensures we provide the most value to our customers," Charter Chief Executive Chris Winfrey said in a statement.

Charter will also help market the streaming services in exchange for a portion of the revenue generated by customer sign-ups.

Interest rates drag down hotel sales in L.A. County and across state

The region has seen a 79% plunge in the value of transactions and a 6% drop in the number of deals.

By CAROLINE PETROW-COHEN

Hotel sales are flagging in Los Angeles County and throughout the state as high interest rates and smaller-sized deals have been a drag on the market, according to a recent industry report.

During the first six months of the year, the number of hotels that traded hands in L.A. County dropped 6% compared with the same period last year, while the amount of money involved in the sales plummeted 79%, the report by Atlas Hospitality Group concluded. A lack of big-ticket transactions accounted for the steep drop-off, said Alan Reay, president of Atlas Hospitality Group.

"What we saw in the first six months of 2024 versus

2023 is a lot smaller transactions," Reay said in an interview. "There were no trophy or bigger full-service hotels that closed in the first six months."

California is home to about 10,000 hotels and used to see roughly 400 to 450 hotel sales per year. In the first six months of 2024, there have been 122 sales.

"It's substantially below what we typically see in a normal year for California," Reay said.

Across the state, hotel sales have been declining over the last two years, Reay said. Statewide, the total volume of transactions is down 48.5% from the same period last year and the number of individual sales is down 1.6%, the report found.

"It's primarily due to how rapidly the interest rates have increased," Reay said of the decline in sales. "We went from being able to get loans for hotels in the low 4% range to well over 8% if you could get them," he said.

Donald Wise, co-founder and chairman of Newport Beach-based Turnbull Capital Group, said increased in-



PATRICK HRUBY Los Angeles Times

terest rates have affected a variety of owners in the California hotel market.

"Interest rates have been very painful across the board, whether you're trying to refinance or you have a loan coming due or if you're

currently building a hotel," he said.

There's also a disconnect between what sellers and buyers are valuing hotel properties at, the Atlas report said.

The priciest hotels in Cal-

ifornia can sell for more than \$700 million — the Fairmont Century Plaza Hotel in L.A. sold in 2023 with a transaction value of \$720 million. But in 2024 in L.A. County, the most expensive sale is the 168-room Residence Inn

in Manhattan Beach, which sold for \$68 million.

Outside Los Angeles County, trends vary but remain bleak. Individual hotel sales in Orange County are down 50% in 2024 compared with the same period last year, but dollar volume is up 4.7%. In San Francisco County, individual sales were flat and the dollar volume decreased 51%.

Another factor discourages the sale of large, valuable hotels in Los Angeles specifically, Reay said. Passed by a ballot initiative in 2022 and enacted in April 2023, the "mansion tax" places an additional 4% tax on real estate transactions of more than \$5 million and adds a 5.5% tax on transactions above \$10 million.

The mansion tax may make large property owners more hesitant to initiate a sale, Wise said, but it's now a reality in Los Angeles.

"The bottom line is, it's not going to go away," Wise said. "It's not like you can wait a year and it's not there. It just means that you're going to have to weigh your options more heavily."

Historic private spacewalk: 'From here, it sure looks like a perfect world'

Hundreds of miles above Earth, a tech billionaire tests a new SpaceX suit on a chartered flight.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — A tech billionaire performed the first private spacewalk hundreds of miles above Earth on Thursday, a high-risk endeavor reserved for professional astronauts — until now.

Tech entrepreneur Jared Isaacman teamed up with SpaceX to test the company's new spacesuits on his chartered flight. The daring feat also saw SpaceX engineer Sarah Gillis going out once Isaacman was safely back inside.

This spacewalk was simple and quick — the hatch

was open barely half an hour — compared with the drawn-out affairs conducted by NASA. Astronauts at the International Space Station often need to move across the sprawling complex for repairs, always traveling in pairs and lugging gear. Station spacewalks can last seven to eight hours, but this one clocked in at less than two hours.

Isaacman emerged first, joining an elite group of spacewalkers who until now had included only professional astronauts from a dozen countries.

"Back at home, we all have a lot of work to do. But from here, it sure looks like a perfect world," Isaacman said as the capsule soared above the South Pacific. Cameras on board caught his silhouette, from the waist up at the hatch, with the blue Earth beneath.

The commercial spacewalk was the main focus of



Associated Press

ENTREPRENEUR Jared Isaacman, photographed at the hatch of the craft, was one of four on the flight.

the five-day flight financed by Isaacman and Elon Musk's company, and the culmination of years of de-

velopment geared toward settling on Mars and other planets.

All four on board donned

the new suits to protect themselves from the harsh vacuum of space. They launched Tuesday from Florida, rocketing farther from Earth than anyone since NASA's moonwalkers. The orbit was reduced by half — to 460 miles — for the spacewalk.

This first spacewalking test involved more stretching than walking. Isaacman kept a hand or foot attached to the capsule the whole time as he flexed his arms and legs to see how the spacesuit held up. The hatch sported a walker-like structure for extra support.

After roughly 10 minutes outside, Isaacman was replaced by Gillis to go through the same motions. Gillis bobbed up and down in weightlessness, no higher than her knees out of the capsule, as she twisted her arms and sent reports back to Mission Control.

Each had 12-foot tethers but did not unfurl them or dangle at the end, unlike what happens at the space station, where astronauts routinely float out at a much lower orbit.

More and more wealthy passengers are plunking down huge sums for rides aboard private rockets to experience a few minutes of weightlessness. Others have spent tens of millions to stay in space for days or even weeks.

Space experts and risk analysts say it's inevitable that some will seek the thrill of spacewalking, deemed one of the most dangerous parts of spaceflight after launch and reentry but also the most soul-stirring.

This operation was planned down to the minute with little room for error.

Trying out new spacesuits from a spacecraft new to spacewalking added to the risk. So did the fact that the entire capsule was exposed to the vacuum of space.

There were a few glitches. Isaacman had to manually pull the hatch open instead of pushing a button on board. Before heading out, Gillis reported seeing bulges in the hatch seal.

Scott "Kidd" Poteet, a former Air Force Thunderbird pilot, and SpaceX engineer Anna Menon stayed strapped to their seats to monitor from inside. All four underwent intensive training before the trip.

It went by "in the blink of an eye," said SpaceX commentator Kate Tice.

Congratulations streamed in after the spacewalk concluded at one hour and 46 minutes — or a full swing and then some around Earth.

"Today's success represents a giant leap forward for the commercial space industry," NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said via X.

Isaacman, 41, chief executive and founder of the Shift4 credit card-processing company, has declined to disclose how much he invested in the flight.

It was the first of three flights in a program he's dubbed Polaris; this one was called Polaris Dawn. For SpaceX's inaugural private flight in 2021, he took up contest winners and a cancer survivor.

Until Thursday, only 263 people had conducted a spacewalk, representing 12 countries. The Soviet Union's Alexei Leonov kicked it off in 1965, followed a few months later by NASA's Ed White.

Trump-Harris debate drew 67 million viewers

ABC had the largest audience of the night, numbering 19 million, followed by NBC and Fox News.

By STEPHEN BATTAGLIO

The first and apparently only debate between Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic presidential nominee, and her Republican rival, former President

Trump, was watched by 67.1 million viewers Tuesday, a 30% jump over Trump's June 27 face-off with President Biden.

The debate, held at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, was moderated by ABC News anchors David Muir and Linsey Davis and presented on 17 television networks measured by Nielsen.

The event was marked by feisty exchanges between the nominees, which became increasingly heated after Harris said Trump sup-

porters were leaving his rallies due to boredom. The evening also differed from the Trump-Biden matchup in that the moderators fact-checked a number of false statements, nearly all of them from Trump, which frustrated his supporters.

The debate was unprecedented as Harris replaced Biden on the Democratic ticket after the president's poor performance in his debate with Trump.

ABC had the largest audience of the night, with 19 million viewers, followed

by NBC (10 million), Fox News (9.1 million), MSNBC (6.4 million), the Fox broadcast network (4.8 million) and CNN (4.4 million).

The vice presidential debate between Republican Sen. JD Vance of Ohio and Democratic Sen. Tim Walz of Minnesota is scheduled Oct. 1. The event will be moderated by CBS News anchors Norah O'Donnell and Margaret Brennan.

The Harris campaign has expressed its willingness to have a second debate, but Trump declined Thursday.

Tenants anxiously await becoming owners

[Property, from A1] empty, boarded-up houses and lax oversight have led to blight and grievances against the public agency, exacerbated by Los Angeles' housing affordability crisis.

Caltrans' tenants, including Payan and other longtime low- and middle-income residents, are gaining the opportunity to buy their homes at reduced prices, the only way they say they could afford to become homeowners. The public agency is selling vacant properties to affordable housing providers who are repairing them for new occupants.

But the continued slow pace of the sales has meant mounting frustration for Caltrans tenants, city officials and housing advocates looking to reawaken their neighborhoods. Renters fear they may remain in escrow for as long as two years before Caltrans completes repairs to their homes. Some vacant properties have yet to hit the market. Notably, the historic Pasadena childhood home of chef Julia Child has been empty for 40 years, and there's no timeline for it to be sold.

Jason Brown, who is buying the home in El Sereno he's rented with his partner since 2007, said he's tempered his enthusiasm. He's seen little progress since entering escrow in January.

"I'm going to believe it when I see it," said Brown, 53.

The 4½-mile gap between the northern end of the 710 Freeway in Alhambra and the 210 Freeway in Pasadena emerged in the 1970s. Other sections of the freeway were built, but South Pasadena activists stalled the full route's completion. Caltrans already had acquired 460 properties along the corridor it intended to demolish, and the homes sat in limbo until 2018, when state lawmakers killed the freeway.

While the freeway's fate wended through years of court and political hearings, the transportation agency rented some houses while allowing others to remain vacant and fall into disrepair. By 2015, the agency had listed more than three dozen as uninhabitable. Today, blocks filled with otherwise vibrant small cottages in El Sereno are marred by multiple houses with plywood and "No Trespassing" signs in their front windows.

It's long been anticipated that if the freeway never got finished, Caltrans would sell the houses, with existing tenants getting first dibs. For those with low or moderate incomes, Caltrans would be responsible for repairs prior to the sale. Even better for the renters, purchase prices would scale with their incomes so that mortgage payments wouldn't be a burden.

Payan is a retired DMV worker. Brown is a store-



EL SERENO resident Patricia Payan with her partner, Richard Enriquez, in the backyard of their home that she soon hopes is hers when escrow is closed. She has been offered a price that is far below market rate.

keeper for the city of Los Angeles. Other tenants planning to buy their homes include a retired clerk with the county fire department and a retired owner of a small upholstery store.

They said they've been quoted \$70,000, \$143,000, under \$400,000 and \$38,000, respectively, to buy their homes. Eric Menjivar, a Caltrans spokesperson, declined to confirm the numbers, saying in a response to written questions from The Times that prices aren't final until the state transportation commission approves them.

The prices are far below what residents could find on the market. Median home values in El Sereno, per Zillow, are \$792,000; the average in L.A. County is nearly \$100,000 higher. Payan said the discounted sales program gives her an opportunity to become a homeowner that she wouldn't otherwise have.

"To be able to afford it?" she said. "Oh my God, yes."

The deals discourage new owners from flipping the properties due to restrictions on resales and financial penalties that are especially stiff in the first five years. Tenants say that's no problem.

Felix Hernandez, the retired upholstery store owner, and his wife have rented on Sheffield Avenue for 48 years. Their 45-year-old son has schizophrenia and lives with them now.

"My idea was that when we passed on," said Hernandez, 78, "my son would have a place to stay."

When Hernandez and the other renters will finalize

their purchases is an open question. Tenants said major repairs have yet to begin on their properties.

Brown said the electricity in his house likely needs rewiring. The foundation, he said, is so off-kilter that he plays fetch with his dog by placing a tennis ball on the ground and watching it roll down the slope.

Menjivar said that Caltrans anticipates closing sales to tenants beginning in early 2025. He noted that if a home is deemed too expensive to fix, Caltrans is allowed to offer tenants another one, and the agency is setting aside vacant properties for that purpose.

Many in and around the area don't believe that the freeway's scar on the community will fade until the empty homes are filled. About 125 along the corridor, including those in multifamily properties, are vacant, according to Caltrans.

Affordable housing providers and agencies are buying the homes as is, and they or future homeowners will be responsible for repairs. As a sweetener, these homes cost only what Caltrans originally paid to buy them in the 1960s. Caltrans has awarded three dozen vacant properties in El Sereno to the city housing authority, San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity and other nonprofits. Typical price tags for the homes range from \$14,553 to \$28,564.

Habitat workers have begun renovations on those that have closed.

Bryan Wong, the nonprofit's chief executive, said more than 1,000 people have submitted applications to

buy the homes. To qualify, families of four have to earn no more than \$10,000 annually, with a sliding income scale for households of different sizes. All must have solid credit and \$7,500 set aside for a down payment. Habitat plans to reserve half for those already living or working in El Sereno.

Wong, who is 59, grew up in South Pasadena and has been hearing about the 710 Freeway all his life. He's elated to be helping make the community whole.

"This is not a pipe dream anymore or a what-if story," Wong said. "This is done. This is happening."

In Pasadena and South Pasadena, Caltrans is offering vacant homes to the cities, which will then spin them off to third parties. South Pasadena officials had expected to gain control of some homes more than a year ago, but the sales have yet to be finalized.

"We appreciate your patience," the real estate team hired by the city said on its website. The city expects to close on the purchases this month.

The city of Pasadena has an army of building inspectors and appraisers ready to examine 17 empty homes offered by Caltrans once they're allowed inside, said Bill Huang, director of the city housing department.

Huang said the city will turn over the homes to Habitat or other nonprofits and may sell some of the larger, historic properties at market rates to finance affordable housing initiatives in the city.

"Having dozens of vacant homes isn't good for any

neighborhood," Huang said. "We're not solving the saga of all the Caltrans-owned homes, but we will for 17 of them."

Menjivar said that despite the complaints about the pace, the agency is pleased with its progress in the past year. About two dozen tenants are in escrow to buy their homes. All the vacant properties Caltrans has awarded in El Sereno have closed or are expected to do so within the next several weeks, he said. The agency anticipates its sales to Pasadena will be final early next year.

For now, Caltrans is still holding back some of the empty houses, including its most famous property.

Built around 1910, the stately, 2½-story, wood, brick and stucco Craftsman home at 1199 S. Pasadena Ave. is where Child was raised. Biographies of the chef include tales of Child sleeping outdoors on the second-floor porch and romping through the lawn with her younger siblings and their Airedale dog, Eric the Red.

On a recent Friday, longtime local preservationists Claire Bogaard and Mic Hansen admired the original, oversized wooden front door and redwood beams on the porch.

"Look at that," Hansen said. "You're not going to find these kinds of wood anymore."

Bogaard and Hansen have been behind efforts to secure official historic designations for the Child house and others in the neighborhood as examples of landmark early 20th century

Southern California architecture. They lamented the signs of disregard in a home that has remained vacant for so long.

Besides the plywood on the windows, someone had managed to get a large trampoline over the chain-link fence in the backyard and left it there.

"Some of these houses were magnificent," Hansen said. "It's sad to see them deteriorate and go unused."

Menjivar said the Child house and other remaining vacant properties in Pasadena will be offered to the city "in the near future."

Resentment over the empty houses boiled over in spring 2020. Homeless and housing-insecure residents seized a dozen of the vacant homes in El Sereno in a coordinated protest against the lack of state action to house the most needy. The activism succeeded, as Caltrans leased two dozen of its properties to the city housing authority for the protesters, who called themselves Reclaimers, and other homeless residents to pay rent and live in the homes legally for two years.

For the Reclaimers, those two years expired in late 2022, but seven households remain. The housing authority has pending eviction lawsuits against them.

Tina Booth, the L.A. housing authority's director of asset management, said that the agency continues to offer assistance and buyouts to the Reclaimers but that the terms of the agreement require them to leave.

"We are trying to encourage folks to continue to work with us so that they can land in supportive housing or other affordable units and so that they're just not simply displaced," Booth said.

More broadly, she said, her agency is expanding its commitment to low-income housing in El Sereno through the vacant properties it's buying from Caltrans. The housing authority plans to refurbish single-family homes and add accessory dwelling units so that more people can live as tenants there.

The public agency's stance frustrates Sandra Saucedo, a Reclaimer facing eviction. She said that the housing authority shouldn't be forcing out people who need housing — Saucedo sometimes sells her plasma for income — and that instead housing officials and Caltrans should allow them to remain by selling the properties to a community land trust.

Two Reclaimers who recently accepted the housing authority's \$15,000 buyout offer have returned to homelessness. Saucedo, who was living in her car before she occupied a home, fears the same fate.

"It's very scary," said Saucedo, 42. "From one day to the next, you could lose everything."

MARKET ROUNDUP

Data yield no surprises; stocks rise

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks pulled closer to their records on Thursday after a couple of reports on the economy came in close to expectations.

The Standard & Poor's 500 rose 0.7% and climbed back within 1.3% of its record set in July after a shaky summer. It remains on track for a fourth winning week in the last five.

The Dow Jones industrial average added 0.6%, and the Nasdaq composite rose 1%.

Nvidia was the strongest force lifting the S&P 500; it rose 1.9% to bring its gain for the week to nearly 16%.

It and other major tech stocks helped offset a 12.4% slump for Moderna after the vaccine maker said it expects to break even in 2028, pushing out its earlier prediction of 2026. The company, whose sales have cratered in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, is also reducing its 2025-28 research and development investment by 20%.

Treasury yields held relatively steady after reports on layoffs and inflation included few surprises. The data did little to change the overriding belief that the U.S. economy is slowing, along with inflation, and that the Federal Reserve will

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	41,096.77	+235.06	+0.58	+9.04
S&P 500	5,595.76	+41.63	+0.75	+17.32
Nasdaq composite	17,569.68	+174.15	+1.00	+17.04
S&P 400	2,983.36	+23.52	+0.79	+7.26
Russell 2000	2,129.43	+25.58	+1.22	+5.05
EuroStoxx 50	4,814.08	+50.50	+1.06	+6.47
Nikkei (Japan)	36,833.27	+1,213.50	+3.41	+10.07
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	17,240.39	+131.68	+0.77	+1.13

Associated Press

deliver a cut to interest rates next week in hopes of protecting the job market and preventing a recession.

One report said the number of U.S. workers applying for unemployment benefits last week ticked up, though it remains low relative to history. Another said prices charged at the wholesale level were 1.7% higher in August than a year before. That's a slowdown from July's inflation rate, but an underlying measure that economists see as a better predictor of future trends also ticked up more than expected.

The inflation data were similar to Wednesday's report on prices at the U.S. consumer level. That kept traders betting the Fed will deliver a traditional-size cut of a quarter of a percentage point next week, instead of the larger half-point cut that

some had earlier been expecting.

Lower interest rates help goose the economy and investment prices, but they can also fuel inflation.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury edged up to 3.68% from 3.66% late Wednesday. It's steadying a bit after sliding since April on expectations for coming rate cuts. That easing helped pull the average rate on a 30-year mortgage in the U.S. this week to its lowest level in 19 months, according to Freddie Mac.

Any rate cuts by the Fed would be the first in more than four years. Across the Atlantic, moves to protect the economy have already begun. The European Central Bank cut interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point on Thursday, the second time it's done so to prop

up economic growth.

Despite all the focus on how much the Fed will cut rates in September, the more important factor is how much in total the Fed will ultimately cut, and how much the market has already priced in, say strategists at UBS. Many traders are forecasting total cuts of more than 2 percentage points over the next year, according to data from CME Group.

"Any divergence from this path — whether from resurgent inflation or recessionary risks — will likely be received poorly by the market," according to the strategists led by Jonathan Golub.

On Wall Street, Kroger climbed 7.2% after reporting stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. The grocer's revenue fell short of expectations, but it raised the floor of its forecast range for a key revenue measure for the full year.

Alaska Air Group rose 1.2% after raising its forecast for profit in the summer quarter. The airline said an important underlying measure of revenue will probably be higher than a year earlier. Fuel costs are also likely to be lower than expected.

American Airlines gained 1% after its flight attendants voted to approve a labor contract and avert a possible strike.

Los Angeles Times
BUSINESS TO BUSINESS
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OPINION

EDITORIALS

ELECTION 2024

Adam Schiff is the clear choice for U.S. Senate

He is an experienced and practical lawmaker who will represent California well in Washington.

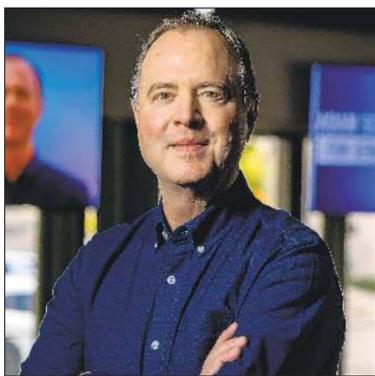
IN THE RACE for the U.S. Senate seat that was held by the late Sen. Dianne Feinstein, the decision isn't a difficult one. California voters can send an experienced, practical, thoughtful and responsible lawmaker to represent them in Washington. Or they can send a former baseball player.

We think the choice is clear. Rep. Adam B. Schiff (D-Burbank) should be California's next senator. He has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and purpose during some of the difficult moments of the last several years, when it seemed as if democracy and the stability of the U.S. government teetered on the edge.

Schiff is probably the most prepared Senate candidate that Californians have considered in decades. He has had a nearly three-decade political career representing Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley communities, first serving in the state Legislature and then in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2001. Before running for office, he was an assistant U.S. attorney and he has retained the methodical, controlled demeanor of a prosecutor.

In Southern California, Schiff earned a reputation as a serious but amiable legislator who digs into the details to come up with practical solutions and a reliable advocate for local needs. He gained national attention — and vilification from conservatives — for pushing back against President Trump's attempts to undermine the nation's institutions and the rule of law for his own advantage.

Schiff led the first impeachment investigation of Trump for allegedly withholding military aid from Ukraine while pressuring its leaders to announce an investigation into Joe Biden.



IRFAN KHAN Los Angeles Times

REP. ADAM SCHIFF (D-Burbank)

And he was the lead prosecutor in the Senate impeachment trial, deftly building the case that Trump abused the power of his office for his own benefit and then sought to stonewall Congress' investigation. The GOP-controlled Senate acquitted the president, but not before Schiff made an emotional closing speech that even won grudging praise from some Republicans.

Schiff was picked again in 2021 to investigate another assault on democratic norms. He served on the Jan. 6 committee, which painstakingly detailed the sprawling conspiracy by Trump and his allies to overturn the 2020 election, culminating in rioters storming the U.S. Capitol to stop Congress from formally declaring Biden's victory.

His role, as well as his effectiveness, in detailing Trump's abuses may have made Schiff a lightning rod but he doesn't have the record of a bomb thrower. He's a collegial legislator practiced in the art of compromise and who has the respect of lawmakers on both sides of the aisle. He does his homework, which is important in a state as large as California, with diverse regions and different needs.

Republican Steve Garvey had a great career playing for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the San Diego Padres in the 1970s and '80s. But he has no experience serving in political office, no history of advocating in the public interest, nor a successful track record as a businessperson. His website offers platitudes rather than positions, and he was evasive and unprepared during the primary debates. In short, he is not a serious candidate.

In the March primary, we picked Schiff over two other highly accomplished House members, Reps. Barbara Lee (D-Oakland) and Katie Porter (D-Irvine). For the runoff, the decision is easy. Schiff is an excellent choice to represent California's interests in the U.S. Senate.

ELECTION 2024

Send Laura Friedman to Congress

She has been an innovative, courageous and persistent state legislator, motivated by principles more than politics.



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

LAURA FRIEDMAN (D-Glendale)

CALIFORNIA Assemblymember Laura Friedman is nearly certain to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives on Nov. 5. The Glendale Democrat is running to replace Rep. Adam B. Schiff in the deeply blue 30th Congressional District race against a little-known Republican physician.

Nevertheless, there's still reason for voters to be excited about supporting her to become the next representative of the district that stretches from West Hollywood to the western edge of Pasadena, including Glendale, Burbank and several L.A. city neighborhoods.

Friedman has been an innovative, courageous and effective state legislator in Sacramento, particularly on the environment, housing and transportation. Her record in Sacramento shows that she is more interested in building support for smart legislation than trolling rivals or participating in the polarizing, asinine culture wars. Those are terrific qualities for a member of Congress to have in these politically fraught times.

She's not afraid to tackle controversial topics. Friedman has authored important legislation on a wide variety of important issues facing Californians. Just to name a few of the more groundbreaking — and often controversial — bills she pushed until they passed: restrictions on the use of potable water on purely ornamental landscaping; a pilot program to legalize speed cameras; a ban on the use of "forever chemicals" in baby products and another on toxic chemicals in cosmetics, and lifting parking mandates in new housing developments near transit.

Her final year as a legislator was no exception. Even as she was running for Congress, she pushed important bills such as one that's on the governor's desk at the mo-

ment to protect the state's wetlands.

Friedman is one of the too-rare lawmakers motivated by principles rather than politics. She is undaunted by opposition to legislation she believes in, and will spend years building support needed to get bills passed, including from Republican colleagues — not an easy feat in today's hyper-partisan political landscape.

Her background in Hollywood will also be a boon for this district, which includes many content creators. Before she pivoted to politics by getting elected to the Glendale City Council, Friedman was a film and television executive. In Washington, she wants to work on issues to protect the long-term health of the industry such as copyright law and artificial intelligence, and on issues that threaten democracy such as the use of deepfake audio and video in election advertising and misinformation.

She's also a strong champion of women (including for those running for president). She endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris in the 2020 presidential primary) and was a leader in the #MeToo movement in Sacramento. We expect she will become a strong voice in the fight in Congress to protect reproductive rights.

Her experience and track record far eclipse what the other candidate, pulmonologist Alex Balekian, has to offer. He's campaigning on the slogan "Progressive isn't working." His misleading personal attacks (one mailer falsely accused Friedman of making bike lanes mandatory "in every California city") and focus on culture war issues such as so-called parental rights seem straight out of the MAGA playbook.

Friedman is not just the likely successor to Schiff, who is most likely going to be elected to the U.S. Senate on Nov. 5, but a worthy one.

LETTERS



MIKE STEWART Associated Press

FLOWERS are seen at a makeshift memorial at Apalachee High School in Winder, Ga., on Saturday, days after a shooting in which four people died.

Fire drills then, gun drills today

Re "Teen charged in school shooting shouldn't be treated as an adult," editorial, Sept. 10

IAM ONE OF the lucky ones. My son wasn't at the North Valley Jewish Community Center in 1999 when a white supremacist went on a shooting rampage there. And he wasn't at Parkland High School in Florida or at Columbine or at Sandy Hook. And he also managed to escape the bombing at the Boston Marathon in 2013, although he was just a block away.

In fact, throughout his entire educational journey, he never participated in an active shooter drill. Having grown up in the Midwest, I took part in tornado and fire drills. Here in Southern California, my son had his share of fire and earthquake drills.

As I watched the coverage of the recent school shooting in Georgia, I realized that active shooter drills are as common today as fire drills. This has to stop.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, gun violence is the biggest cause of death of children and teens in the U.S. How many more empty prayers will we hear? How many more shooters will we call "monsters"? How many more deaths or injuries will it take before Congress takes aggressive action to control guns?

TERRI JONISCH, Northridge

It's a disconcerting fact that there are more guns in the United States than there are people. The zillionth mass shooting, which took place in Georgia, is the latest grim reminder of the consequences of that.

We read about the 2nd Amendment to the Consti-

tution and feckless arguments from strict constructionists and other so-called constitutional scholars. That document was written in 1787, as I recall from freshman U.S. history. Then, there were no AR-15s or other assault weapons.

Therefore, I believe

people in this country can own guns, but only if those weapons conform to the technology that existed when the Constitution was written. So, let people go out in public with their muskets and blunderbusses, which can take a minute to load.

Put that in your 2nd

Amendment pipe and smoke it.

LUIS TORRES
Pasadena

::

I believe that charging the parent of the alleged Georgia school shooter will have zero impact as a deterrent.

But that isn't the point. The point is stupidity. From time to time, the stupidity of some people is so profound — such as when one provides a weapon to his disturbed child — that, criminal or not, the act must be punished and we derive some small measure of satisfaction.

JACK SPIEGELMAN
Los Angeles

It's not just fixing pavement

Re "How L.A. can fix our scary sidewalks for the Olympics," Opinion, Sept. 10

It seems simple — a homeowner gets a loan, hires a contractor and fixes the sidewalk. However, looking deeper, it is really quite complicated.

The picture with UCLA professor Donald Shoup's op-ed article shows the need to remove a large tree; that could require a street closure. Utilities must be protected and street damage repaired. There is extensive excavation needed to remove the roots. I can just imagine the permitting nightmare.

There are reasons why the city of Los Angeles is so far behind on repairing sidewalks, and these and other issues are among them. Dumping this issue on the homeowner is not a good solution.

We need to find out what tools the city needs to fix its

sidewalks and why the tools it has seem to be underutilized.

PATRICK RANDALL
Newbury Park

::

Maybe I'm just too much of a simpleton when it comes to taking care of the issues set before me, a business owner of more than 50 years. My life has been spent making plans to solve problems, resolving those problems and then moving on. The city of Los Angeles is not capable of this thought process, apparently.

I'll give a case in point: A few months ago, crews were dispatched to my neighborhood for yet another copper cable theft repair. Part of the exercise was to "fortify" the existing underground pull boxes against vandalism.

I'm not sure how many hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent on not just fortifying the boxes (which meant marking their location in the new concrete), but the utter stupidity of installing hundreds of feet of new sidewalk and leaving the buckled, ski jump-like portions intact.

In his op-ed article, Shoup mentions a 2016 lawsuit that resulted in a \$1.4-billion judgment requiring L.A. to repair its sidewalks. He notes that since then, \$35 million has been paid out for sidewalk-related injuries.

The fact that California law makes private homeowners responsible for public works maintenance issues on public sidewalks adjacent to private property is hideous.

And don't get me started on switching street lights to solar, where possible. I've been stonewalled for years on that issue.

RICC BIEBER
Northridge

A dictator gives us a warning

Re "Trump threatens to jail foes if he regains the presidency," Sept. 9, and "Venezuelan opposition candidate flees for Spain," Sept. 9

Despite being seen as the legitimate winner of Venezuela's presidential race, Edmundo González was forced to flee to Spain because of arrest orders issued by President Nicolás Maduro's government.

The day before that happened, former President Trump posted an online threat to jail his political opponents if he wins the election. Trump promised to prosecute those who "cheated" in the election, including lawyers, political operatives and even donors.

Do you see a parallel between Maduro and Trump? Do you have concern about the state of democracy if Trump wins? Would you have the same concern if Vice President Kamala Harris were to be elected president?

Regardless of your political party, is there any more important issue to be decided on Nov. 5?

RICHARD RAFFALOW
Valley Glen

::

The disturbing story about an unhinged Trump threat doesn't appear until Page A5. I wonder what page it would have appeared if this had been about Harris.

VAUGHAN MEYER
Los Angeles

HOW TO WRITE TO US

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OP-ED

Think of Donald Trump as Robin Hood in reverse

His snake-oil economic plans would transfer trillions from the poor and middle class to the rich.

By Kimberly A. Clausing

IF TRUMP is elected president, he will have pulled off quite the con — Robin Hood in reverse. His economic policies call for transferring trillions in resources from the poor and middle class to the rich, only minimally dressed up in populism and grievance.

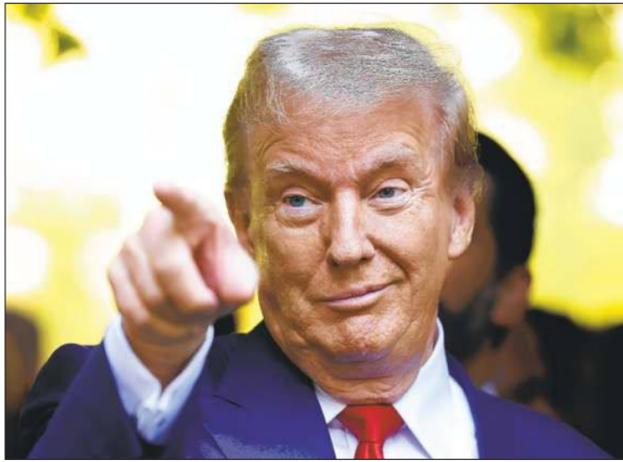
Trump consistently blames immigrants and foreigners for taking American jobs and hollowing out heartland factory towns. But his stance blaming “outsiders” for all that ails America, and at the same time proposing draconian trade and immigration policies, will harm more than help U.S. workers.

Trump’s 2024 tariff proposals — tariffs are taxes paid on imported goods — would take his first-term policies into disastrous Smoot-Hawley territory, and they would disproportionately burden low-income and middle-class Americans.

People in those groups must spend all or most of their income to get by, whereas richer Americans can afford to save a share of theirs. Tariffs raise prices of imports and the domestic goods that compete with them, and those that spend most or all of their income are immediately affected.

Economic research has left no doubt that U.S. tariffs burden Americans rather than foreigners. They also tend to depress trade and production; any job creation benefits are generally more than offset by harms.

For example, research indicates that Trump’s tariffs of 2018-19 cost households about \$800 per year, and studies found job losses due to foreign retaliation but no discernible effect on employment in the newly protected sectors. In the case of steel tariffs, exceedingly modest job creation was dwarfed by job loss many times higher in



YUKI IWAMURA Associated Press

THE FORMER president’s economic plans have been called a “national sales tax” by Kamala Harris. She’s right.

Why would Trump pursue harmful, risky economic policies? To create a distraction from the rest of his deeply unpopular economic agenda.

U.S. industries that use steel as an input.

Similarly, the draconian immigration policies that Trump imagines — his promised “largest deportation operation in the history of our country” — would be deeply harmful to the economic prosperity of the United States, not to mention immoral, tearing apart families and lives. Rather than businesses simply turning to “Americans” to fill in for the deportees, research shows that many of those jobs (and businesses) disappear — 88,000 for every 1 million deportees.

It’s unsurprising that economic luminaries conclude that Trump’s trade and immigration proposals would create enormous “stagflationary” headwinds, risking simultaneous increases in recessionary and inflationary pressures. Why would he pursue such harmful, risky policies?

Blaming “others” for economic

stresses is a smoke-and-mirrors distraction from the rest of his agenda, which is deeply unpopular with most Americans: cutting taxes for the well-off and corporations.

Although Trump claims to want broad tax relief, when you do the math related to extending his first-term tax breaks, alongside his tariff proposals, most Americans would be worse off.

Except those at the top. Beyond extending his first-term tax cuts, Trump has vowed to cut the corporate tax rate again, to 15%, disproportionately benefiting shareholders or capital owners. (Taxes on labor income, payroll taxes and tariffs fall more heavily on workers.)

Likewise, his speculative plan to exempt Social Security from taxation, while seemingly generous to all retirees, would mostly benefit well-off retirees while

deeply increasing fiscal pressures on the program, risking cuts to benefits in the years ahead.

What about Trump’s proposal to exempt tips from taxation, which the Harris campaign has mimicked? Although it could benefit poorer workers, without serious guardrails it could also open large new channels of tax avoidance. Both campaigns are probably more concerned with winning votes among service workers in the swing state of Nevada than with the principles of good tax policy.

A final danger with the Trump fiscal agenda is that it will blow deeper holes in budget deficits and debt, already problematically high. Trump’s tax agenda could easily cost \$5 trillion or \$6 trillion over the coming decade, and despite his wishful thinking about replacing income taxes with tariffs, the math, again, doesn’t add up. And Trump has never shown much interest in reining in spending; his administration added far more to the national debt than Biden’s has.

A potential Harris administration should not learn the wrong lessons from Trump. It’s true that President Biden left many of Trump’s China tariffs in place, even as they failed to achieve changes in Chinese trade practices. And the Biden-Harris administration levied new tariffs on \$18 billion in Chinese products. Still, these new tariffs target far less than 1% percent of the trade that the proposed Trump tariffs would tax, and they focus on protecting key strategic domestic industries. The Biden-Harris administration explicitly rejected the kind of broad tariffs that Trump suggests. Harris correctly calls them a “Trump sales tax.”

America’s “kitchen table” economic issues can’t be solved by blaming foreigners and immigrants. Scapegoats are an easy answer for complex problems that instead require strengthening U.S. fundamentals, thoughtful engagement with our trading partners and building a fairer tax system. Make no mistake, Trump’s proposals are snake oil, pure and simple.

KIMBERLY A. CLAUSING is the Eric M. Zolt Professor of Tax Law and Policy at the UCLA School of Law. She was deputy assistant secretary for tax analysis at the U.S. Treasury during 2021-22.

In L.A., I discovered what being Jewish meant to me

Given the diversity of Jewish experience, our identities are not static.

By Jessica Elisheva Emerson

THERE’S A POWERFUL Jewish value, *elu v’elu*, that means “these and those.”

As in, both these and those ideas have merit. Both these and those people contain a holy spark. Both this and that answer can be right.

When I moved from Tucson to L.A. in 1997, I left a greater metro area of a little over half a million people for a city with a little over half a million Jews. I quickly learned that despite being raised Jewish, I knew only a sliver about the diversity of Jewish experiences. I’d never heard of *elu v’elu*, but being in Los Angeles helped me discover it.

As a student at USC, I joined Jewish campus organizations. A rabbi there helped me realize that although I was far less learned than the ancient sages, my own ideas about the religion had validity. I began to define what being Jewish meant to me. *These and those*.

Working at a production company, I came to understand how Hollywood’s arts elevated Jewish ritual across the city. It was revelatory to see a Torah portion presented as a play, hear a sermon in the form of poetry. I got married. We watched old Yiddish movies with friends and read contemporary Jewish playwrights.

I met young Argentine Jewish parents at a garden co-op in Santa Monica and old Russian Jews at a community garden in Hollywood. The former were teaching their children liturgy in English, Hebrew and Spanish, and the latter had abandoned organized Judaism but hung out almost exclusively with other old Russian Jews. Absorbing their contrasting histories and lifestyles, asking question after question, helped me understand what was most meaningful to me. *Elu v’elu*. And still, we all grew Persian cucumbers and little yellow pear tomatoes.

I’d never met a rabbi who wanted to study Talmud with young adults — I’d never studied Talmud at all — until coming to Los Angeles. But in an un-air-conditioned room of a community center one hot night, I traced my fingers over layers of rabbinic interpretation and the ancient code of Jewish law, each insight built on the other. *Elu v’elu*, these commentaries, and those.

At Rabbi Sharon Brous’ IKAR synagogue, I learned about justice through a Jewish lens, and about activism. I began to think of Jewish texts as an ancient technology, one through which — whether by agreeing or vehemently disagreeing with the ideas — I could filter the pressing questions of modern life. *These and those*.

My years living in the Jewish enclave of Pico-Robertson were a cultural and sensory feast. On Friday nights, as we settled into our Shabbat meal with our young children, we could hear “Shalom Aleichem” sung to different tunes, and with different numbers of repetitions of the verses, blending with the voices at our table. Our Jewish neighbors crossed the spectrum from extremely observant to totally secular. *These and those*.

I no longer live in L.A. Before I left, my tattoo artist, a native Hebrew speaker, inked the Hebrew names of my children on my arms, along with a giant jacaranda.

Now, when I cover my eyes and welcome Shabbat each week, I am often thinking of the neighborhoods and people of Los Angeles, from Boyle Heights to Topanga Canyon, and especially along Pico Boulevard.

I remember the Persian, Afghan, Bukharian, Yemeni, Iraqi and Moroccan neighbors whose traditions made their way into my religious practice. I remember the joy of walking down Pico during the festival of Sukkot and the scent of cheesecake that accompanies Shavuot in the air. When I uncover my eyes, I take my pick of all those Shabbat songs and start to sing.

My melodies and the text aren’t static and, as I learned in L.A., neither is my Jewish identity. *These and those*.

JESSICA ELISHEVA EMERSON’S first novel, “Olive Days,” is about a Los Angeles woman’s search for Jewish identity.

MPOX (FORMERLY known as monkeypox) is back in the news. As of early September, the World Health Organization has reported more than 5,000 laboratory-confirmed cases this year. Given the well-documented shortcomings of mpox surveillance, these numbers underestimate the true magnitude of the disease burden.

The highest number of cases are in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the current outbreak has expanded to several other countries in Africa. The first case outside that continent appeared in Sweden, in a patient who returned from Africa; it’s only a matter of time before a case shows up in the United States, although the extent of a potential U.S. outbreak is uncertain.

To combat the spread of mpox, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization have declared a public health emergency. How the world, and the U.S., responds to this latest flare-up will test whether we are at all better prepared to confront global public health emergencies since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The current uptick, primarily driven by a new virus strain, clade I, is different from the 2022 mpox surge, which was successfully controlled by the U.S. and other countries. Unlike in 2022, more than half of the reported cases, and most deaths, have been in children younger than 5 years old. During the earlier outbreak, the virus primarily spread through sexual contact among men who have sex with men, whereas the evidence shows the current outbreak spreading through heterosexual and nonsexual contact. In the U.S., the 2022 outbreak was contained by health authorities working with groups including men who have sex with men to increase vaccine uptake and reduce transmission risk; this year’s requires a more extensive approach.

For the U.S. now, waiting to act until clade I cases are detected here will be too late. The best way to control an outbreak is to prevent it. There are a few steps that can help us prepare. Ensuring adequate vaccine supplies should be the highest priority. Danish vaccine manufacturer Bavarian Nordic is one of a few companies in the world with an approved mpox vaccine. Before the 2022 outbreak, it did not have a large inventory of mpox vaccine and doses were produced to order, delaying their availability in 2022 and stymieing



MOSES SAWASAWA Associated Press

A HEALTH WORKER attends to an mpox patient at a treatment center in Munigi, Democratic Republic of Congo, in August. Cases are spreading in the DRC and elsewhere in Africa.

Will we let mpox spread and repeat public health failures?

If wealthy countries fail to help contain the outbreaks now, the world probably will pay a high price for that neglect later

By Saad B. Omer

outbreak control in the initial days.

Since then, the company has maintained an inventory of mpox vaccine doses. More than 250,000 doses have been sent to the DRC, and the company indicated that it could produce another 2 million by the end of the year. However, the precise schedule of availability of these doses is uncertain, and the 2 million would cover just a fraction of the doses needed to vaccinate 10 million people in the coming months, according to estimates from the Africa CDC. Meanwhile, wealthy countries, including the U.S. and Canada, have donated or pledged modest amounts of vaccine and have further stockpiles that could provide some emergency donations. Adequate vaccine supplies to Africa to control the outbreak will be essential for preventing broader spread.

Another urgent need is to evaluate the efficacy of the mpox vaccine against the new strain. Previous evaluations have primarily focused on effectiveness against clade II. While it is reasonable to deploy the current vaccine, as it is the best tool available to protect against mpox, a more precise estimate of its effectiveness against clade I will help ensure that the optimal number of doses and the right vaccination schedule are used.

Modest investments in early stages of outbreaks can prevent much larger financial costs associated with widespread epidemics. Failure by high-income countries to ensure that the World Health Organization and Africa CDC have the financial resources to fight this now may result in a much more expensive outbreak in a few months. Fast-moving outbreaks also

have the tendency to increase the spread of misinformation. In the past, public health agencies ramped up their communication efforts only after rumors started taking hold. Evidence from behavioral science supports preemptively “inoculating” the public against misinformation, such as what we’ve seen regarding the COVID vaccine.

There is a window to mount an effective national and global response to control mpox and avoid past mistakes. If we don’t respond within that window, we may have *deja vu* from our imperfect COVID response, when delays in getting ahead of outbreaks caused so much unnecessary suffering.

SAAD B. OMER is an epidemiologist and vaccine expert.

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| Mariscos Jalisco | McConnell's Fine Ice Creams | Meteora* | Mirate | Paradise Dynasty & Le Shrimp Noodle Bar | Pasjoli* | Perilla LA | Pink Taco | Rita's Deluxe | Ronan |
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| OyBar | Pizzana | Poltergeist | Ponchos Tlayudas | Steep LA | Stella | Trophies Burger Club | Tsubaki | Wanderlust Creamery | XUNTOS |

SUNDAY Sept. 22



Sarah Hymanson & Sara Kramer



Yumna Jawad



Nancy Silverton

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Agnes Restaurant & Cheesery | All About the Cinnamon | Amphai Northern Thai Food Club | Apollonia's Pizzeria | Ayura Thai | Baar Baar | Baroo | Brique French Toastery | The Brothers Sushi | Camphor |
| Ceci's Gastronomía | Cha ReDefine | CUT Beverly Hills* | Damian* | Dino's Famous Chicken | DOMESTIC | El Ruso | Evil Cooks | Grá | Hamasaku |
| Janté Cheesecakes | LaSorted's | Level 8** | Lucky Bird | Lustig | Maison Matho | Mayura Indian Restaurant | Ocean Prime Beverly Hills | OyBar | Petit Trois |
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GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

VINTAGE VEHICLES and parts destroyed by the Airport fire sit at a property off Ortega Highway in Lake Elsinore on Tuesday.

Malibu jolt is latest of busy year

Thursday's magnitude 4.7 earthquake is the 14th seismic sequence in Southland in 2024.

By RONG-GONG LIN II, STEVE HENSON AND KAREN GARCIA

The magnitude 4.7 earthquake just north of Malibu on Thursday morning adds to what scientists say is an unusually active year for moderate earthquakes in Southern California.

The Malibu earthquake was part of the 14th seismic sequence this year in Southern California with at least one magnitude 4 or higher earthquake, said seismologist Lucy Jones, a Caltech research associate.

The observation is not necessarily an indication that a large, damaging earthquake is around the corner, scientists said. Some researchers have offered dueling theories — some say earthquake activity goes up in a region before a large earthquake, others say seismic activity decreases before a large jolt. So the recent activity does not offer any hint of when the next large, destructive temblor will occur, said Susan Hough, a U.S. Geological Survey seismologist.

But it is a reminder that Southern California has been in a seismic drought, so to speak. The last major seismic event underneath a highly populated area — the magnitude 6.7 Northridge earthquake — is now 30 years old. And that seismic drought won't last forever.

Over the last 65 years in Southern California, Jones said, there were an average of eight to 10 independent sequences of earthquakes that included at least one of magnitude 4 or greater.

In some years, there's been just one or two of those earthquake sequences; the highest previous tally was 13, in 1988. But this last year has broken a record for the last 65 years, with Thursday's quake being the 14th seismic sequence with an earthquake of magnitude 4 or greater this year.

[See Earthquake, B5]

Threat lingers from several blazes in region

Southland residents grapple with loss as firefighters try to slow the flames

By SALVADOR HERNANDEZ, COLLEEN SHALBY, SUMMER LIN AND RUBEN VIVES

After days of multiple wildfires across Southern California in extreme heat, a drop in temperatures has finally given crews a chance to gain the upper hand, though risks remain, officials said.

On Thursday, fire officials cautioned that several communities in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties are still under evacuation orders, with some of the blazes continuing to show "extreme fire behavior" on the ground.

Since last week, the Bridge, Line and Airport fires have raced across more than 100,000 acres combined, or more than 156 square miles.

But the pace has slowed dramatically in the last day.

"The conditions are improving a little bit — at least weather-wise," said Bryan Lewis, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Oxnard.

The Bridge fire has consumed at least 20 homes in Wrightwood, Mount Baldy Village and other mountain towns — with more than 5,700 structures threatened, officials said Thursday.

The fire broke out Sunday in Angeles National Forest and exploded from 4,000 acres to more than 50,000 acres between Tuesday and Wednesday. It had blackened 51,167 acres by Thursday with no containment.

Firefighters were focusing their efforts on protecting the communities of Wrightwood, Pinon Hills and Mount Baldy. After days of temperatures reaching the triple digits, crews will carry on the fight with temperatures hovering in the mid- to low-70s into the

[See Wildfires, B4]



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

TRABUCO CANYON residents evacuate with their luggage and pets on Tuesday. Since Monday, the Airport fire has burned more than 23,000 acres.

Evacuees wait, and hope Airport fire spares them

By RACHEL URANGA AND ASHLEY AHN

The Airport fire, which began Monday in Orange County's Trabuco Canyon, was still burning out of control as it moved into Riverside County, scorching thousands of acres and burning homes.

Although fire officials didn't have specific numbers on structures burned, they told The Times that multiple homes had been affected.

Joel Pavelka, who lives in the small mountain town of El Cariso, was trying to

stay upbeat.

"I am crossing my fingers, we are OK for now," Pavelka said as he watched smoke billow over the Santa Ana Mountains near the spot where he has lived for 20 years.

The small, tight-knit Riverside County community sits in the heart of Cleveland National Forest, home to campgrounds and trails across the scenic mountainside. To the west lies Orange County and to the east is Lake Elsinore.

On Wednesday afternoon at Lake Elsinore Market, as the sun began to set, the

[See Evacuees, B4]

Enforcing farm heat rules is a struggle

Legislation aims to make it easier to file workers' compensation claims

By REBECCA PLEVIN

Erika Patricia Deluque Barros said she was working in a tomato field in Yolo County when she first started feeling shaky and nauseated. An immigrant from Colombia with little experience working in the fields, she said she didn't know at the time that the summer heat could make her sick.

"I didn't know the sun here could kill," Deluque Barros said. "I didn't know what sunstroke was, and nobody had told me what could happen."

Two weeks later, she said, she was working in searing heat and once again started feeling dizzy and nauseated. She said she took a break under a tree but felt faint as soon as she returned to work. It felt too hot to work.

[See Farmworkers, B3]



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

WITH THE temperature well over 100 degrees, a farmworker takes a break in the shade of a peach tree in an orchard in Riverside County in August 2023.

CAPITOL JOURNAL

What do Republicans still see in Trump?

GEORGE SKELTON IN SACRAMENTO

Donald Trump finally met his match in a debate. Kamala Harris not only dominated and clobbered him; she goaded him into appearing unhinged.



It was arguably the best presidential debate performance since Ronald Reagan eviscerated President Carter in 1980 with his classic lines: "There you go again" and "Ask yourself, are you better off than you were four years ago?"

It's conventional to say that debates don't matter much in a race's final outcome. But that's bunk. There are many times when they have. And the Harris-Trump debate is potentially

one.

Harris came across as a tough scrapper who could think on her feet and conceivably handle the rigors of the Oval Office. Moderate swing voters in battleground states may have gained some confidence in her because she projected strength. And she didn't really sound like a San Francisco liberal.

In short, the debate may well have shown swayable voters that Harris is fit to be president — and the ranting, scowling Trump is unfit.

But it's doubtful Trump will lose any hard-core supporters. He never does, no matter how outrageous his actions. And that has always intrigued me.

Look, he's everything our mothers told us not to be: a bully, braggart, whiner, liar and name-caller. He showed most of these ugly traits

[See Skelton, B5]

CITY & STATE



MICHAEL BLACKSHIRE Los Angeles Times

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Raa, right, practices kung fu with Propfit amid the heat wave on Sunday in Los Angeles' Leimert Park neighborhood. The Southland's cooling trend is expected to continue in the days ahead. **WEATHER, B6**

Son of officers killed self with gun in home; county to pay \$495,000

BY REBECCA ELLIS

The gun was locked in a safebox.

But on Dec. 17, 2019, Aiden Smith, the son of two divorced Los Angeles police officers, guessed the code: his mother's birth year, according to court records.

The 15-year-old took out his stepfather's gun and fatally shot himself.

It was the second time Aiden, who told doctors he was suicidal and plagued by hallucinations of demons, had found a gun in the La Crescenta home his mother shared with his stepfather, also an LAPD officer.

That November, Aiden had come across his mother's LAPD-issued gun under some clothes in a closet, leading a therapist to make a report of neglect to the L.A. County Department of Children and Family Services.

On Tuesday, the county Board of Supervisors, which oversees DCFs, agreed to pay a \$495,000 settlement to Aiden's father, Johnny Smith, and his older sister, Rely.

The Smiths, who sued both the county and city in 2022, argued that DCFs caseworkers and the LAPD should have ensured that Aiden could not get access to another gun.

"This case is about firearm safety, especially when it comes to firearms that are

in possession of law enforcement," said Steve Vartazarian, a lawyer representing the Smiths. "They have the same responsibilities as private citizens to keep the firearms safe."

Vartazarian said negotiations with the city of Los Angeles are still ongoing. Both the LAPD and DCFs declined to comment on the specifics of the case.

"We extend our heartfelt condolences to the family members and friends mourning the loss of this young person," DCFs said in a statement.

The district attorney's office declined in 2020 to bring charges against Aiden's mother, Amira Eppolito, for criminal storage of a firearm and child abuse, according to records from the office. Investigators concluded that Eppolito took "the situation seriously" when she learned her son was suicidal and that leaving her gun unsecured was not typical for her.

Johnny Smith is an LAPD captain who in 2021 filed a whistleblower lawsuit alleging that he was demoted and transferred in retaliation for voicing concerns about the Mission Division's troubled gang unit.

His "whole world had been turned upside down" by Aiden's death, he wrote in a 2021 declaration in his lawsuit over the suicide.

"I realized that the sys-

tems that have been put in place failed my son," he wrote.

Multiple agencies had been alerted that Aiden was suffering, according to court documents.

At the urging of his son's psychiatrist, Smith brought Aiden to a Rosemead mental health facility a week before Thanksgiving in 2019.

After reporting that he was hallucinating and had looked for—and located—a gun in his mother's home, Aiden was hospitalized for about a week. A therapist made a report to the county of "general neglect due to access to a weapon," according to the Smiths' lawsuit.

Johnny Smith said in a deposition that around that time, he told a commander at the LAPD that his son had found an unsecured gun and that he was "under the impression" that it would be reported up the chain in the department.

"I remember him being very kind and said, 'Look, man, you've just got to remind your son that you love him and that you're there for him. You know, don't worry about any of this other stuff. We'll take care of it,'" Smith recounted in the deposition.

On Nov. 29, a few days after Aiden was discharged from the hospital, someone he had been chatting with on Discord called a nearby sheriff's station and said that the teen had threatened

to kill himself if his girlfriend broke up with him, according to the records from the district attorney's office. Sheriff's deputies interviewed Aiden, who told them he had been joking.

One week later, a DCFs social worker went to the home and interviewed Aiden, according to legal filings. The social worker determined that Aiden was "not in immediate danger of serious harm" and that all the guns were locked in a safe.

The social worker was assured by Aiden's mother that none of the children living in the house knew the combination of the safe, which was hidden under clothing in a closet, according to records from the district attorney's office. Aiden told the social worker that he was feeling better and had taken his medication.

Aiden killed himself two weeks later. His phone history showed he had been trying to figure out his mother's birth year and had also researched how to pick a lock.

The Sheriff's Department, which investigated the suicide, determined that the gun was privately purchased and registered to Aiden's stepfather, Eric Eppolito, according to a filing from the city attorney's office.

Vartazarian disputed the finding and said the gun was issued by the LAPD.

Candidates for D.A. spar in online forum

Hochman and Gascón offer competing visions on how to prosecute crime.

BY CONNOR SHEETS

Los Angeles County Dist. Atty. George Gascón squared off via Zoom on Wednesday against Nathan Hochman, his challenger in the November election, with the two candidates exchanging pointed but polite blows in their first head-to-head encounter of the race.

The virtual forum was marked by technical glitches, rapid-fire switches between topics, and attacks by both candidates. Gascón defended his prosecutorial record while laying out a progressive vision for another four years in office. Hochman, in turn, attempted to pitch himself as the tougher-on-crime alternative.

A lightning rod of controversy since taking office four years ago on a platform of criminal justice reform, Gascón has since rolled back some of his boldest policies in the face of withering criticism. But he said he still prioritizes reducing the incarceration rate while also holding lawbreakers accountable and keeping crime low.

"We have evolved," Gascón said, noting that the D.A.'s office under his leadership has prosecuted "over 100,000 serious and violent crimes."

Citing one example, he pointed to his stance on sentencing enhancements, which can extend prison terms for certain crimes. Gascón initially halted the use of most enhancements, including for hate crimes, but said: "Very early on there were concerns about hate crime allegations, and we brought those [enhancements] back in."

Hochman, a former federal prosecutor, repeatedly claimed that his opponent was misrepresenting facts, and described the district attorney as presiding over "extreme policies" that leave Angelenos less safe.

"The choice for D.A. could not have more stark contrast," Hochman said. "You have tried a social experiment with public safety," he said later, "and it has failed and it is time to end it."

Billed as a candidate forum, the event was put on by

Jewish Federation Los Angeles and moderated by Alex Cohen, a political journalist at Spectrum News 1. It began nearly 10 minutes late amid technical difficulties, and the candidates struggled with the mute button and strictly imposed time limits on their responses to questions.

Hochman sat in front of an antiseptic white background, well-lit in a pressed dark suit and close-trimmed coif. Gascón was brightly backlit and had knickknacks and a potted plant behind him as he spoke.

Both men picked and chose information and data that helped make their respective cases to voters. Hochman highlighted figures published by the California Department of Justice that show violent crimes in L.A. County rose 12.1% between 2020 and 2023. Property crimes have also increased, he said.

"Don't let Gascón gaslight you into believing crime is down when the California DOJ and your own personal experiences show [the opposite]," Hochman said.

The state Justice Department data show that while rapes fell between 2020 and 2023, homicides remained steady in the county. But Gascón pointed to Los Angeles police statistics that show that citywide, homicides fell 17% from 2022 to 2023.

Hochman called the incumbent out for referencing city statistics while the office's purview is the county. He also lambasted the district attorney over incidents that occurred within the city of L.A. — which has its own city attorney — including protests, intimidation and violence on campuses and outside a synagogue.

Gascón responded to a barrage of such Hochman attacks by calmly stating that his opponent "struggles with the truth. Tonight he fails to understand the role of the D.A."

On the heels of Tuesday's widely viewed presidential debate between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, Gascón made one last dig at his opponent, who is now an independent but previously ran for state attorney general as a Republican.

"Tonight we heard another Trumpian political farmonger," he said. "You've now heard two very different visions of the future of our community."

H5N1 bird flu virus found in three more California dairy herds

BY SUSANNE RUST

California officials have identified three new outbreaks of H5N1 bird flu in Central Valley dairy herds, bringing the total number of infected farms to six.

Wednesday's announcement comes as health officials in Missouri are trying to determine how a human who had no connection to dairy or poultry farming became infected. It is the 14th human case reported this year.

According to a statement from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "while other novel flu cases have been detected through the country's national flu surveillance system, this is the first time that system has detected a case of H5."

The California Department of Food and Agriculture said the newly reported herds were in a "group targeted for testing due to elevated risks from their recent connections with the initial affected premises."

Nationwide, 201 herds have been affected across 14 states. Another infected herd was identified in Michigan earlier this week.

A statement from the state agriculture agency

said the finding of three additional herds was not unexpected, and was a testament to the agency's surveillance methods, which are designed to find "affected farms as early as possible."

Affected dairies have been quarantined and "enhanced biosecurity measures are in place to prevent the spread of the virus," the agency said.

The risk of H5N1 remains low for the general population, and the state's milk supply and dairy foods are safe and "not impacted by these events," the statement said. Health officials say pasteurization inactivates the virus, so there is no cause for concern for consumers of pasteurized milk or dairy products.

Steve Lyle, a spokesman for the state's agriculture department, said none of the affected farms are raw milk farms.

There are at least four raw milk dairies in California. Three are located in the Central Valley, the fourth in Grenada, north of Mt. Shasta.

Mark McAfee, the owner of Raw Milk Farms — which operates farms in Fresno and Hanford — said he tests his milk regularly and so far, his herds are negative for the virus.

Pasadena dogs targeted with deadly food

BY KAREN GARCIA

Los Angeles County officials are asking the Pasadena community for help identifying a person who has been leaving foods that are poisonous to dogs near a canine boarding and day-care facility.

On Tuesday, county Supervisor Kathryn Barger called on Pasadena residents who live or work near Foothill Boulevard to look out for whoever is putting out grapes and chocolate alongside rice or noodles near Dogtopia of East Pasadena, apparently to entice and harm dogs.

Grapes and chocolate are poisonous to dogs, according to the Humane Society of the United States.

Barger said in a news release that the unidentified person needs to be stopped because "animal cruelty should never be tolerated."

"I am outraged that someone is going out of their way to hurt dogs and their unsuspecting owners who are just enjoying a trot down Foothill Boulevard," she said.

A video shared by the boarding facility shows a person crouching by a dirt patch on the street corner in front of Dogtopia and apparently putting something on the ground — the corner is shaded and it's unclear what the person is doing.

Jacks Vasquez said the



FRANCINE ORR Los Angeles Times

WALKING DOGS in parts of Pasadena is risky as officials seek to identify whoever is leaving grapes and chocolate with enticing foods along Foothill Boulevard.

act captured by her business' surveillance camera is just one of many. Someone has been leaving grapes and chocolate M&Ms at various spots along a 1.5-mile stretch of Foothill Boulevard for several months, according to a news release.

"I'm sick to my stomach knowing that someone is doing this in broad daylight," Vasquez said.

The person has been leaving food in walkways along Foothill Boulevard between Sierra Madre and

Rosemead boulevards.

Vasquez, who has been in the animal care and veterinary field for more than a decade, said that "consuming even the smallest amount of grapes can be lethal" to dogs. Chocolate, she added, can make dogs very sick "and result in thousands of dollars in veterinary bills."

"I've been warning customers, but am worried the word won't get out to the community at large," she said.

Pasadena police officials said any related suspicious activity can be reported to the Police Department.

"Any actual and reported cruelty to animals will be taken very seriously and with assertive enforcement," said Gene Harris, the city's chief of police.

Anyone with information should contact the Pasadena Police Department at (626) 744-4501 or go to cityofpasadena.net/police and click on the "Report A Crime" link.

State bill focuses on farmworker safety amid heat

[Farmworkers, from B1] safely, she said, so she and five others got permission from their supervisor to leave early.

But when the laborers returned to the field early the next morning, according to a complaint filed with the state Labor Commissioner's Office, they were handed their final checks and fired.

"I was surprised; I was humiliated; I felt bad," Deluque Barros recalled. "On one hand, I keep thinking, 'I should have tolerated it, because I needed the work.' But on the other hand, I've also been thinking that people should have dignity and shouldn't have to put up with so much just for a job."

The state Agricultural Labor Relations Board is investigating the incident as a retaliatory firing. And the workers — now dubbed the Yolo Six — have been held up as an example of the need for California to do more to enforce compliance with heat safety rules for farmworkers that have been in place for nearly two decades.

A bill on Gov. Gavin Newsom's desk aims to compel employer compliance with the state's outdoor heat safety standards by making it easier for farmworkers to make a workers' compensation claim for heat illness.

SB 1299 would change the burden of proof in workers' compensation claims when a farmworker develops a heat-related injury after laboring outdoors for an employer who fails to comply with the heat standards. Instead of the farmworker having to prove the injury occurred on the job, as is typical in workers' compensation cases, it would be the employer's responsibility to prove the illness was not work-related.

Opponents of the bill, including the California Chamber of Commerce and the California Farm Bureau, acknowledge the importance of protecting farmworkers from heat illness, but argue the issue should not be addressed through the workers' compensation system.

The legislation comes as many farmworkers continue to labor in unsafe conditions and the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health confronts a severe staffing shortage that is hampering its ability to enforce heat regulations for outdoor workers.

First enacted in 2005, the state's heat illness prevention rules require employers to provide outdoor workers with fresh water, access to shade at 80 degrees and warmer, and cool-down breaks whenever a worker requests one. Employers also must maintain a heat illness prevention plan with effective training for supervisors to recognize the signs and symptoms of heat illness.

Enforcement of the rules has proved challenging.

In 2009 and 2012, the United Farm Workers sued Cal/OSHA, accusing the agency of failing to enforce the regulations. A 2022 study by the UC Merced Community and Labor Center found many farmworkers were still laboring without the protections.

Of the more than 1,200 farmworkers surveyed, 43% reported their employers had not provided a heat illness prevention plan and 15% said they had not received heat illness prevention training. Additionally, 20% reported their employers did not monitor the temperature on hot days, 15% said their employers failed to provide enough shade for breaks when temperatures reached 80 degrees and higher, and 22% said their employers did not monitor for heat illness when the

temperature reached 95 degrees.

"This has just been a really persistent challenge of, how do you make sure that the laws on the books are the laws in the fields?" said Antonio De Loera-Brust, communications director for the UFW, which sponsored SB 1299.

The bill's author, Sen. Dave Cortese (D-San José), described SB 1299 as a "creative workaround" that is "taking the tools that we do have available and trying to cobble together an approach that will hopefully spur greater compliance."

Under the bill's provisions, if an employer fails to comply with the rules, any resulting heat-related injury to an employee "shall be presumed to arise out of and in the course of employment." It would create a "rebuttable presumption," which is more commonly used for law enforcement officers and firefighters who develop certain injuries that could arise from the risks inherent to their jobs.

"The employers hate the workers' comp presumptions so much that it makes me feel like it might actually work," Cortese said. "The avoidance factor is so high with them that they'll say, 'My God, it's actually easier for us to provide shade and water than to have to deal with a proliferation of expedited workers' comp claims.'"

"We're trying to take something that they view as kind of a thorn in their side and use it as a disincentive for the kind of behavior we're seeing," he said.

Ashley Hoffman, senior policy advocate for the California Chamber of Commerce, took issue with the approach during an Assembly committee hearing in June, contending there is no evidence that the workers' compensation system is failing in regard to heat claims filed by agricultural workers.

She pointed to a legislative analysis by the California Workers' Compensation Institute that found very few agricultural heat illness claims had been filed in California. The analysis also found heat illness claims filed by agricultural workers have a denial rate of 11%, lower than the 12.4% to 13.3% denial rates for other outdoor occupations covered by the heat standard and the 14.7% denial rate for all claims.

"Utilizing a very unique workers' compensation system with its own unique procedures to address this separate problem, when the data shows us that the system itself is functioning well and how it's supposed to work with regard to these claims, we do not believe is the right solution," Hoffman said during the hearing.

Bryan Little, director of employment policy for the California Farm Bureau, called the legislation a "solution in search of a problem." He noted Cal/OSHA is already hiring for a new agricultural unit that would significantly expand enforcement offices, including in the communities of Lodi, Salinas, El Centro and Fresno.

"I don't know what else to say," Little said. "It's problematic in terms of just continuing to add rebuttable presumptions to workers' comp law when you don't really need it and Cal/OSHA is already moving to address the problem."

Newsom has until Sept. 30 to sign or veto the bill.

This article is part of The Times' equity reporting initiative, funded by the James Irvine Foundation, exploring the challenges facing low-income workers and the efforts being made to address California's economic divide.

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Legal Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: Ralph T. Pate
Case No.: 20STPB02242
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of: **Ralph T. Pate.**

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by **Proposed Administrator James Dillingham Reed** in the Superior Court of California, County of **LOS ANGELES.**

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that **Proposed Administrator James Dillingham Reed** be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on **September 23, 2024 at 8:30 p.m. in Dept. 2D** located at: Stanley Mosk Courthouse
111 North Hill Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney or Party without Attorney:
James Dillingham Reed, In Pro Per
5232 Windermere Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90041

Published in the Los Angeles Times

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Yesterday's Jumbles: DITTY PIANO BELONG COLUMN
Answer: All the employees at this business were happy with their jobs and — IN GOOD COMPANY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of the City of Covina will conduct a PUBLIC HEARING in the City Hall Council Chamber, 125 East College Street, Covina, on Tuesday, September 24th, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter, to consider the following applications: Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 24-005 and Site Plan Review (SPR) 24-075 – A request to operate a bonafide eating establishment in conjunction with the sale of beer, wine, and distilled spirits for consumption on the license premises, (ABC Type 47 License: "On-Sale General – Eating Place"). A 1,081 square feet of interior tenant improvement to an existing one-story vacant building to operate a restaurant within the Covina Town Center Specific Plan (CTCSP) Historical Core (HC) Zone, located at 100 N. Citrus Ave. Covina, CA, 91723 APN: 8445-009-043.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15301, the project is exempt from environmental review under CEQA because the project involves only minor alterations of an existing private structure involving negligible or no expansion of the existing or former use, and is located in an area where all public services and facilities are available. The project involves interior improvements/upgrades to accommodate a restaurant involving plumbing and electrical conveyances. No structural additions are proposed.

(LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY ON FILE IN PLANNING DIVISION)
All interested parties are invited to attend the public hearing and provide public comment. Written comments may be submitted via email or in person to the Community Development Department, Planning Division at planning@covinaca.gov or 125 E College St, prior to, or at the time of, the hearing.

If you challenge the decision on the proposed actions in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence submitted to the Planning Secretary or the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Further information may be obtained from the City of Covina Community Development Department, Planning Division, at (626) 384-5450.

Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act, the City of Covina will make reasonable efforts to accommodate persons with disabilities. If you require special accommodations, please contact the Planning Division at (626) 384-5450, at least five (5) days in advance of this hearing.

BRIAN K. LEE
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

NOTE: ACCESS TO THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER IS FROM THE NORTH SIDE OF THE TWO-STORY CITY HALL BUILDING VIA THE COURTYARD.

PUBLISH: September 13, 2024; The Los Angeles Times

CITATION TO PARENT
Case No.: 24A0006, 24A0007
In Pro Per
SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF KINGS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF, Jesus Lopez, Petitioner
TO: Eric Grande

By order of this court you are hereby advised that you may appear before the Judge presiding in Department 1 of this Court on November 1, 2024 at 8:15am, then and there to show cause, if any you have, why **Damien Eric Grande** and **Ismael Grande** should not be declared free from your custody and control for the purpose of freeing **Damien Eric Grande** and **Ismael Grande** for placement for adoption. The following information concerns rights and procedures that relate to this proceeding for the termination of custody and control of said minor as set forth in Family Code Section 7860 et seq.:

1. At the beginning of the proceeding the court will consider whether or not the interests of the minor child require the appointment of counsel. If the court finds that the interests of the minor do require such protection, the court will appoint counsel to represent him/her, whether or not he/she is able to afford counsel. The minor will not be present in court unless he/she requests or the court so orders.

2. If a parent of the minor appears without counsel and is unable to afford counsel, the court must appoint counsel for the parent, unless the parent knowingly and intelligently waives the right to be represented by counsel. The court will not appoint the same counsel to represent both the minor and his/her parent.

3. The court may appoint either the public defender or private counsel. If private counsel is appointed, he or she will receive a reasonable sum for compensation and expenses, the amount of which will be determined by the court. That amount must be paid by the real parties in interest, but not by the minor, in such proportions as the court believes to be just. If, however, the court finds that any of the real parties in interest cannot afford counsel, the amount will be paid by the county.

4. The court may continue the proceeding for not more than thirty (30) days as necessary to appoint counsel to become acquainted with the case.

Date: Sep 03, 2024
Nocona Soboleski, Clerk of Court
Court Executive Officer
By: Jonathan Colvard, Deputy Clerk

Published in the Los Angeles Times 9/13, 9/20, 9/27 and 10/4/2024



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times
FARMWORKERS don hats and scarves as face coverings to stay cool in Thermal, Calif., in August 2023.

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Los Angeles Times

Airport fire leaves a 'moonscape' in mountain town

[Evacuees, from B1] silhouette of helicopters dropping water from the city's namesake lake could be seen.

Pavelka and a small group of evacuees had been camped out for more than a day watching the winds whip up hot spots near their homes and getting reports from neighbors who stayed behind. Smoke filled the air, and the glow of the fire colored the landscape a hazy orange.

The Airport fire began with a spark from heavy equipment as rocks were being moved in the Trabuco Canyon foothills.

Since Monday, it has burned more than 23,000 acres, while two other major fires burned in San Bernardino County and the Angeles National Forest.

More than 5,000 homes were under evacuation orders in Riverside County, affecting over 19,000 residents, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Division Chief Todd Hopkins said at a Wednesday news conference.

At the market, the evacuees sat on fold-out chairs

outside a camper.

"I am glad you're OK, Barbara," said a man passing by the group.

Barbara Shea-han, who owns the Lookout Roadhouse on Ortega Highway above Lake Elsinore, is well-known in the area.

She said her house and restaurant were still standing, but many of her neighbors hadn't been so lucky.

"It's awful. My house burned down" many years ago, she said. "I know exactly how they feel. It is debilitating."

Shea-han had been out running errands down the mountain in Irvine on Tuesday morning. When she returned, Ortega Highway, the only road to get to her home, had been shut down. She tagged along with a news crew to sneak back up to the community.

"Looking at the vegetation, it looks like a moonscape with trees. All you see is rocks and earth," she said. "It will be weeks before we can get the restaurant back open."

And perhaps days before they can sleep in their beds.



THE BRIDGE FIRE has burned at least 20 homes in Wrightwood, above, and other mountain towns, officials say. The two other major Southern California fires — the Airport and Line fires — have injured at least 13.



GINA FERRAZZI Los Angeles Times

THOUSANDS of homes are under evacuation orders in the fire. Above, damaged vehicles in Lake Elsinore.

[Wildfires, from B1] weekend, with the possibility of drizzle on Sunday, Lewis said. The weekend weather will also bring a light breeze with 10 mph gusts steering the fire east, he said.

"It's certainly a little less windy and a little bit higher humidity," he added. "It should translate to better firefighting conditions, for sure."

Despite the improving weather, firefighters will still have to grapple with steep and rugged terrain, as well as an abundance of fuel beds and vegetation from back to back wet winters. The region charred by the Bridge fire has a long history of fires and has trees stressed by historic drought, so a few days of increased humidity isn't enough to significantly reduce the landscape's ability to catch fire.

In the two other major Southern California fires — the Airport fire and the Line fire — at least 13 people, including several firefighters, have been injured.

By Thursday, the Airport fire had charred 23,410 acres in Riverside and Orange counties and was 5% contained, and the Line fire in San Bernardino County had burned 37,207 acres and was 18% contained. Neighborhoods east of both fires remained under evacuation orders.

Kevin Fetterman, incident commander with the Orange County Fire Authority, said the Airport fire has been hard to mitigate because of dry weather conditions and terrain.

Depending on where crews are located, the conditions around the fire can be very different. Humidity levels on the Airport fire's west flank were upward of 55%, while in Riverside County near Lake Elsinore, humidity was as low as 25%, setting up the vegetation there to burn.

Temperatures around the fire were in the 60s Thursday morning, an improvement from the extreme heat when the fire first made its run from Orange to Riverside County.

There's the potential for rain around the Airport fire on Monday, said Philip Gon-salves, a meteorologist with the weather service in San Diego.

"I don't think it will put the fire out but it will certainly help," he added.

For residents who fled the area as the fire spread across two counties, the improved weather conditions was welcomed as they eagerly waited for news about their neighborhood.

Emily Pang, 16, evacuated from her neighborhood in El Cariso two nights ago as flames and smoke ravaged the area. She said that as far as she knows, her house is still standing — "a miracle."

"I just accepted that the fire would take my house," Pang said, recalling the immense fear that took over as she watched flames engulf the area. "I'm just lucky to be alive."

Pang is sheltering at the Temescal Canyon High School with her parents. About 20 people were there Thursday, a worker said.

Several dogs were housed in a tent outside; a husky tied to a pole outside the center barked for its owner.

Pang was with a neighbor when the Airport fire erupted; her parents were blocked from driving to her so she met them at the road below, bringing along her school awards, martial arts certificates and figurines that her sister brought her back from Japan — keepsakes she said are part of her identity.

A friend was at the shelter to visit her; their high school near the mountains was also under evacuations.

Nhoun Pheak, 44, evacuated two days ago after a deputy knocked on his family's door off Temescal Canyon Road and told them to leave within 10 minutes. The area was filled with smoke.

He left with a backpack filled with clothes and a toothbrush; some of his family is at a hotel while he waits nearby at a shelter. He doesn't know whether his house is still standing but is hopeful to get back home soon.

"We're not allowed to go back there yet," he said.

At least a dozen people have been injured at the Airport fire, including 10 firefighters, officials said.

In San Bernardino County, the Line fire had burned through 37,207 acres and was 18% contained as of Thursday afternoon.

Cooler temperatures and higher moisture had helped make the fire line "less intense" overnight, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Firefighters on the ground expect the cooperating weather to slow the fire's growth, but they are still concerned that it could run up and down canyon slopes.

Authorities believe the Line fire was caused by arson and, on Tuesday, took 34-year-old Justin Wayne Halstenberg into custody.

Officials have released few details about how the fire was started Sept. 5.

His mother, Connie Halstenberg, said in a text message response to The Times that she was not talking to news media.

"I do want to say this about my baby boy," she said. "He did not light that fire, I repeat he did not light that fire."

She said she doesn't approve of some of the things her son does, but added that "he is not an arsonist."

On Wednesday, Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency for the three fires, which frees up additional state resources to respond and allows the affected counties to recover more funds from the fire-fight.

Times staff writers Nathan Solis and Hannah Fry contributed to this report.

Obituaries

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Sally Marie Greenberg

December 12, 1927 - September 6, 2024

It is with heavy hearts that the family of Sally Greenberg announce her passing on the 6th of September 2024, at the young age of 96. Sally passed peacefully in her home in the Pacific Palisades, surrounded by her family.

There were several husbands along the way, but her dearest and finest partner in crime was Dick Greenberg. Splitting time between Los Angeles and Puerto Vallarta, Sally and Dick frequently hosted family and friends for elegant birthdays, holiday celebrations, summer vacations and any other reason to gather a lively and friend-filled events.

Sally is survived by her daughter, Cynthia Van Norden, her three grandchildren, Lauren Cohn Alley, Ilan Goldstein, Tito Goldstein and her three great-grandchildren, Coen Alley, Luna Alley and Clifford Goldstein-Burton. She will be missed by, Juan and Marta Beccera, and many special friends from her second home, Casa Salinas, in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Linda M Shapero

November 1, 1940 - September 12, 2024

Born and raised in Los Angeles, a UCLA graduate, and elementary school teacher for 30 years, Linda will be remembered fondly. She is survived by her children, Wendy and Dan, grandchildren Julian and Camille, son-in-law Jean-Claude, and her loving family.

Cemetery Lots/Crypts

2 Cemetery Plots For Sale, Forest Lawn, Cypress, \$20,000, Call for info (928) 221-7443.

Jerome Rabow

June 12, 1933 - September 7, 2024

Dr. Jerome Rabow, a beloved father, husband, grandfather, brother, uncle, step-father and friend, died peacefully at home in Los Angeles on September 7. He was 91.

A professor emeritus in the sociology department at the University of California, Los Angeles, as well as an author and therapist, Rabow was a prolific writer of both scholarly papers as well as self-published short stories and murder mysteries. His range of interests was broad and diverse: Rabow's many dozens of academic publications (<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=kXrudDQAAAAJ&hl=en>) raised deep and important questions about racial justice and education, LGBTQ and gender politics, the role of alcohol in society, and relationships between fathers and sons, among many other topics. His fictional works could be both playful and penetrating, exploring genres from noirish detective tales to stories filled with familiar characters from his childhood in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn.

Born in 1933 to Manya Konigsberg and Morris Rabow, immigrants from a small town near what is now Kiev, Ukraine, Rabow ran track at Lincoln High School and, with his younger sister, roamed the beach and boardwalk in their neighborhood, which bordered Coney Island. Rabow received a BA from Brooklyn College in sociology and psychology; an MA from Columbia University in sociology; and a Ph.D from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in social psychology.

A popular professor at UCLA for more than three decades, Rabow also served as a lecturer at California State University Northridge; Director of the Center for the Celebration of Diversity Through Education; and, since 1970, has been a licensed marriage and family therapist. He is the author of several non-fiction books on education, including, *Tutoring Matters: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About How to Tutor*, (Temple University Press, 2011) and *Voices of Pain and Voices of Hope: Students Speak About Racism* (Kendall Holt Publishing, 2006).

He fully embraced California culture, living, for years, in an apartment on Venice Beach, where he ran, biked and played paddle tennis. He also was a true believer in Democratic politics and an avid supporter of Kamala Harris for President.

His first marriage, to Tanya Kaplan, ended in divorce; in 1981 he married Roslyn Berman Rabow.

In addition to his wife, Roz, and ex-wife, Rabow is survived by his children, Joshua Rabow (Rachel Gotbaum) and David Rabow (Danielle McAnerney); grandchildren Zach and Matthew Rabow; his sister, Selma Zimmerman; step-children, Tricia Berman (Michael Chesler), Lynne Berman (Ed Dimendberg) and Steven Berman (Frances Berman); step-grandchildren, Lucie and Liliana Berman and niece and nephew Rachel and Paul Zimmerman.

In lieu of flowers please consider donating to one of the following organizations Rabow supported: The Los Angeles Guild for Reproductive Health or Kamala Harris for President.

Share a memory

To sign a guest book please go to
latimes.com/guestbooks

Los Angeles Times

Whittier pizzeria razed by fire; owner suspects arson

Pizzamania, a staple in the city for decades, is among five businesses damaged by the blaze.

BY SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

Pizzamania, a beloved pizza restaurant and a staple in Whittier for more than 50 years, burned down Tuesday morning in a blaze that the owner believes might have been intentionally set.

The pizza joint and four other businesses were damaged after a fire was reported at 2:25 a.m. in the one-story strip mall in the 13500 block of Telegraph Road, Los Angeles County fire officials said.

Firefighters arrived to find the five businesses engulfed in flames. The blaze was extinguished shortly after 3 a.m.

Patrons and passersby posted images of the fire on social media and expressed grief over the loss of the restaurant that has been a fixture in the community for decades.

"NOOOOOOO!!!!" one person posted on Instagram, followed by a series of crying emojis.

A spokesperson for the Fire Department said the cause of the fire is being investigated by the L.A. County Sheriff's Department.

"Someone came by and torched it," said Warren Haines, one of the co-owners of the restaurant.

Video cameras from the restaurant were destroyed in the fire, but Haines said video from one of the neighboring businesses showed what looked like someone intentionally setting the fire.

Haines, who started the restaurant in 1973 with business partner Jim Barrit, said the person appeared to have targeted Pizzamania.

Investigators were searching the area for more surveillance images, he said. Officials with the Sheriff's Department did not immediately respond to inquiries about the fire.

The fire put about 50 employees at the restaurant out of work, Haines said.

"I'm pissed off," he said. "It takes the wind out of your sail."

Just hours after the fire, Haines said his son, who handles social media for the restaurant, had received more than 700 emails from patrons devastated about the news and wondering

how they could help. Moncy Flores, owner of the neighboring Bianca's Beauty Salon, said her shop also was damaged in the fire, and she's still unsure whether anything is salvageable.

"We don't know how it is inside," Flores said. "They didn't let us go inside."

The salon has been at the location for about 20 years, and her family has owned it for about nine years, she said.

She said she doesn't know how the fire started but said she wasn't surprised to hear it might be intentional. About a week ago, she said, two of the other businesses in the strip mall had their windows broken.

The location has always been busy and popular, thanks to Pizzamania, she said.

Haines said he was moved by patrons' outreach and understands that Pizzamania was a landmark in the community for decades.

"They call, and half of them are in tears," he said. "It means everything to me."

Haines said he's reeling over the fire but intends to keep Pizzamania alive.

"We're an institution," he said. "I intend to rebuild."

An unusually busy year of quakes for Southland

[Earthquake, from B1]

"So yes, this is a more active year than we've had in the past," Jones said. But, she said, "we can't quite say yet that whether or not that it is actually statistically significant to be seeing this."

The latest quakes are "a really good reminder that the quiet of the last couple of decades is not our long-term picture, and we do need to be prepared," Jones said.

Thursday's quake struck at 7:27 a.m. and was centered in the Malibu Hills off Kanan Dume Road around Ramirez Canyon. There were a number of aftershocks, including magnitude 3.4 quakes at 8:40 a.m. and 9:37 a.m.

Residents should be prepared for more aftershocks. "Earthquakes like to cluster up with other earthquakes in space and in time, and this earthquake is no exception," said Morgan Page, a USGS geophysicist. In most cases, aftershocks are smaller and fade over time, but there is a 1 in 20 chance that, in the next week, there will be another earthquake of magnitude 4.7 or larger.

Earthquakes can reach up to a magnitude 8 in this area, Morgan said, which is actually "pretty standard for anywhere in California." That's because individual faults can link up with others in the same seismic event to form an even larger magnitude earthquake.

The epicenter of Thursday's earthquake was closest to the Malibu fault, Jones said. Initial analysis suggests the quake had a 40% chance of being associated with the Malibu fault and a 46% chance of being associated with the Anacapa fault.

Earthquakes of this magnitude rupture only a relatively small section of a fault, perhaps only a few hundred yards. As such, these modest events often happen on small faults that are not associated with faults that are much larger and mapped at the Earth's surface.

"Moderate" and "light" shaking, as defined by the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale, was felt in parts of Malibu, Thousand Oaks,



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

AT EMIL'S Bake House in Agoura Hills, Julius Speck said the shaking lasted only a few seconds. "I thought somebody dropped something in the back," he said. After a moment, he moved on to helping another customer.

Agoura Hills, Calabasas and Westlake Village. Moderate shaking is felt by nearly everyone and can break windows and dishes; light shaking can rattle dishes, windows and doors.

In Thousand Oaks, one resident reported shaking lasting a few seconds, but a resident elsewhere felt about 12 seconds of rattling. Many people in Southern California didn't feel the earthquake.

"Weak" shaking was felt over most of the Los Angeles metropolitan region, including downtown L.A.; Santa Monica; Long Beach; the San Fernando, San Gabriel and Antelope valleys; Orange County and the Inland Empire. There were crowdsourcing reports indicating that shaking was felt as far away as San Diego and Bakersfield.

The earthquake startled anchors broadcasting live at KTTV-TV, which has studios just east of Santa Monica. "We're having an earth-

quake right now," the anchors said, followed by the sound of a rumble and an exclamation of "Whoa!"

Emil's Bake House is a favored early morning stop of commuters streaming from the 101 Freeway to Malibu via Kanan Road in Agoura Hills. Julius Speck was at the counter serving customers lattes, scones and vegetable juice when the windows and display cases rattled.

"I thought somebody dropped something in the back," Speck said, pointing to the kitchen. "I was confused."

The shaking lasted only a few seconds, and Speck said he took a deep breath and asked the next customer what they'd like to order.

Another earthquake in Malibu, a magnitude 4.6, was felt Feb. 9. That jolt's epicenter was about six miles to the southwest of Thursday's quake and probably wasn't related to it, Page said.

Another cluster of earthquakes was reported over

the summer in El Sereno, on Los Angeles' Eastside, which occurred on the Puente Hills thrust fault system.

The most recent was a magnitude 4.4 quake that occurred Aug. 12, which was enough to cause shampoo bottles to be knocked off a shelf at a Target store in Alhambra.

They were preceded by a pair of earthquakes in early June — a magnitude 3.4 on June 2 and a magnitude 2.8 on June 4 — as well as a magnitude 2.9 earthquake in the same area June 24.

The Puente Hills thrust fault system is the same overall fault network that produced the 1987 Whittier Narrows magnitude 5.9 earthquake, which killed eight people and caused some \$358 million in damage. The Puente Hills system is capable of producing a magnitude 7.5 earthquake, which runs under highly populated areas of L.A. and Orange counties and could kill 3,000 to 18,000 people.

The largest earthquake experienced in California this year was a magnitude 5.2 temblor that occurred Aug. 6. That was centered on rural farmland about 15 miles northwest of the unincorporated Kern County community of Grapevine near Interstate 5 and about 19 miles southwest of Bakersfield.

Another widely felt earthquake, a magnitude 4.9, struck July 29. Its epicenter was in the Mojave Desert, about 14 miles northeast of Barstow, in San Bernardino County, and shaking was felt across Los Angeles.

Before Thursday's quake, some residents were alerted by the earthquake early warning system, which is powered by the USGS' ShakeAlert system. In Koreatown, residents got about two seconds of warning before shaking arrived. A free earthquake early warning system app, MyShake, can be downloaded from the iOS and Google Play app

stores. Android also has an earthquake early warning system built into its operating system.

On the CLine Metro train heading west toward the Crenshaw station Thursday, cars erupted in beeping as phones lit up with warnings of the quake. Passengers reached for their phones or looked around in alarm, but the train continued forward, swaying as usual. Despite the instructions on their phones, no one dropped to the floor or sought cover under their seats. Shaking from an earthquake was not noticeable on the train.

It's not unusual for people to feel varying levels of shaking, or none at all. If you're sitting quietly, the duration of shaking you feel may be much longer than by someone who is moving. And being on top of soft sediment in valleys and basins, where shaking is amplified as it bounces around, can result in feeling longer shaking than if you were on top of bedrock.

The Los Angeles Fire Department, as well as Ventura County officials, reported no damage. The L.A. County Fire Department received no calls regarding the earthquake.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department locked down all of its jail facilities after the quake to do a damage assessment but quickly returned to normal operations after none was found.

In general, an earthquake must be at least a magnitude 5 to cause damage, if it's a relatively shallow event, Jones said.

"It is a very good reminder to people that we live in earthquake country. And we need to take the steps that will help keep us all safe if a bigger earthquake does occur," Hough said.

Times staff writers Keri Blakinger, Alexandra Del Rosario, Jon Healey, Meg James, Iliana Limón Romero, Samantha Masunaga, Luke Money, Joseph Serna, Ruben Vives and Richard Winton contributed to this report.

Trump still speaks to many voters

[Skelton, from B1] during the debate. Plus, he's a convicted felon.

Regardless of Trump's character faults, this is a very tight race because his core voters are steadfastly loyal.

In deep blue California, Trump received 6 million votes in 2020 — more than in any other state, although he lost here by nearly 2 to 1.

He'll lose California again on Nov. 5 but doesn't seem to have hemorrhaged supporters despite shameless behavior.

A poll of likely voters last month by the UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies showed Harris leading Trump by 59% to 34%. He hadn't lost any support since February, but Harris was running 7 percentage points stronger than President Biden.

So, who are these dedicated Trump voters and what motivates them? How can they back someone with such unsavory character? I called around.

"Character is a declining issue in politics — and a nonissue for a lot of people," said Republican strategist Rob Stutzman, a Never Trumper. "I think the Bill Clinton era had a lot to do with it."

Clinton and Trump both cheated on their wives. Clinton even did it next to the Oval Office. But Clinton never acted uncivilly and called his opponents "crooked" and "stupid" as Trump does.

"Politics is a team sport," Stutzman added. "Trump is on their team whether they like him or not."

Actually, many Republican voters just hate Democratic politicians.

"Republicans hate the left and Trump embodies someone who will fight back against the left," Stutzman said.

I asked Republican strategist Matt Rexroad about that hate.

"It's 100% true," he said. "Anyone could be on the ballot with an 'R' and [Republicans] would vote for them."

"Trump's a protest vote against the status quo," Rexroad continued.

That's particularly true



ALEX BRANDON Associated Press

DONALD TRUMP probably won't win California, but he hasn't lost any support here in recent polls.

of rural residents who tend to vote Republican.

"They feel disenfranchised," Rexroad said. "People in the biggest cities aren't listening to them. A lot of people in San Francisco couldn't find Modoc County on a map if their life depended on it. They know Placer County because they drive through it on the way to Tahoe."

"People between Bakersfield and Fresno, they don't like what's going on in Sacramento and Washington. They feel they've been left behind."

Former Republican strategist Ken Khachigian, who grew up on a Visalia walnut and grape farm, says Trump speaks to the proverbial "forgotten man."

San Joaquin Valley farmers are particularly frustrated that after record Sierra snowpacks they received only half the water they requested from the federal and state governments, Khachigian says.

And valley folks are "unhappy about a lot of the handouts for illegal immigrants — free medical care and free other services," he added.

In Trump, he said, "they see someone who's willing to [speak up] about what's going on. ... He's seen as strength and vigor and intensity."

I called Mark Baldassare, chief pollster for the nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California. He delved into the innards of several PPIC polls in recent months.

"The negativity [of Trump voters] is one thing that struck me," he said. "It's all doom and gloom. This is a group that's particularly sour about the way things are going in the country, the state and their own lives."

Roughly 98% believe that California and America are headed "in the wrong direction." Around 92% think the state and nation will have "bad times" economically in the next 12 months. And 64% say their families are worse off financially than a year ago.

Also, 87% feel immigrants "are a burden" on California.

On many issues, Trump supporters' views are the direct opposite of Democrats'.

Examples: 60% say addressing climate change is "not an important concern," 63% favor more oil drilling off the California coast, 92% would rather have lower taxes and fewer services than higher taxes and more services, 89% favor protecting gun rights over controlling gun ownership, and 71% approve of the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision overturning national abortion rights.

"A sizable portion feel that government is the problem, not the solution," Baldassare says. "They feel ignored. One way to get attention is to say, 'I'm for Trump. Listen to me.'"

But they won't be allowed to listen to their candidate in a second debate. Trump has chickened out of another face-off with Harris.

Los Angeles
September
15

Presents

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THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

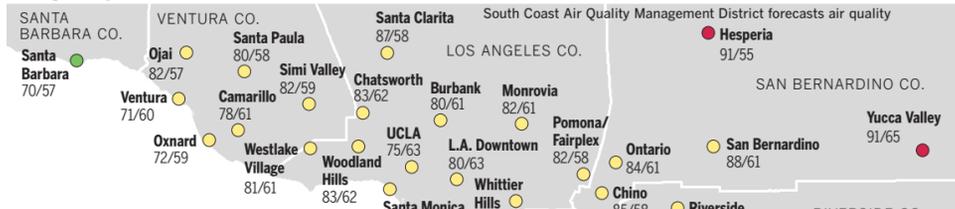
Staying on the cool side: A general west to east flow aloft and an onshore flow at the surface will prevail through the weekend. The result will be dry weather and an absence of any big swings in temperatures.

5-day forecasts

High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

Table with 5 columns: L.A. Basin, Valleys, Beaches, Mountains, Deserts. Rows for Today, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday.

Air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO Inner waters: Wins southeast, then south 5-10 knots. Seas 2-4 feet. Swell west 2 feet at 9 seconds and south 2 feet at 17 seconds.

Surf zone: The potential for strong rip currents is expected to be moderate at all area beaches today.

Table with 5 columns: County, Height, Period, Direction, Temp. Rows for Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego.

Tides

Table with 5 columns: Time, Height, Direction, Low, High. Rows for Today, Sat.

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people Las Vegas, 30 Phoenix, 30 Los Angeles, 30 San Francisco, 30

California cities*

Table with 6 columns: City, Thu., Hi, Lo, Today, Hi, Lo, Sat. Hi, Lo. Lists various California cities and their weather forecasts.

Sun and moon

Today's rise/set Los Angeles Co. Orange Co. Ventura Co. Sun 6:35a/7:02p 6:34a/7:01p 6:39a/7:06p Moon 4:28p/1:11a 4:26p/1:10a 4:33p/1:14a



Almanac

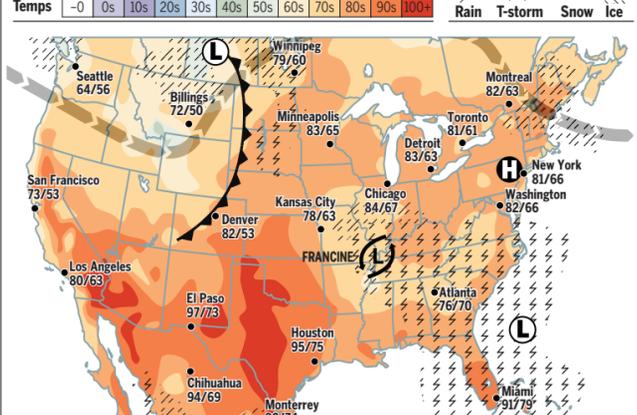
Table with 4 columns: Temperature, Los Angeles, Fullerton, Ventura*. Rows for High/Low, Normal/High/Low, Record high/date, Record low/date.

Table with 4 columns: City, Thu., Hi, Lo, Today, Hi, Lo, Sat. Hi, Lo. Lists various cities and their weather forecasts.

Today in North America

Francine brings additional rain: Francine will still bring some wet weather, including the potential for locally severe thunderstorms, from the lower Ohio Valley through Tennessee south to the Gulf Coast.

Pressure: L Low H High Warm Front Cold Front Jet Stream Trough



U.S. cities

THURSDAY'S EXTREMES AS OF 2 P.M. FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES High 108 in Phoenix, Ariz. Low 19 in Incline Village, Nev.

Table with 6 columns: City, Thursday*, Hi, Lo, Prcp., Today, Hi, Lo, Sky. Lists various U.S. cities and their weather forecasts.



NEKA OGWUMIKE shoots over Azura Stevens in a 16-point night against her old Sparks team.

Sparks see positives but not a win

They outplay Seattle in a lot of areas, however, it's not enough as they lose their sixth game in a row.

BY ANDRÉS SOTO

Four of the Sparks' starters scored in double figures, but it wasn't enough. Dearica Hamby had a historic night, grabbing her 341st rebound to break Lisa Leslie's 20-year-old single-season franchise record and enter the Sparks' top-10 career rebounds list, but it still wasn't enough.

The Sparks outrebounded the Seattle Storm, outscored them in the paint and had more second-chance points, but all of it wasn't enough as the Sparks fell 90-82 on Wednesday in their penultimate home game of the season.

"It was a really, really well-played game," Sparks coach Curt Miller said. "I thought both teams adjusted to the physicality around the rim. The officials let a lot go tonight but because of that, there was some flow in our game. I just thought it was a really good basketball game... a lot easier to walk into that locker room tonight and talk to them about all the positives."

Ricke Jackson led the Sparks with 22 points. But it was really the efforts of two role players that

stood out: Odyssey Sims, who recently was signed for the rest of the season, had 16 points while shooting 61% from the field to go with six assists and three rebounds. And Azura Stevens had another monster night as she scored 18 points and grabbed 15 rebounds for a total of 32 rebounds in 48 hours.

"I just think I play better when I don't think and I'm just aggressive," Stevens said. "I think it helps the team come out and be more aggressive and it just gets us all attacking."

The Sparks entered the fourth quarter trailing by six, their largest deficit. They've had a bad habit of letting runs snowball throughout the season, but it appeared as though they finally found an answer when a reverse layup from Jackson put the cap on an 8-0 run to start the period, giving the Sparks back the lead for the first time since before halftime.

The teams traded buckets for the next few minutes, but a corner three-pointer from Sami Whitcomb gave Seattle a 75-72 lead with just less than six minutes to go. The Sparks were able to get within one point, but a late sequence that consisted of a fadeaway basket from Skylar Diggins-Smith and a Crystal Dangerfield turnover that led to a fast-break layup from former Sparks forward Nneka Ogumike stretched the lead to five with less than two minutes to go.

A pair of missed free throws from Rae Burrell in the final 90 seconds ended any hopes of a Sparks comeback.

Sims, a 10-year veteran, says a young team such as the Sparks being in these situations is a sign of growth.

"We don't have anything to lose, so what we control is our effort," she said. "Whether you play a lot of minutes or not, go out there and give it your all. I think that's more important, because it trickles down, from one all the way to 12. It's contagious. ... We have a young group, but you see glimpses of how good we can be."

The Sparks (7-30) head to Seattle (22-14) for a rematch Sunday. They return to Crypto.com Arena for their home finale against the Phoenix Mercury on Tuesday.

Table with 2 columns: WEDNESDAY'S LATE BOX STORM 90, SPARKS 82. Rows for Seattle, Sparks, 3-Point Goals, Total Fouls.

THE DAY IN SPORTS

Lions' Hall of Famer Schmidt dies at age 92

WIRE REPORTS

Joe Schmidt, the Hall of Fame linebacker who helped the Detroit Lions win NFL championships in 1953 and 1957 and later coached the team, has died. He was 92.

One of pro football's first great middle linebackers, Schmidt played his entire NFL career with the Lions from 1953 to 1965. An eight-time All-Pro, he was enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1973 and the college football version in 2000.

"Joe likes to say that at one point in his career, he was 6-3, but he had tackled so many fullbacks that it drove his neck into his shoulders and now he is 6-foot," said the late Lions owner William Clay Ford, Schmidt's presenter at his Hall of Fame induction in 1973. "At any rate, he was listed at 6 feet and as I say was marginal for that position. There are, however, qualities that certainly scouts or anybody who is drafting a ballplayer cannot measure."

Schmidt played college football in his hometown at Pittsburgh and was drafted by the Lions in the seventh round in 1953. As defenses evolved in that era, Schmidt's speed, savvy and tackling ability made him a valuable part of some of the franchise's greatest teams. Schmidt was elected to the Pro Bowl 10 straight years from 1955 to 1964, and after his arrival, the Lions won the last two of their three NFL titles in the 1950s.

In a 1957 playoff game at San Francisco, the Lions trailed 27-7 in the third quarter before rallying to win 31-27. That was the NFL's largest comeback in postseason history until Buffalo rallied from a 32-point deficit to beat Houston in 1993.

"We just decided to go after them, blitz them almost every down," Schmidt recalled. "We had nothing to lose. When you're up against it, you let both barrels fly."

Schmidt became an assistant after wrapping up his career as a player. He was Detroit's coach from 1967 to 1972, going 43-35-7. Schmidt was part of the NFL's All-Time Team revealed in 2019 to celebrate the league's centennial season.

"It was a dream of mine to play football," Schmidt told the Detroit Free Press in 2017. "I had so many

people tell me that I was too small. That I couldn't play. I had so many negative people say negative things about me ... that it makes you feel good inside. I said, 'OK, I'll prove it to you.'"

ETC. WNBA, Aces try to dismiss Hamby's suit

The WNBA and Las Vegas Aces filed motions to dismiss Sparks star Dearica Hamby's federal lawsuit that alleges mistreatment over her pregnancy while she was with the Aces.

Hamby filed the suit about a month ago, alleging the Aces discriminated and retaliated against her, resulting in her January 2023 trade to L.A. The Aces argued in their motion filed Wednesday that Hamby failed to provide evidence of retaliation or discrimination.

The WNBA argued Hamby doesn't have standing to sue the league because it doesn't employ her and disputed her claim that it didn't properly investigate her allegations. The league in May 2023 suspended Aces coach Becky Hammon for two games without pay and docked the Aces their first-round 2025 draft pick for providing impermissible player benefits involving Hamby.

The WNBA also denied it failed to extend Hamby's marketing agreement with the league as a form of retaliation. The league pointed to the nine-month gap between her complaint and the contract expiring as evidence of lack of causation.

Cleveland Guardians starting pitcher Alex Cobb went on the 15-day injured list because of a blister on his right middle finger. ... In Wednesday's late games, Bryan Woo took a perfect game into the seventh inning and Seattle beat San Diego 5-2.

Rory McIlroy birdied his final three holes to shoot three-under 68, two back of first-round leader Todd Clements at the Irish Open.

Rafael Nadal withdrew from next week's Laver Cup in Berlin, leaving it unclear when the Spanish star will play again.

Pac-12's future brighter after four schools join

The conference adds Boise State, Fresno State, Colorado State and San Diego State.

BY RALPH D. RUSSO

Can't say the Pac-12 is making a comeback because it never really went away.

The Conference of Champions was certainly in critical condition, but Oregon State and Washington State stood fast after the league collapsed in 2023 and vowed to keep it alive if a power conference invite didn't come.

Now, the Beavers and Cougars will be joined by Boise State, Colorado State, Fresno State and San Diego State in a reimagined Pac-12 in 2026.

The latest realignment aftershock makes it four straight years in which the 10 major Division I football conferences have been shaken up.

Of course, more moves will now follow. The Pac-12 is still two schools short of what it needs to be a recognized conference by the NCAA in two years, and the Mountain West is facing a future without four of its most valuable members, so shopping for replacements could be the next step.

Why add these four schools?

Football is the easiest answer. Boise State, Fresno State and San Diego State have not only been three of the best programs in the

Mountain West (nine conference championships combined since 2013) but also three of the most consistent winners in the country outside those in power conferences.

Colorado State is the outlier. The Rams have had runs of success, but despite a relatively new stadium and other investments in football, it has been a struggle lately. Colorado State has not had a winning season since 2017, but the school does have a foothold in the Denver media market and fields good basketball teams.

San Diego State has been a men's basketball powerhouse, with a Final Four appearance in 2023, and Boise State has made three straight NCAA men's tournaments.

Why should they join the Pac-12?

This is not the promotion these schools had been hoping for. They have all angled for years to join a power conference, where schools get payouts of more than \$30 million annually from multi-billion-dollar TV deals.

Still, this is a step up. Between the Pac-12's strong brand value and aligning with a smaller group of schools that have traditionally fielded highly competitive sports programs, the hope is it will boost revenue and profile.

"The acceptance of this invitation to join and rebuild Pac-12 membership is a catalyst for our vision of being the most watched, most



LYDIA ELY/Associated Press

THE DEPLETED Pac-12 added Boise State, Fresno State and San Diego State because they are three of the best football programs in the Mountain West.

loved and most innovative program in the West," Colorado State athletic director John Weber said.

A Pac-12 that starts with these six teams could also be better positioned than the Mountain West to earn one of five spots guaranteed to conference champions in the new 12-team College Football Playoff.

Who's next for the Pac-12?

Oregon State and Washington State got most of the Pac-12's money and assets in the divorce with the 10 former members. School leaders have pushed back on referring to what they have ac-

cess to as a war chest, but they have about \$250 million at their disposal.

They will have to dip into that to extricate Boise State, Colorado State, Fresno State and San Diego State from the Mountain West, probably to the tune of about \$100 million.

Will they spend more on Mountain West schools or look elsewhere?

In the Mountain West, Air Force and Nevada Las Vegas could be next in line. Schools in the American Athletic Conference such as Texas San Antonio, Memphis and Tulane could be attractive and cheaper.

AAC bylaws require departing members pay a \$10-

million withdrawal fee and give 27 months' notice. That timeline doesn't work for a July 2026 entry to the Pac-12, so figure any school leaving the AAC would have to increase the exit fee by a few million.

The ACC has the best media rights deal among Group of Five conferences, helping the conference pay out about \$9 million per school per year.

None of the schools that left the Pac-12 is coming back. Even with the uncertainty in the Atlantic Coast Conference, Stanford and California are locked in long term via a grant of media rights contract — unless the ACC is next to collapse.

Can it get a better media rights deal?

The Pac-12 managed to land a deal with the CW and Fox to broadcast football games this year, but the conference has nothing beyond it. The hope is a streamlined, best-of-the-rest conference can garner a deal that's better than or equal to the \$1-billion, 12-year contract the AAC has with ESPN. With fewer schools to feed, the payouts could be better per school.

Whither the Mountain West?

Barring more defections, the conference will still include UNLV, Air Force, Utah State, New Mexico, San José State, Nevada, Wyoming and Hawaii for football-only. Hawaii is otherwise affiliated with the Big West.

That's enough to move forward, but with its television deals expiring after the 2025-26 season, it is questionable whether the conference could replicate its existing \$270-million, six-year deal with Fox and CBS.

Adding schools might not help, but if the MWC were looking, its best options might come in the second tier of Division I.

The Big Sky with Montana, Montana State, Eastern Washington, Idaho and others is arguably the best conference in the Football Championship Subdivision. Those school have resisted jumping up to the Bowl Subdivision before.

Russo writes for the Associated Press.

Dobbins back and being cheered on by Aaron Rodgers

[Chargers, from B10] somebody that has a season-ending injury that comes back and then is up to that same standard, maybe even a little better: faster, quicker, stronger," Harbaugh said. "What you know when that takes place is the grueling rehab. ... He definitely put in the work and he's done it with a smile on his face and a bounce to his step."

The former first-team All-American has maintained his positive demeanor despite suffering two season-ending injuries in three years. After announcing himself at the NFL level by averaging six yards a carry as a rookie for the Baltimore Ravens, Dobbins missed the 2021 season because of a torn anterior cruciate ligament suffered in a preseason game. He returned as the full-time starter in 2022 but was slowed by another knee injury that limited him to seven games.

When Dobbins tore an Achilles in the season opener last year, he joined a growing group of players who have suffered the devastating injury. According to a study published in the International Journal of Sports Physical Therapy, 22 NFL players suffered Achilles tendon ruptures last season. The prevalence of Achilles tears in the NFL has increased between three- and five-fold.

Dobbins suffered the injury the same week as New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers, who then became a partner as the pair rehabbed together during the season.

Rodgers and Dobbins traded barbs about who was putting in more work. Rodgers poked fun at how much the 40-year-old quarterback was dominating physical therapy over the 25-year-old running back. Rodgers didn't just participate in the daily banter. He actively needed it, he said.

"He made every day's rehab just a little bit brighter," Rodgers said on the "Pat McAfee Show" on Tuesday, adding it was "just so freaking cool" to see Dobbins' success in the opener. "To see him smiling and laughing and more importantly just healthy, I just know what kind of guy he is, he's a special human being."

During free agency, Dobbins reunited with former Ravens running back Gus Edwards and offensive coordinator Greg Roman with the Chargers. With Dobbins sidelined last year, Edwards stepped up for career highs

in rushing yards (810), attempts (198) and touchdowns (13) while starting nine of 17 games. Edwards started Sunday and had six carries for eight yards in the first half, compared to Dobbins' two attempts for four yards.

The Chargers were struggling to break through on the ground until Dobbins rushed for 46 yards on the Chargers' fifth play of the second half, breaking a run up the middle on third and one. Dobbins ended with 10 carries to Edwards' 11, which went for 26 yards.

In some running back rooms, the by-committee approach might result in tension over playing time. Roman often catches Dobbins and Edwards standing side by side during practice, however, and the coach knows his room won't have to worry about any such problems.

"These guys are such a team," Roman said. "These guys work so well together, complement each other so well."

The gregarious Dobbins seems like a stark contrast to the straight-faced Edwards, who joined the Ravens as an undrafted rookie in 2018 and can be outgoing, Dobbins said.

Dobbins believes his gift is to "be a light."

"Even through hard times, I'm still smiling," Dobbins said during the preseason. "Because every day is a blessing. Especially to do the job that I do is a blessing, especially after all the stuff that I've been through on the field, I got no reason but to smile, right?"

The only reason to not smile, Dobbins clarified, is if his team is losing. The Chargers hope to avoid that sight weekly.

Bosa injury

Chargers star outside linebacker Joey Bosa, who has struggled with groin, hamstring and foot injuries in the last two seasons, did not practice Thursday because of a back injury.

The Chargers practice in El Segundo on Friday before traveling to face the Carolina Panthers on Sunday. The final injury report for the game will be released Friday afternoon.

After the Chargers' 22-10 win over the Las Vegas Raiders last Sunday, Bosa, the team's top tackler, was wearing a large bandage around his midsection to hold a bag of ice on his lower back. He was a limited participant during Wednesday's practice.



BRIAN ROTHMULLER/Icon SportsWire

GAVIN MEYER unexpectedly unseated USC's incumbent, all-conference defensive tackle Bear Alexander.

WORTH HIS WAIT FOR USC

Meyer's portal patience pays off in Trojans' defensive overhaul

BY RYAN KARTJE

The window was quickly closing last May, the pool of available transfers nearly set for next season, and Lincoln Riley had yet to land the interior lineman he and USC's defense still desperately needed.

Damonic Williams, one of the top young defensive tackles in the Big 12, was headed to Oklahoma. Derick Harmon, a 320-pound behemoth previously at Michigan State, chose Oregon. Within two days in May, two of the most coveted tackles in the transfer portal were out of reach. Others were finding homes fast. Time was running out to find a fit.

For Gavin Meyer, though, there was no real hurry. The Wyoming grad transfer had waited until the last possible moment to enter the portal, just barely beating the May 1 deadline. In part because he was graduating that week in Laramie, Wyo., where he'd spent the last four years. But also Meyer understood his circumstances made finding the right situation especially important. He didn't want to just be a depth piece added to some defense at the eleventh hour.

"I think that's 100% in people's thoughts in the transfer portal," Meyer said. "You have to find your right fit. There's so many things that go into that. With players on the team, how many guys they have on the team,

but also the coaching staff. As long as you're in the portal and you have the right intentions, a lot of people see through a lot of stuff."

USC had already added a transfer tackle in January, Isaiah Raikes, just to see him jump ship after spring. No matter how perilously thin the Trojans were on the interior, Riley didn't want to add for the sake of adding, either.

The previous cycle had been "a good reminder," Riley said later, of how adding a poor fit from the portal could be "one of the most damaging things you can do." This time, he and his USC staff were intent on "bringing in the right guys from the portal, not just the right body types or right experience level."

In Meyer, Riley and his new defensive coordinator, D'Anton Lynn, felt right away they'd found a combination of all three. Even if he'd never had the chance to prove it at the power conference level.

"He was one of the very, very few," Riley said, "who checked all the boxes for us."

Meyer has so far delivered on that initial confidence, even unexpectedly unseating the Trojans incumbent, all-conference defensive tackle, Bear Alexander, to earn a starting spot through the first two weeks. During that time, Meyer and Alexander have rotated evenly at tackle, playing roughly the same number of snaps (Meyer's 49



UP NEXT

11 USC vs. 17 Michigan

AT ANN ARBOR, MICH.

Sept. 21, 12:30 p.m. PDT
TV: Channel 2

■ Sign up for The Times of Troy, our new USC sports newsletter at latimes.com/newsletters.

to Alexander's 48). But where Meyer has earned universal early acclaim from coaches, the tone surrounding Alexander has been decidedly different since he sat out most of spring nursing an injury.

While Riley has praised his progress, the coach also made note before the season how Alexander "is still very young on the football field."

"Bear has a long ways to go," he said.

Meyer, meanwhile, made clear to Lynn upon first meeting him that he'd have no trouble picking up the Trojans new defensive scheme. For more than an hour on his visit, they talked about the finer points of defense, while Lynn rolled tape, peppering Meyer with questions.

"We're talking Xs and O's, concepts," Meyer said. "He's

asking me, 'What do you see here? What do you see here?' And we're going back and forth, back and forth on all that stuff."

It was an eye-opening exchange for Meyer.

"That was the moment when I was like, 'Yep, sounds about right,'" Meyer said. "Everything I'd heard about him and how he perceives the game of football was exactly how I see it."

And in Meyer, Lynn saw something USC's defense was desperately missing a season ago: a consistent presence on the interior.

It didn't matter that he'd arrived on campus only this summer. Or that his experience at Wyoming was spent primarily in a part-time role.

"From the very first practice, he was just on it," Lynn said. "From the fronts, the adjustments, the pressures, seeing how he picked it up that fast was super impressive."

Meyer's role on the interior should only prove more integral from here, with Michigan, the defending national champs, looming next Saturday and a slate of beefy Big Ten fronts fast approaching after that.

But so far, the fit at USC has been everything he — and his coaches — could have hoped for, considering how late they'd found each other.

"Just in the perfect place," Meyer said with a smile. "The perfect place to get better."

BASEBALL: WEDNESDAY FLASHBACK



ABBIE PARR Associated Press

BRANDON DRURY tries to field a single by Minnesota's Trevor Larnach in the first inning Wednesday. Drury later left the game.

Kochanowicz has off night for Angels

Rookie starter gives up four runs in 5 1/3 innings as Twins win again. Adams hits his first career homer.

By BRIAN HALL

MINNEAPOLIS — Matt Wallner homered for the second straight game, Brooks Lee snapped an 0-for-19 slump with a go-ahead, two-run double, and the Minnesota Twins beat the Angels 6-4 on Wednesday night.

Royce Lewis nearly had his sixth career grand slam for Minnesota in the seventh inning as his drive to left field initially was called a home run, but a review showed

that the ball hit the top of the wall for a two-run double.

Wallner's 13th homer into the bullpen in left-center tied it after the Angels' Taylor Ward led off the game with his 23rd homer. Willi Castro had an RBI single to snap an 0-for-16 skid during a three-run fourth inning for Minnesota.

"We felt good," Wallner said. "Guys getting hits and just continuous hits, driving guys in scoring position, is huge for us."

The Twins have back-to-back wins after losing six of their previous seven games. They entered Thursday six games behind Cleveland in the American League Central, and are 3 1/2 ahead of Detroit for the final AL wild card.

"We got some really nice swings," Minnesota manager

Rocco Baldelli said. "You could feel the offense kind of brewing there... You could feel the guys, the good energy, the good at-bats that they gave us. They were really locked in and doing their part in a nice way."

Nolan Schanuel had his 13th homer among three hits, and Jordyn Adams added his first career homer for the Angels, who have lost four of five.

"It felt good," Adams said. "I was going up to the plate looking for something hard and obviously I got it. And I just tried not to miss it. I was fouling them back my previous two at-bats and that was my main focus. Just get it in play."

Rookie starter Jack Kochanowicz (2-5) gave up four runs in 5 1/3 innings for the Angels. He entered the game with five con-

secutive quality starts since being recalled Aug. 10 for his third stint in the majors.

"I felt good but I need to be better with the breaking balls as usual," Kochanowicz said. "But they were just on the sinker. But then when I hit my spots and I did that little later on, I started using four-seamer to get them off of it."

Minnesota rookie Zebby Matthews started and gave up two runs in just 3 1/3 innings. Jhoan Duran surrendered three hits in the ninth, including an RBI single by Schanuel, but got his 23rd save.

Angels infielder Brandon Drury left the game in the fifth inning because of left hamstring tightness.

Hall writes for the Associated Press.

STANDINGS

Through Wednesday

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Table with columns: West, Central, East, Team, W, L, Pct., GB, L10. Lists standings for Dodgers, Arizona, San Diego, San Francisco, Colorado, Milwaukee, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York, Atlanta, Washington, Miami.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Table with columns: West, Central, East, Team, W, L, Pct., GB, L10. Lists standings for Houston, Seattle, Texas, Oakland, ANGELS, Cleveland, Kansas City, Minnesota, Detroit, Chicago, New York, Baltimore, Boston, Tampa Bay, Toronto.

Today's games

Table listing today's games between various teams with start times and locations.

MINNESOTA 6, ANGELS 4

Box score for Minnesota 6, Angels 4. Lists player stats for Angels and Minnesota.

BOSTON 5, BALTIMORE 3

Box score for Boston 5, Baltimore 3. Lists player stats for Baltimore and Boston.

CLEVELAND 6, CHICAGO WHITE SOX 4

Box score for Cleveland 6, Chicago White Sox 4. Lists player stats for Cleveland and Chicago.

N.Y. METS 6, TORONTO 2

Box score for New York Mets 6, Toronto 2. Lists player stats for Mets and Toronto.

DODGERS 10, CHICAGO CUBS 8

Box score for Dodgers 10, Chicago Cubs 8. Lists player stats for Dodgers and Chicago.

DETROIT 7, COLORADO 4

Box score for Detroit 7, Colorado 4. Lists player stats for Detroit and Colorado.

ARIZONA 14, TEXAS 4

Box score for Arizona 14, Texas 4. Lists player stats for Arizona and Texas.

WASHINGTON 5, ATLANTA 1

Box score for Washington 5, Atlanta 1. Lists player stats for Washington and Atlanta.

N.Y. YANKEES 4, KANSAS CITY 3

Box score for New York Yankees 4, Kansas City 3. Lists player stats for Yankees and Kansas City.

PHILADELPHIA 3, TAMPA BAY 2

Box score for Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 2. Lists player stats for Philadelphia and Tampa Bay.

ST. LOUIS 2, CINCINNATI 1

Box score for St. Louis 2, Cincinnati 1. Lists player stats for St. Louis and Cincinnati.

OAKLAND 5, HOUSTON 4

Box score for Oakland 5, Houston 4. Lists player stats for Oakland and Houston.

SEATTLE 5, SAN DIEGO 2

Box score for Seattle 5, San Diego 2. Lists player stats for Seattle and San Diego.

SAN FRANCISCO 13, MILWAUKEE 2

Box score for San Francisco 13, Milwaukee 2. Lists player stats for San Francisco and Milwaukee.

PITTSBURGH 3, MIAMI 1

Box score for Pittsburgh 3, Miami 1. Lists player stats for Pittsburgh and Miami.

PHILADELPHIA 3, TAMPA BAY 2

Box score for Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 2. Lists player stats for Philadelphia and Tampa Bay.

ARIZONA 14, TEXAS 4

Box score for Arizona 14, Texas 4. Lists player stats for Arizona and Texas.

WASHINGTON 5, ATLANTA 1

Box score for Washington 5, Atlanta 1. Lists player stats for Washington and Atlanta.

N.Y. YANKEES 4, KANSAS CITY 3

Box score for New York Yankees 4, Kansas City 3. Lists player stats for Yankees and Kansas City.

PHILADELPHIA 3, TAMPA BAY 2

Box score for Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 2. Lists player stats for Philadelphia and Tampa Bay.

ST. LOUIS 2, CINCINNATI 1

Box score for St. Louis 2, Cincinnati 1. Lists player stats for St. Louis and Cincinnati.

OAKLAND 5, HOUSTON 4

Box score for Oakland 5, Houston 4. Lists player stats for Oakland and Houston.

SEATTLE 5, SAN DIEGO 2

Box score for Seattle 5, San Diego 2. Lists player stats for Seattle and San Diego.

SAN FRANCISCO 13, MILWAUKEE 2

Box score for San Francisco 13, Milwaukee 2. Lists player stats for San Francisco and Milwaukee.

PITTSBURGH 3, MIAMI 1

Box score for Pittsburgh 3, Miami 1. Lists player stats for Pittsburgh and Miami.

PHILADELPHIA 3, TAMPA BAY 2

Box score for Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 2. Lists player stats for Philadelphia and Tampa Bay.

ARIZONA 14, TEXAS 4

Box score for Arizona 14, Texas 4. Lists player stats for Arizona and Texas.

WASHINGTON 5, ATLANTA 1

Box score for Washington 5, Atlanta 1. Lists player stats for Washington and Atlanta.

N.Y. YANKEES 4, KANSAS CITY 3

Box score for New York Yankees 4, Kansas City 3. Lists player stats for Yankees and Kansas City.

PHILADELPHIA 3, TAMPA BAY 2

Box score for Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 2. Lists player stats for Philadelphia and Tampa Bay.

ST. LOUIS 2, CINCINNATI 1

Box score for St. Louis 2, Cincinnati 1. Lists player stats for St. Louis and Cincinnati.

OAKLAND 5, HOUSTON 4

Box score for Oakland 5, Houston 4. Lists player stats for Oakland and Houston.

SEATTLE 5, SAN DIEGO 2

Box score for Seattle 5, San Diego 2. Lists player stats for Seattle and San Diego.

SAN FRANCISCO 13, MILWAUKEE 2

Box score for San Francisco 13, Milwaukee 2. Lists player stats for San Francisco and Milwaukee.

PITTSBURGH 3, MIAMI 1

Box score for Pittsburgh 3, Miami 1. Lists player stats for Pittsburgh and Miami.

PHILADELPHIA 3, TAMPA BAY 2

Box score for Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 2. Lists player stats for Philadelphia and Tampa Bay.

ARIZONA 14, TEXAS 4

Box score for Arizona 14, Texas 4. Lists player stats for Arizona and Texas.

WASHINGTON 5, ATLANTA 1

Box score for Washington 5, Atlanta 1. Lists player stats for Washington and Atlanta.

N.Y. YANKEES 4, KANSAS CITY 3

Box score for New York Yankees 4, Kansas City 3. Lists player stats for Yankees and Kansas City.

PHILADELPHIA 3, TAMPA BAY 2

Box score for Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 2. Lists player stats for Philadelphia and Tampa Bay.



ASHLEY LANDIS Associated Press

THE DODGERS' Shohei Ohtani gets his 48th stolen base, beating the tag by Cubs shortstop Dansby Swanson.

Dodgers hold five-game lead

[Dodgers, from B10] of the plate in the first inning and a two-run shot to right from the left side of the plate in the eighth, giving him four homers in a 24-hour span, but the switch-hitter was more impressed with Ohtani's prowess than his own power.

"Each day he does something, and you're like, 'I've never seen that before,'" Edman said. "The day game on Sunday, he hit the ball [450 feet] off the [stadium club] in right field, and tonight's homer was the lowest [launch angle] I think I've ever seen.

"He crushes the ball. To do that and steal as many bases as he does is pretty incredible."

Ohtani's homer sparked a five-run, six-hit first inning in which Edman, Will Smith and Muncy hit back-to-back-to-back homers, the second time this season the Dodgers have hit three straight home runs and four homers in an inning.

Ohtani walked and stole his 48th base in the second, continuing his march toward baseball's first 50-50 season, and he hit a two-out, two-run single to center field that left his bat at 111.6 mph for a 7-3 lead in the third.

"We all definitely know what's going on," Smith said of Ohtani's 50-50 quest. "It's fun to watch. It's fun to get a chance to see it every night. ... It's pretty impressive what he's doing individually, but he's also helping us win games."

Indeed, the Dodgers avoided a three-game sweep, pushed their National League West lead to five games over Arizona and 5½ over San Diego, and re-

duced their magic number to clinch the division title to 12 with 16 games to play.

But they didn't make it easy on themselves.

Right-hander Bobby Miller probably pitched his way out of a potential playoff rotation spot with his second straight shoddy start, giving up six runs and five hits — two of them homers — while walking four and striking out two in 4⅓ innings to boost his earned-run average to 8.17 in 12 starts.

Miller, who was rocked for seven runs and three homers in a 10-1 loss to the Angels on Sept. 4, walked two and gave up an RBI single to Isaac Paredes and an RBI double to Michael Busch in the first.

He gave up a solo homer to Seiya Suzuki in the third and a three-run shot to Cody Bellinger that pulled the Cubs to within 7-6 in the fifth.

"He's grinding," manager Dave Roberts said. "He's competing as much as he can, but he didn't have a feel for the curveball. He didn't strike it very often. They were taking good swings off the fastball. The changeup at times was good. Certainly, the walks weren't helpful."

Reliever Daniel Hudson replaced Miller in the fifth and walked two batters. An error by second baseman Chris Taylor on Nico Hoerner's potential double-play grounder loaded the bases, and Pete Crow-Armstrong's single tied the score 7-7.

The Dodgers took an 8-7 lead in the seventh when Smith hit a one-out double to right-center and took third on Muncy's groundout. Miguel Rojas walked, and Gavin Lux, who entered

as a pinch-hitter in the fifth, lined a clutch, two-out RBI single to center.

Teoscar Hernández, returning to the lineup, singled with two out in the eighth, and Edman's second homer gave the Dodgers two huge insurance runs and a 10-7 lead.

Evan Phillips retired the side in order in the eighth, and Michael Kopech survived a harrowing ninth, walking the first three batters before getting Paredes to hit a sacrifice fly to right. The Cubs gifted the Dodgers an out when Suzuki was thrown out attempting to steal third, and Busch struck out to end the game.

"I saw a lot of fight," Roberts said. "It's been a while since I've felt the energy, the buzz in the dugout that we had in that first inning.

"We got off to a really good start, took a couple of punches, gave up a big inning and the lead and battled back."

Ohtani also might be gaining the upper hand in a spirited battle with New York Mets shortstop Francisco Lindor for the NL most valuable player award.

Ohtani, the American League MVP in 2021 and 2023, has had the superior offensive season, with a .292 average, .992 on-base-plus-slugging percentage, 47 homers, 30 doubles, seven triples, 104 RBIs, 116 runs, 48 stolen bases in 52 attempts, 74 walks and 146 strikeouts in 143 games.

Lindor has a .268 average, .832 OPS, 31 homers, 28 doubles, one triple, 85 RBIs, 102 runs, 27 stolen bases in 31 attempts, 54 walks and 122 strikeouts in 146 games for a

second-place Mets team.

But while Ohtani has been relegated to designated hitter while he recovers from Tommy John surgery, Lindor has played Gold Glove-caliber defense at a premium position, racking up an NL-leading 17 outs above average, according to Fangraphs.

Both players have kept their teams in playoff contention, but Ohtani, who hopes to join Frank Robinson as the only players to win MVPs in both leagues, could become the first major leaguer to hit 50 homers and steal 50 bases in a season.

"It's a good debate," Roberts said when asked about a DH winning the MVP over a position player.

"I sort of equate it to a pitcher winning the MVP. If you separate yourself enough from the field, I think it deserves some worthy consideration.

"And when you're talking about someone who is close to doing something that's never been done, a 50-50 season, for me, that's separating yourself from the field."

Ohtani and Lindor were ranked first and second in the NL in wins above replacement, Ohtani (7.4) holding an edge over Lindor (6.4) in Baseball Reference's version of the all-encompassing metric, and Lindor (7.4) leading Ohtani (7.0) in the Fangraphs model.

"With all we've gone through, Shohei hitting leadoff and doing what he's done has allowed us to stay above water," Roberts said. "Him being able to take down 600 plate appearances and have an unprecedented season has been very valuable."

Ohtani could be the bullpen's savior

[Plaschke, from B10] saying Ohtani will not pitch this season while rehabbing from elbow surgery, but that rehab should soon end, just in time for his team to encounter an inning that requires three outs to win a series or a ring.

Game 7 of the National League Championship Series, ninth inning, they need somebody to mow down the Philadelphia Phillies' Kyle Schwarber, Trea Turner and Bryce Harper ... why not Ohtani?

Game 7 of the World Series, ninth inning, they need someone to stare down the New York Yankees' Juan Soto and Aaron Judge ... why not Ohtani?

First, the medical report. By the time the post-season begins, Ohtani should be ready to pitch competitively. He already is throwing off a mound and is scheduled to face Dodgers hitters sometime during these final weeks of the season.

There's not enough opportunity to build him up to be a starting pitcher, but, barring a major setback, physically he should enter October in a position to record the occasional three outs.

While he hasn't been a reliever since his early days in Japan, the highlight of his career came out of the bullpen, when he struck out Mike Trout to clinch the 2023 World Baseball Classic for Japan.

So if he physically can do it, and he's already done it successfully, and, considering how badly he wants to

'If he were to come out and it does go awry, it's not worth potential injury. You just cannot duplicate the stress of that one inning.'

— DAVE ROBERTS

win a championship, he surely is willing to do it ... so why not let him do it?

Wouldn't you want to put your biggest moment in the hands of your best pitcher?

Would you really want to leave your \$700-million investment on the bench to save him for the length of his 10-year contract if you have a chance to win now?

There are countless reasons not to pitch Ohtani in the post-season, but none are as important as the single reason why you should.

He can pitch the Dodgers to a parade.

And, goodness, after 36 years without a full-season title or the accompanying celebration, the most loyal fan base in baseball is deserving of a parade.

To not give the team and those fans and this city their best chance to win a title would be dereliction of duty. To not include Ohtani if the situation arises and he's

willing to take the ball would be simply wrong.

When pressed with the idea Wednesday, Dodgers manager Dave Roberts acknowledged he couldn't totally kibosh it.

"I wouldn't say no way ... I'm not going to close the door 100%," he said.

However, he acknowledged that while it would be cool, it would be tough.

"If I was scripting a movie or writing a book, it would be a no-brainer that he comes out of rehabilitation and throws the last pitch," Roberts said. "The problem is, in reality, he hasn't thrown a leverage pitch in over a year. If he were to come out and it does go awry, it's not worth potential injury.

"You just cannot duplicate the stress of that one inning. I just don't think it's worth it."

Andrew Friedman, president of baseball operations, steered clear of giving an opinion on the idea, noting that it was still too soon to even ponder.

"The subject is nowhere near front of mind for us," he said. "He's still going through his rehab progression."

The negatives are obvious.

Ohtani has nine more years left on a record contract whose value is based on his ability to both hit and pitch, and the Dodgers are uneasy about risking an arm injury that could end his pitching career for the sake of three outs.

When Ohtani underwent his second elbow surgery

last September, it was announced that he would not be ready to pitch until 2025, and the Dodgers are wary of suddenly changing that timetable, especially since it would annoy Ohtani's overbearing agent, Nez Balelo.

Even though he would need only an inning to get warmed up, and would be on the mound for only three outs, the Dodgers are concerned that the sudden change in routine would affect his MVP-level hitting.

"I would love to see what he did to Mike Trout to close out the Dodger World Series, but he had a ramp-up, building up to that moment," Roberts said, referring to the WBC ending.

Indeed, any Ohtani mound appearance would come out under the greatest of pressure with the least of preparation, thrusting him in a position to spectacularly fail.

But he has one thing going in his favor.

He's Shohei Ohtani! Truly, baseball crypts are filled with the dead arms of pitchers who were asked to compete in the post-season outside of their comfort zone.

But he has something they don't.

He's Shohei Ohtani!

Any argument against using their baseball unicorn in relief can be countered by those same three words, a phrase which this summer has come to symbolize magic and majesty and moonstruck possibility.

He's Shohei Ohtani! He can do anything. He can do this.

PRO CALENDAR

	FRI 13	SAT 14	SUN 15	MON 16	TUE 17
DODGERS	at Atlanta 4:15 Apple TV+	at Atlanta 4:15 SNLA	at Atlanta 4 ESPN	at Atlanta 4:15 SNLA	at Miami 3:30 SNLA
ANGELS	HOUSTON 6:30 BSW	HOUSTON 6:30 BSW	HOUSTON 1 BSW	CHICAGO WHITE SOX 6:30 BSW	CHICAGO WHITE SOX 6:30 BSW
RAMS			at Arizona 1:05 Ch. 11		
CHARGERS			at Carolina 10 a.m. Ch. 2		
SPARKS			at Seattle 3 SpecSN, Ch. 13		PHOENIX 7:30 SpecSn, CBSSN
GALAXY		LAFB 7:30 Apple TV+			
LAFB		at Galaxy 7:30 Apple TV+			
ANGEL CITY		at Louisville 4:30 Ion			

Shade denotes home game.

TODAY ON THE AIR



MATT YORK Associated Press

NELLY KORDA and the U.S. take their best shots on Day 2 of the Solheim Cup early Saturday morning.

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL		
2:30 a.m. (Sat.)	AFL, semifinals, Greater Sydney vs. Brisbane	TV: FS2
AUTO RACING		
2 p.m.	ARCA Menards, Watkins Glen	TV: FS1
4 p.m.	NHRA, Pep Boys Nationals, qualifying (delay)	TV: FS1
1:15 a.m. (Sat.)	Formula One, Azerbaijan Grand Prix, Practice 3	TV: ESPN2, ESPND
4:45 a.m. (Sat.)	Formula One, Azerbaijan Grand Prix, qualifying	TV: ESPN2, ESPND
BASEBALL		
3:30 p.m.	Kansas City at Pittsburgh	TV: MLB
4 p.m.	Boston at New York Yankees	TV: Apple TV+
4:30 p.m.	Dodgers at Atlanta	TV: Apple TV+ R: 570, 1020
6:30 p.m.	Houston at Angels	TV: BSW R: 830, 1330
7 p.m.	Texas at Seattle	TV: MLB
BASKETBALL: WNBA		
4:30 p.m.	Las Vegas at Indiana	TV: Ion
7 p.m.	Connecticut at Phoenix	TV: Ion
COLLEGE FIELD HOCKEY		
3 p.m.	Women, Northwestern vs. Louisville	TV: ACC
COLLEGE FOOTBALL		
4 p.m.	Nevada Las Vegas at Kansas	TV: ESPN
5 p.m.	Arizona at Kansas State	TV: 11
COLLEGE SOCCER		
4:30 p.m.	Men, Virginia Tech at Syracuse	TV: ACC
COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL		
5 p.m.	Women, Arizona State at Nebraska	TV: Big Ten
5:30 p.m.	Women, Duke at Penn State	TV: FS1
7 p.m.	Women, Washington State at Washington	TV: Big Ten
GOLF		
3:30 p.m.	PGA Tour, Procore Championship, second round	TV: Golf
4 a.m. (Sat.)	Solheim Cup, Day 2	TV: Golf
HORSE RACING		
10 a.m.	America's Day at the Races	TV: FS2
6:30 a.m. (Sat.)	Irish Champion Stakes	TV: FS2
PICKLEBALL		
1 p.m.	PPA, Atlanta Slam, quarterfinals	TV: CBSSN
PREP FOOTBALL		
7 p.m.	San Clemente at Corona del Mar	TV: BSSC
PRO FOOTBALL		
7 p.m.	Toronto at B.C.	TV: CBSSN
RUGBY		
7 p.m.	NRL, women, Brisbane vs. Cronulla-Sutherland	TV: FS2
8:30 p.m.	NRL, women, Gold Coast vs. Newcastle	TV: FS2
11 p.m.	NRL, men, Melbourne vs. Cronulla-Sutherland	TV: FS2
SOCCER		
11 a.m.	Saudi Arabia, Al Nassr vs. Al Ahli	TV: FOXD
11:30 a.m.	Germany, Borussia Dortmund vs. Heidenheim	TV: ESPN+
11:45 a.m.	France, Saint-Étienne vs. Lille	TV: beIN
Noon	Spain, Betis vs. Leganes	TV: ESPN+, ESPND
4 p.m.	NWSL, North Carolina vs. Bay FC	TV: Amazon Prime
5 p.m.	Canada, York vs. Valour	TV: FS2
6 p.m.	Mexico, Atlas vs. Pachuca	TV: TUDN
7 p.m.	Mexico, UANL vs. San Luis	TV: FOXD
7 p.m.	NWSL, Portland vs. Chicago	TV: Amazon Prime
8 p.m.	Mexico, Necaxa vs. UNAM	TV: TUDN
4:30 a.m. (Sat.)	England, Southampton vs. Manchester United	TV: USA, Universo
5 a.m. (Sat.)	Spain, Mallorca vs. Villarreal	TV: ESPN+, ESPND
6 a.m. (Sat.)	Italy, Como vs. Bologna	TV: CBSSN, Paramount+
6:30 a.m. (Sat.)	Germany, Hoffenheim vs. Leverkusen	TV: ESPN+
6:30 a.m. (Sat.)	Germany, Leipzig vs. Berlin	TV: ESPN+
6:30 a.m. (Sat.)	Germany, Freiburg vs. Bochum	TV: ESPN+
6:30 a.m. (Sat.)	Germany, Wolfsburg vs. Frankfurt	TV: ESPN+
6:30 a.m. (Sat.)	Germany, Monchengladbach vs. Stuttgart	TV: ESPN+
TENNIS		
5 p.m.	Guadalajara (WTA), semifinals	TV: Tennis
2 a.m. (Sat.)	Monastir (WTA), semifinals; Davis Cup group stage	TV: Tennis

SPORTS EXTRA



For late coverage of Dodgers, Angels, Rams and Chargers games and more, see our daily digital eNewspaper. Subscribers get free access to an exclusive "Sports Extra." View it on your phone, tablet or computer at latimes.com/enewspaper.

SPORTS

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2024 :: LATIMES.COM/SPORTS

Ohtani, Edman flexing muscles

Dodgers star sets off 4-homer first inning; utility man hits 2 for second straight game.

By Mike DiGiovanna

The Dodgers might want to add another giveaway item to the 18 bobblehead dolls and various jerseys, sweatshirts and hats on this year's promotional calendar: chest protector night, with free catcher's gear for fans in the right-field pavilion at Dodger Stadium.

One unlucky fan could have used some body armor in the first inning Wednesday night when Shohei Ohtani sent a 118.1-mph laser into the right-center-field seats for his career-high 47th homer, the first of four long balls in the inning, setting the tone for an eventual 10-8 victory over the Chicago Cubs in Chavez Ravine.

"I feel sorry for the fan who tried to catch that," third baseman Max Muncy said. "Every night, I feel like he does something we've never seen."

Tommy Edman had a huge night for the Dodgers, hitting a two-run homer to left field from the right side [See Dodgers, B9]



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

SHOHEI OHTANI'S surgically repaired elbow has healed and he's been throwing off a mound to build his arm strength back up.

The push for 50-50

Shohei Ohtani is trying to become the first player to hit 50 home runs and steal 50 bases in the same season. Here's how he stands:

HOME RUNS

47

STOLEN BASES

48

GAMES REMAINING

- 4 at Atlanta
3 games: 3 HRs, 2 SBs
- 3 at Miami
3 games: 1 HR, 2 SBs
- 3 vs. Colorado
7 games: 2 HRs, 2 SBs
- 3 vs. San Diego
9 games: 1 HR, 3 SBs
- 3 at Colorado
7 games: 2 HRs, 2 SBs

Here's the pitch: Ohtani on the mound in October

Dodgers star has shown he can do it all. If they need someone to get three outs, who else would you want in that spot?

BILL PLASCHKE



When the Dodgers last won the World Series in 2020, the championship was saved with the most unusual of scenarios.

The final seven outs of the deciding Game 6 victory against the Tampa Bay Rays were perfectly navigated by a pitcher who had worked out of the bullpen just once that season.

Julio Urias was not a reliever, but the Dodgers were nimble and smart and out of this gutsy decision, a title was forged.

Fast-forward to this October, when, if the Dodgers find themselves in a similar position — and they probably will — they should have the courage to make a similar maneuver.

This season's savior pitcher?

Shohei Ohtani.

This could happen. This should happen. This being Hollywood and this being Ohtani, how cool would it be if it really did happen?

The Dodgers have spent all summer

[See Plaschke, B9]

NFL WEEK 2 :: CHARGERS AT CAROLINA

SUNDAY AT BANK OF AMERICA STADIUM, CHARLOTTE, N.C., 10 A.M. PDT | TV: CHANNEL 2, PARAMOUNT +



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

J.K. DOBBINS led the Chargers in rushing Sunday in his debut with the team, overcoming a slow start to break off two long runs on Nate Hobbs and the Raiders.

DOBBINS HITS THE GROUND RUNNING

He's back and being cheered on by Aaron Rodgers after they rehabbed torn Achilles tendons together

By Thuc Nhi Nguyen

J.K. Dobbins never would say his triumphant return to the field one year after suffering a torn Achilles was satisfying. The Chargers running back wouldn't even say that rushing for 135 yards and a touchdown against the Las Vegas Raiders was emotional.

He has bigger plans. "I knew that's how hard I worked," Dobbins said after Sunday's season opener. "I knew it was going to show. I knew my prayers were going to be answered."

Dobbins could become

the first Chargers running back to start a season with back-to-back

100-yard games when the team visits the Carolina Panthers on Sunday. His 13.5 yards per carry are the most in an opening NFL weekend among players with at least 10 attempts. Coach Jim Harbaugh's favorite part was that Dobbins was "elite" in pass protection.

"I didn't like J.K.'s performance," Harbaugh said, "I loved it. In all ways."

What Dobbins didn't love about his performance was his conditioning. After a yearlong layoff, he acknowledged he needed to get in

better shape after he got chased down on runs of 46 and 61 yards.

Dobbins showed he still has his top-end speed while racing past the first and second levels of defenders. According to Zebra Technologies, which partners with the NFL's Next Gen Stats, Dobbins reached 19.92 mph on the field Sunday. It was tied with Philadelphia Eagles star Saquon Barkley for the highest top speed reached by a running back in Week 1.

"There's not too many things that are more impressive than when you see [See Chargers, B7]

Meyer's patience pays off for USC

Lineman waited until last minute to enter the portal and has played key role in team's defensive rebuild. **B7**

Pac-12 says it's not quite done

The conference finds new life, adding Boise State, Fresno State, Colorado State and San Diego State. **B7**

Sparks see positives but not win

They outplay Seattle in many facets of the game, but the Storm come away with a 90-82 victory. **B6**

SPORTS EXTRA

A TIMES E-NEWSPAPER EXCLUSIVE :: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2024



REBECCA BLACKWELL Associated Press

DOLPHINS QUARTERBACK Tua Tagovailoa (1) exits the field after being hit in the third quarter. Tagovailoa was diagnosed with a concussion and did not return.

Tagovailoa, Dolphins roughed up by Bills

By TIM REYNOLDS

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — Miami Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa sustained a concussion for the third time in his NFL career, leaving his team's game Thursday night against Buffalo after running into defensive back Damar Hamlin and hitting the back of his head against the turf.

Tagovailoa remained down for about two minutes before getting to his feet and walking to the sideline after the play in the third quarter. He made his way to the tunnel not long afterward, looking into the stands before smiling and departing toward the locker room.

The Dolphins needed almost no time before announcing it was a concussion. The team said he had two during the 2022 season, and Tagovailoa was diagnosed with another concussion when he was a college player at Alabama.

Dolphins coach Mike McDaniel said Tagovailoa would get "proper procedural evaluation" and "appropriate care" on Friday.

"The furthest thing from my mind is, 'What is the timeline?' We just need to evaluate and just worry about my teammate, like the rest of the guys are," McDaniel said. "We'll get more information tomorrow and take it day by day from here."

Some players saw Tagovailoa in the locker room after the game and said they were encouraged. Tagovailoa spoke with some players and then went home, McDaniel said.

"I have a lot of love for Tua, built a great relationship with him," said quarterback Skylar Thompson, who replaced Tagovailoa after the injury. "You care about the person more than the player and everybody in the organization would say the same thing."

Tagovailoa signed a four-year, \$212-million extension before this

season — a deal that makes him one of the highest-paid players in the NFL — and was the NFL's leading passer in Week 1. He left with the Dolphins trailing 31-10, and that was the final score.

"If you know Tua outside of football, you can't help but feel for him," Bills quarterback Josh Allen said on Amazon after the game. "He's a great football player but he's an even greater human being."

Tagovailoa's college years and first three NFL seasons were marred by injury, though he positioned himself for a big pay bump with an injury-free and productive season last year as he led the Dolphins into the playoffs. He threw for 29 touchdowns and a league-best 4,624 yards.

When, or if, he can come back this season is anyone's guess. Tagovailoa said in April 2023 that the concussions he had in the 2022 season left him contemplating his playing future. "I think I consid-

ered it for a time," he said then, when asked if he considered stepping away from the game to protect himself.

Tagovailoa was hurt Thursday on a fourth-down keeper with about 4:30 left in the third quarter. He went straight ahead into Hamlin and did not slide, leading with his right shoulder instead. He wound up on his back, both his hands in the air and Bills players immediately pointed at Tagovailoa as if to suggest there was an injury. Dolphins center Aaron Brewer quickly did the same, waving to the sideline.

Tagovailoa appeared to be making a fist with his right hand as he lay on the ground. It was movement consistent with something that is referred to as the "fencing response," which can be common after a traumatic brain injury.

Tagovailoa eventually got to his feet. McDaniel grabbed the side of his quarterback's head and gave

him a kiss on the cheek as Tagovailoa departed. Thompson came into the game to take Tagovailoa's spot.

Hamlin was the player who suffered a cardiac arrest after making a tackle during a Monday night game in January 2023 at Cincinnati, causing the NFL to suspend a pivotal game that quickly lost significance in the aftermath of a scary scene that unfolded in front of a national television audience.

"I love Tua on and off the football field," Bills edge rusher Von Miller said. "I'm a huge fan of him. I can empathize and sympathize with him because I've been there. I wish him the best."

James Cook caught a touchdown pass and ran for two scores for the Bills, who improved to 14-2 against Miami since Sean McDermott's first year as coach in 2017.

Reynolds writes for the Associated Press.

What rivalry? Oregon State vs. Oregon is a nonconference game

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The rivalry between Oregon and Oregon State often had post-season implications in the past. Now? Not as much.

Before Oregon decided to leave the Pac-12 for the Big Ten, the in-state rivalry was played over Thanksgiving weekend. The timing often meant that at least one team was competing for a spot in the Pac-12 championship game or jockeying for bowl position.

So while both sides still are gunning for a victory Saturday in Corvallis, this meeting between the No. 9 Ducks and the Beavers is now simply a nonconference game.

Oregon State is looking to go 3-0 in what remains of the Pac-12 under new coach Trent Bray. The Beavers have wins against Idaho State and San Diego State to start what will be an unusual season.

"I know this is a rivalry game and all those things, but for players and guys that go out there on the field, once the game starts, it's football. None of that stuff really matters," Bray said.

Oregon also looks to go 3-0 but has struggled in underwhelming wins over Idaho and Boise State to open its first season in the Big Ten. Oregon was ranked No. 3 in the pre-season Associated Press poll but has dropped after each game.

"Is it another game? Yeah, it's another game. Is it important for us? It's very important for us," Oregon coach Dan Lanning said. "Our guys want to go out there and have success."

Offensive line woes

It was clear Oregon had not resolved its offensive line issues from Week 1 to Week 2. Boise State sacked Ducks quarterback Dillon Gabriel four times, and Oregon had just 109 yards rushing. The Ducks used several combinations on the line, including swapping centers Japani Laloulu and Charlie Pickard.

"We're going to have to keep challenging ourselves to figure out what that looks like. I do think we found some highlights at times of guys looking well, but also had some lowlights at multiple positions and didn't matter necessarily what position a guy was at, there was mistakes at all those," Lanning said. "But I promise you nobody looks at it closer than we do."

On the run

Through the first two games, the Beavers are averaging nearly 300 yards rushing and are ranked fifth in the nation. Of 140 offensive plays, 109 have been runs (also fifth nationally). Six of their touchdowns have come on the ground.

Bray said he would like to see



LYDIA ELY Associated Press

OREGON quarterback Dillon Gabriel has completed 84.3% of his passes for 623 yards with four touchdowns. But he was sacked four times by Boise State, a sign of the Ducks' offensive line woes.

the Beavers be more balanced.

"The great teams that I've been around or have watched have been great running football teams," Bray said. "I think that's where it starts. Your ability to close out games, you've got to be able to run the football. It definitely helps your defense stay off the field, so it helps you play better defense. There's no question. But as much as we've [run] it, probably not. It's just kind of how the games are, and what's been working."

Confident quarterbacks

Gabriel is putting up big numbers for the Ducks, but his stock as a Heisman candidate slid a bit be-

cause of Oregon's struggles.

Gabriel has thrown for 623 yards with four touchdowns. He ranks third nationally in completion percentage (84.3), completing 59 of 70 passes.

On the Beavers' side, Gevani McCoy has thrown for 295 yards, two touchdowns and has a 69.4% completion rate. The Ducks got a peek at McCoy while studying film before the opener against Idaho — McCoy transferred from Moscow to Oregon State in the offseason. While acknowledging that Oregon State is more of a running team, Lanning said that when McCoy throws, he does it well.

"It's really kind of second time

we watched him this year because we watched a lot of his film going into our first game. And he's really elusive, he's really athletic, he throws the ball well," Lanning said.

Historic rivalry

It is the 128th meeting in the rivalry, which used to be known as the Civil War. It is the seventh-most contested game ever, and second most at the FBS level.

Oregon leads 68-49-10, but Oregon State has won the last two at Reser Stadium. The Ducks won last season's game 31-7 at Autzen Stadium. This is the first time the rivalry game has been played in September.

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Los Angeles Times

This must be the place

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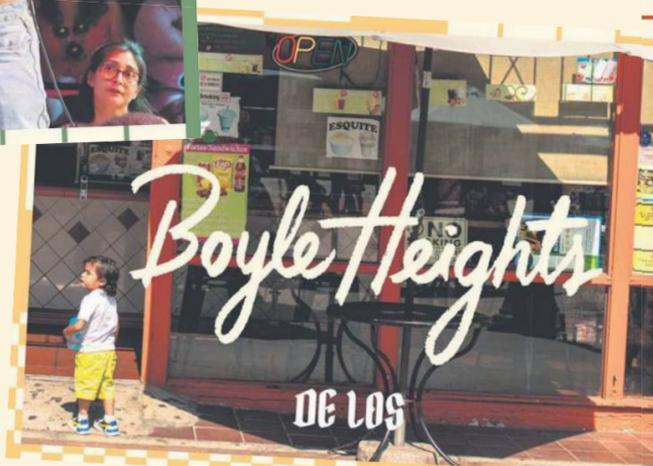
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ENTERTAINMENT

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THE EMMYS

Writing the end of a marriage

Treva Silverman on the 'MTM' episode where Lou Grant's wife leaves him.

BY WHITNEY FRIEDLANDER

In "Inside the Episode," writers and directors reflect on the making of their Emmy-winning episodes.

Is Hulu's "The Bear" a comedy? Was HBO's "Succession" a drama? And should they be judged as equals?

If this were 1974, TV fans could have seen this knock-down, grudge match play out in real time.

For that year's Primetime Emmy Awards, the TV Academy introduced "Super Emmy" categories. Meant to be a tongue-in-cheek battle of the genres, 14 already announced Emmy winners (including actors, writers and directors) competed for the "Super Emmy" during the ceremony, going head to head with their genre counterparts (best comedy director battled best drama director, etc.). To pull this off in a reasonable time frame for a live production, the academy revealed the winners of the traditional categories ahead of time and then asked members to revote for the "Super Emmy" winners, which would be unveiled at the ceremony.

Ironically, some of the biggest opponents of the "Super Emmys" were also its winners, such as actor of the year recipient Alan Alda ("M*A*S*H") and actress of the year recipient Mary Tyler Moore ("The Mary Tyler Moore Show"). They each used their acceptance speech to ridicule the category.

The "Super Emmys" did not get a second-season renewal.

"It was so stupid ... it took all the magic away," says [See Super Emmy, E6]



From Treva Silverman / CBS
TREVA Silverman won for a pivotal "Mary Tyler Moore Show" episode.



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

LUCAS BRAVO traded law school for acting. He got his big break on the series "Emily in Paris."

IT'S ALL BRAVO FOR 'EMILY' STAR

Netflix show's dreamboat chef is learning to embrace stardom

BY YVONNE VILLARREAL

Something crazy happened to me the other day," Lucas Bravo says as he sits alfresco at Swingers, the diner that's a longtime staple along Beverly Boulevard in West Hollywood, on a sticky August day.

He explains that it was about 5 a.m. and that he was jetlagged after traveling to L.A. from Paris, where he lives, to promote the new season of "Emily in Paris." Unable to sleep, Bravo linked up with a friend and drove to a beach, where he was approached with an unusual request.

"As we park, a Range Rover pulls up and this woman is like, 'Hey, are you doing anything?'" Bravo recalls. "She was like, 'Listen, if you have 10

minutes, I'll give you money so you can serve someone [legal papers]. Basically, it's for custody of my kids; I'm in the middle of a divorce and these are papers to serve to my mother-in-law.'"

"I'm a people pleaser," he says. "so I'm like, 'How do I get out of this?' And I'm an Aries, so I jump in the pool and then I learn how to swim. But, also, I mean, I don't want to serve a grandmother. My friend got me out of it. But what if I was alone? I probably would have done it."

This is what it's like, getting lost in the tales of a French guy who's in Los Angeles. But, for the record, his alter ego may still have the edge on experiencing surprising and dramatic life moments.

[See Bravo, E6]



CANNES Film Festival Grand Prix winner "All We Imagine as Light."

Race for the top Oscar is wide open

GLENN WHIPP

This time last year, "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer" were taking a victory lap after saving cinema. We spent the summer swooning over Celine Song's heartbreaking love story "Past Lives" while Cannes and the fall film festivals unveiled the likes of "Killers of the Flower Moon," "The Zone of Interest," "Poor Things," "Maestro," "The Holdovers," "Anatomy of a Fall" and "American Fiction."



Those 10 movies became the finest group of best picture Oscar nominees we've had since the motion picture academy expanded the category in 2009. A mix of critical favorites, audience crowd-pleasers and the raw material for a dozen different Halloween costumes, this class was impeccable and, at least for the near future, unrepeatable.

Which brings us to 2024, where, at the moment, the two movies that have most thrilled audiences at Cannes and the fall film festivals are Jacques Audiard's "Emilia Pérez," a musical soap opera about a Mexican cartel boss looking to transition to being a woman, and Sean Baker's [See Awards, E3]

Beyond Fest returns to L.A.

Keanu Reeves, Sandra Bullock and Al Pacino lead an all-star lineup later this month. E2

Remake tones down malice

Hollywood's take on horror film "Speak No Evil" lacks courage of Danish original. E2

Comics E4-5
Puzzles E5

MUSIC REVIEW

Linkin Park roars back with echoes of the band's past

The group and its new singer kick off a tour with familiar two-hour set at the Forum.

BY STEVE APPLEFORD

Seven years after tragedy silenced the raging platinum-selling rock band Linkin Park, the group took a major step toward its resurrection at the Forum on Wednesday night, launching a tour with new singer Emily Armstrong.

Following 17 years of radio hits and major touring success, the band's original run ended abruptly with the 2017 suicide of singer Chester Bennington, who had long been the roaring counterpoint to Mike Shinoda's rapped vocals. In his lyrics and performances, he was an artist adept at the ex-

tremes of fury and tenderness who had connected deeply around the world.

A new singer who sounded too much like Bennington would only make fans miss him more. For his replacement, casting against type was the braver and more intriguing path, rebirthing Linkin Park as something more than a sad echo of its past. Armstrong, who previously sang for Los Angeles-based rock band Dead Sara, showed that potential at the Forum.

The band played in the round, on a mostly empty, high-tech stage shaped like an aircraft carrier. That meant great sight lines for more people in the arena, but muddier sound as a result.

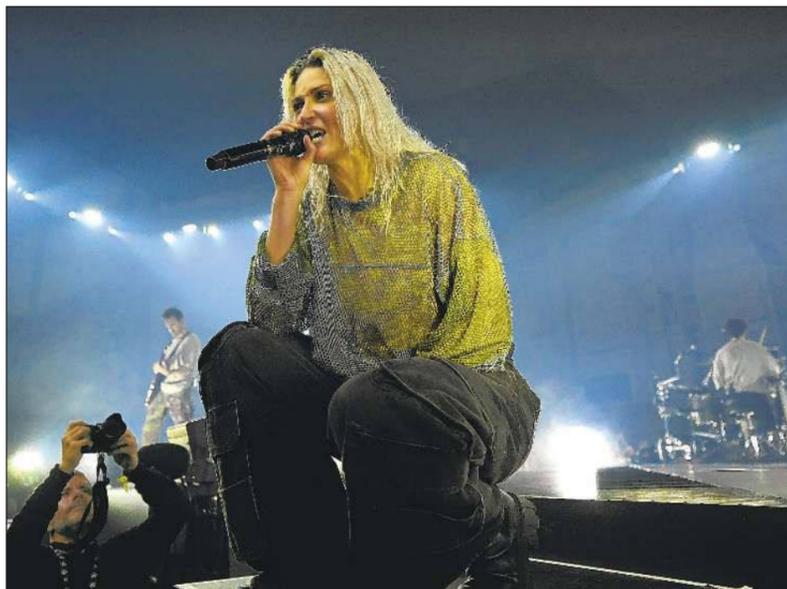
Regardless, for two hours the band powered through 27 songs as tight as ever, beginning with two of their most popular early anthems, "Somewhere I Be-

long" and "Crawling." Like most of the Linkin Park songbook, Bennington's voice was central on the original recordings, but Armstrong dived in with confidence and appropriate angst, frequently bent over her mic, wailing at the edge of the stage.

On "Crawling," she roared the signature anguished lyric, headbanging her blond locks: "I've felt this way before / So insecure!" as the crowd shouted along.

Genders aside, there are similarities between the current and former singers. Like Bennington, Armstrong is as capable with rich melodies as throat-ripping vocals, a natural fit with the established Linkin Park sound, which collides metal riffs with hip-hop, electronics and pop hooks.

"Have you met our friend Emily yet?" said a grinning Shinoda, bearded and wear- [See Linkin Park, E2]



TIMOTHY NORRIS Getty Images

EMILY ARMSTRONG has stepped in as a new singer for Linkin Park, which is back and on tour seven years after the death of frontman Chester Bennington.

Beyond Fest to return with all-star lineup

This year features a 'Speed' reunion, a 'Scarface' tribute and buzzworthy films.

By JOSH ROTTENBERG

Keanu Reeves and Sandra Bullock will buckle up for a "Speed" reunion while Al Pacino will say hello with a "Scarface" tribute at this year's Beyond Fest, returning to Los Angeles later this month and boasting 82 films in its star-studded program.

Running from Sept. 25 to Oct. 9, Beyond Fest's 12th edition features its most expansive and diverse lineup to date, with a wide range of films spanning horror, sci-fi, fantasy and action.

This year's festival opens with the world premiere of "Salem's Lot," a much-anticipated new adaptation of Stephen King's 1975 vampire novel, directed by Gary Dauberman. The fest's closing night will honor legendary Japanese director Kiyoshi Kurosawa, who will present the world premiere of his latest film, "Cloud," and participate in a retrospective of his work, which has seen him blend psychological horror and existential

themes in movies like "Cure," "Pulse" and "Tokyo Sonata."

In between those two evenings, notable screenings will include the West Coast premieres of Marielle Heller's "Nightbitch," starring Amy Adams as a stay-at-home mom who thinks she may be becoming a dog, and Steven Soderbergh's "Presence," which The Times called "a sleek and sublimely nimble ghost story" when it debuted at Sundance earlier this year. Ali Abbasi's controversial Trump biopic "The Apprentice," which continued to make waves at the Telluride Film Festival earlier this month, will screen ahead of its release nationwide on Oct. 11.

Unique among the fall festivals, which tend to favor Oscar contenders, Beyond Fest has proven an increasingly powerful draw for talent as a springboard for new genre fare presented to adoring audiences. In 2022, the festival bet big on Indian filmmaker S.S. Rajamouli, helping launch a successful Oscar bid for his action epic "RRR." Last year's edition brought out heavy hitters including James Cameron, Guillermo del Toro and Michael Mann.

Along with the highly anticipated "Speed" reunion,



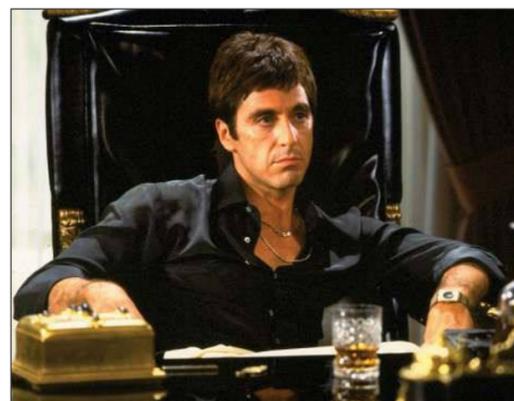
RICHARD FOREMAN 20th Century Fox

KEANU REEVES and Sandra Bullock will reunite at the film festival, celebrating their 1994 "Speed."

which brings Reeves, Bullock and director Jan de Bont together to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the bomb-on-a-bus action classic, Pacino will be on hand for a career retrospective centered around his iconic role as Tony Montana in 1983's "Scarface." The appearance comes as Pacino is set to release his memoir "Sonny Boy" next month.

Genre legend Sam Raimi, known for "Evil Dead" and "Spider-Man," will be in person with a triple feature of "Darkman," "The Quick and the Dead" and "Drag Me to Hell."

The festival also will host a 50th-anniversary screening of 1974 horror classic "The Texas Chain Saw Massacre," with a dozen members of the original cast and crew in attendance. Other retro highlights include a 30th-anniversary matinee of Tim Burton's "Ed Wood," presented by screenwriters Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski, and a career tribute to "Twin Peaks" star Kyle MacLachlan, who will introduce screenings of some of his most iconic films, including "Blue Velvet," "Dune" and "The Hidden."



Universal Studios

AL PACINO will appear at a tribute to 1983's "Scarface" just before his memoir release next month.

Fan favorite Ron Perlman will be on hand for a 20th-anniversary screening of Del Toro's "Hellboy," while "Nightmare on Elm Street" franchise stars Heather Langenkamp, Amanda Wyss, Lin Shaye and Ronee Blakley will host a screening of Wes Craven's original horror hit, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary. Australian director Jennifer Kent will make a rare U.S. appearance to celebrate the 10th anniversary of her horror film "The Babadook," while Don Johnson will take the stage for a career retrospective

featuring a double bill of his 1975 postapocalyptic cult film "A Boy and His Dog" and the 1990 noir thriller "The Hot Spot."

Screenings will take place at several iconic Los Angeles venues, including the Egyptian Theatre, Aero Theatre, Los Feliz 3 and Vista Theatre, with all proceeds benefiting the American Cinematheque, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and presenting the art of film.

Tickets are on sale via americancinematheque.com. For more details, visit beyondfest.com.

MOVIE REVIEW

'Speak No Evil' remake turns down volume on malevolence

Unforgettably bleak Danish horror film is sapped of its courage in Hollywood's take.

By ROBERT ABELE

A soul-chilling modern horror classic has been given a giggly date-night polish in the Blumhouse remake of the 2022 Danish film "Speak No Evil." Beyond the usual Hollywood impulse to try to increase art-house-sized audiences to big box-office levels, there was really no reason to remake Danish filmmaker Christian Tafdrup's squirmy hell-is-other-people scenario. But in doing so, writer-director James Watkins has swapped out malevolence for a tamer sense of misadventure. The take-away? Lingering dread isn't multiplex-friendly.

There's nothing inherently wrong with remakes, which, when executed wisely, should give leeway for a different chef's take on an established dish. And at first, the bones of this "Speak No Evil" effectively mirror the unassuming allure and eccentricity of the original's groundwork in how tourists bond. Under a stock-standard Tuscan sun, married American couple Louise (Mackenzie Scott) and Ben (Scoot McNairy) spark with a British family sharing their fancy villa. They are a rascally charming, forthright doctor named Paddy (James McAvoy), his smiling wife, Ciara (Aisling Franciosi), and their mute, reserved boy, Ant (Dan Hough).



JAY MAIDMENT Universal Pictures / Blumhouse

JAMES McAVOY turns on the creepy in James Watkins' film "Speak No Evil."

'Speak No Evil'

Rating: R, for some strong violence, language, some sexual content and brief drug use
Running time: 1 hour, 50 minutes
Playing: In wide release

Ant bonds with Louise and Ben's own kid, the similarly withdrawn 11-year-old Agnes (Alix West Leffer). After the dinner chat among the adults proves lively and inspiring, in no time there's a plan for them all to reunite back in the U.K. at the rustic, secluded farmhouse property in the north country where Paddy and Ciara live.

During a long country weekend, however, the hosts' energetic hospitality betrays an edge, mainly to do with Paddy's mercurial, insistent personality and flashes of ill temper toward Ant. But also in how gleefully he'll push Louise and Ben into a frozen discomfort, as if playing a social-norms parlor game: poking at Louise's vegetarianism, stifling them with a dinner bill and taking open displays of horniness too far. In these scenes, it's hard to take your eyes off the glinting McAvoy, who's like some fiendish juggler of items both benign and dangerous. You know he'll throw something at you if you're not prepared.

But while Ben and Louise, already not the most secure of unions, argue where their bailout line is, Ant seems intent on secretly

communicating to Agnes something gravely serious about the situation they're in. And that's when the unsettling road that the new film, to this point, has mostly shared with the Danish original suddenly forks, sending its characters into a very different endgame, one with a vastly different tone and outlook.

The central deviation is that this "Speak No Evil," with its more pronounced humor and catharsis, treats the other film's scenario as a ghastly comedy of manners rather than as a brutalizing, unheroic descent. In other words, it's no longer true horror. But, hey, it's hard to sell tickets to the feel-bads, so a trap becomes a maze, the weak become the strong and predators learn a little bit about being the prey. Who wants to leave the theater remembering how unsettling it was initially to watch observant, good people ignore every protective instinct, a merciless commentary on our thirst-to-belong society?

And sure, some of what's different here is admirably pulse-racing, because Watkins constructs a sturdy ride, including the amusing needle drop of an '80s song best left unspoiled. He's also gifted with a great cast, starting with McAvoy and very much extending to the exquisite marital purgatory of McNairy and Scott. But when you won't speak the evil of "Speak No Evil," then a disservice has been done to the source terror and how expertly it refused to deliver us to a safe place.



TIMOTHY NORRIS Getty Images

EMILY ARMSTRONG and Linkin Park perform during a global livestream at Warner Bros. Studios.

Linkin Park kicks off new chapter

[Linkin Park, from E1] ing a leopard-print jacket. He did most of the talking between songs, and also noted the spontaneous, high-octane singalongs that were already filling the arena, with an affectionate nod to their late vocalist. "You already know that you guys are singing for Chester tonight, right?"

Later, he added, "We are thrilled to be back out here. It is not about erasing the past. It is about starting a new chapter into the future."

That new chapter arrived with little warning less than a week ago, when Linkin Park announced its return, and introduced its new singer, via a livestream performance from Warner Bros.' Burbank studio that included a new song, "The Emptiness Machine." A new album, "From Zero," will land in November from the band's longtime label, Warner Records.

Losing a talented, charismatic frontman is a devastating blow to any rock group, and few survive. If most Linkin Park fans were resigned to the band being over, the impulse to find a way back is in character for Shinoda, long its most driven creative force in the studio. But keeping the reunion a secret even as the group rehearsed with Armstrong, recorded an entire album and planned an arena tour was a startling feat.

"I'm sorry we had to keep this big secret from you for so long. It was very difficult for us," Shinoda said from the Forum stage, then nodded toward Armstrong. "She had to not even hang out with her friends or tell anybody anything."

There are other changes too. Drummer Rob Bourdon chose not to participate in the reunion and was re-

placed by Colin Brittain. While guitarist Brad Delson remains a full member, he will no longer tour with Linkin Park; filling in on the road is Alex Feder.

Fans were primed for this moment and roared with approval. There were many spontaneous chants of: "Linkin Park! Linkin Park! Linkin Park!" Bennington's singular presence was irreplaceable, but Armstrong showed she had chops of her own to help the veteran act work toward something new.

Until "From Zero" is released, the band's set list will remain almost entirely songs from the past. But Armstrong seemed up to the challenge, even on 2007's agitated "Given Up," originally featuring one of Bennington's most superhuman vocals, as she paced the large stage, pumping her fist, reshaping the vocal to her voice.

At a different volume was "Lost," as Shinoda tapped a delicate piano melody and Armstrong added an understated vocal of regret ("I'm lost in these memories / Living behind my own illusion"). Originally recorded during sessions for 2003's " Meteora," the song remained unreleased until a 20th-anniversary reissue of the album, but at the Forum it was rearranged to its most austere and vulnerable.

Late in the evening, Linkin Park delivered three of the band's most popular and explosive songs of frustration and defiance — "Numb," "In the End" and "Faint" — as Armstrong was nearly drowned out by a crowd passionately singing every word. In those moments, it hardly mattered who held the microphone, as thousands of the band's most devoted followers took on the lyrics as their own, and maybe saw something of themselves in this new singer.

The Forum concert was the first night of a short international tour that continues Monday in New York, followed by stops in Hamburg, Germany; London; Seoul; and Bogotá, Colombia. A longer tour is promised for 2025.

After years of silence, Linkin Park once again sounds like a band with a future.

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NETFLIX

Fall film fests offer hints of what may lead the Oscar race

[Awards, from E1] “Anora,” the madcap, generous story of a Brooklyn sex worker who impulsively marries the young son of a Russian oligarch. Both films premiered earlier this year at Cannes, where “Anora” won the festival’s highest prize, the Palme d’Or.

“This isn’t exactly a mainstream movie,” Baker said at Cannes, both stating the obvious and expressing the tone of the upcoming awards season in a mere half-dozen words.

From the size of the crowds standing outside theaters showing “Anora” at Telluride, you might have suspected Baker was under-selling his movie a bit. Hundreds were turned away, a notable (and happy) contrast to the divisive reception that Baker’s last movie, “Red Rocket,” received at the festival two years ago.

Have audiences become more open and adventurous? We’re about to find out as we enter an Oscar season that seems as unsettled as any in recent memory, dominated by international auteurs, indie offerings and, fingers crossed (because we could really use a maximalist miracle), Ridley Scott’s “Gladiator II.”

Even the one blockbuster that’s already locked for a best picture nomination, Denis Villeneuve’s “Dune: Part Two,” stands as daring cinema, its spectacle aiming for both the gut and the intellect.

Villeneuve’s first “Dune” movie won six Oscars two years ago. The sequel might equal that count. But being the second film of a planned trilogy (even if Villeneuve doesn’t like to define the series that way), a best picture win is unlikely, an

outcome any middle child already knows in their secret heart.

While “Anora” and “Emilia Pérez” established themselves at Cannes, the fall festivals offered a murkier picture of the season. “The Room Next Door,” Pedro Almodóvar’s first English-language film, won the Golden Lion for best film at Venice. The drama follows a terminally ill journalist (Tilda Swinton) who asks a close friend (Julianne Moore) to stay with her as she contemplates taking her own life. Festival buzz at Venice and Toronto, aside from the Golden Lion, felt respectful but not quite rapturous.

The Telluride premieres of “Conclave” and “Nickel Boys” offered contrasting portraits of the ways audiences receive movies at festivals.

The movies played back-to-back on Telluride’s opening night, with Edward Berger’s “Conclave,” a lively and occasionally clever melodrama about a bunch of petty cardinals choosing the next pope, wowing the crowd with a series of pulpy plot twists. Ralph Fiennes does most of the heavy lifting, playing a dutiful and doubting man overseeing the vote. “Conclave” feels like a movie made for the Oscars: absurd, stylish and not nearly as shrewd as it thinks it is. Expect it to clean up.

“Nickel Boys,” RaMell Ross’ disorienting adaptation of Colson Whitehead’s celebrated novel, followed “Conclave” and knocked its audience sideways. Shot from the point of view of its characters, two Black boys navigating the horrors of a Florida reform school,



BRADY CORBET’S “The Brutalist,” with Alessandro Nivola, left, and Adrien Brody, launched a bidding war.

“Nickel Boys” invites moviegoers to immerse themselves and bear witness. Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor, wonderful as a loving grandmother, said festivalgoers approached her after the screening, calling the movie “tough.” That’s fine with her.

“I think that we have been conditioned as moviegoers, particularly in this country, to have an expectation of how we should feel watching a film,” Ellis-Taylor told me at Telluride. “I want to be an advocate for cinema that is not palliative.”

To that end, the movie of the season might be “The Brutalist,” Brady Corbet’s 3½-hour epic that inspired a fierce bidding war after its Venice premiere, with chic indie studio A24 winning the rights. The story of a Hungarian Jewish architect (Adrien Brody) who survives World War II and relocates to the United States, the film is sprawling, nervy and demanding. It has an overture and an intermission and has been compared to “The Godfather” in the way it examines

the American dream. The hype will be overwhelming when it arrives in theaters later this year.

By contrast, a below-the-radar standout is Indian filmmaker Payal Kapadia’s astonishing “All We Imagine as Light,” winner of the Grand Prix at Cannes, and also a selection at Telluride, Toronto and the upcoming New York Film Festival. The film follows the lives of two roommates who work together as nurses at a hospital in Mumbai, capturing their dreams and disappointments in rich, evocative detail.

Some films failed to make it out of the festivals unscathed, with critics roasting “Joker: Folie à Deux,” the sequel to Todd Phillips’ “Joker,” with Joaquin Phoenix reprising his Oscar-winning turn opposite Lady Gaga. The good news: Gaga now will have more time to tour behind her new record rather than campaigning for an Oscar.

“Maria,” starring Angelina Jolie as legendary opera singer Maria Callas, is Pablo Larraín’s latest look at a

famous woman imprisoned by image and celebrity, following “Jackie” (about Jacqueline Kennedy) and “Spencer” (about Princess Diana). It’s a feast for the eyes and ears but also a bit lifeless. Reviews were mixed, but never underestimate how awards voters will swoon for a biopic.

Jolie will have plenty of competition in the lead actress category, including Mikey Madison (“Anora”) and Karla Sofia Gascón (“Emilia Pérez”), along with Saoirse Ronan, who received a tribute at Telluride primarily pegged to her work playing a woman trying to maintain her sobriety in “The Outrun,” a Sundance premiere.

There’s also a ferociously raw turn from Oscar winner Nicole Kidman in “Babygirl,” an erotic thriller that was the talk of Venice and Toronto, and more greatness from Amy Adams, somehow not yet an Oscar winner, in the Toronto-premiering “Nightbitch,” a movie about the demands and joys of motherhood that also prompted a great deal of conversation, much of it

decidedly dumb.

Demi Moore was in Toronto too for the North American premiere of Coralie Fargeat’s “The Substance,” a horror movie about women’s value in showbiz that contains the best work she has ever done.

Which brings us to movies not yet seen. There’s James Mangold’s look at Bob Dylan going electric, “A Complete Unknown,” starring Timothée Chalamet. Jon M. Chu has staged a lavish adaptation of the Broadway musical “Wicked.” And Oscar-winning director Steve McQueen pays tribute to Londoners living through World War II in “Blitz,” which will premiere in a few weeks at the London Film Festival and will close the New York Film Festival, making it one of the last contenders to launch.

Except, of course, for “Gladiator II,” this year’s only appropriate answer to the question: “What’s your Roman Empire?” Unless it’s Ridley Scott, cranking out epic movies year after year, well into his 80s. He’s an acceptable response as well.

“A genuinely moving tribute to friendship.”

RollingStone

“An endeavor that could change and even save lives.”

DAILY BEAST

“Poignant and laugh-out-loud funny.”

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COMICS

LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz



PICKLES By Brian Crane



CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia



BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell



CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers



LOOSE PARTS By Dave Blazek



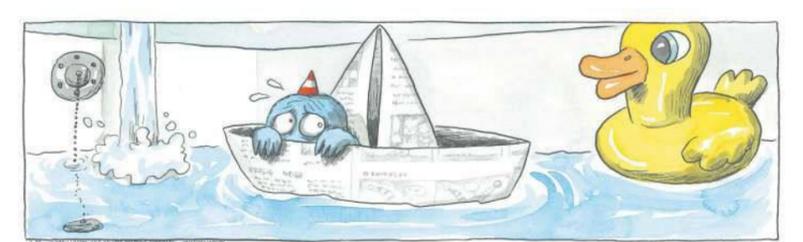
JUMP START By Robb Armstrong



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis



MACANUDO By Liniers



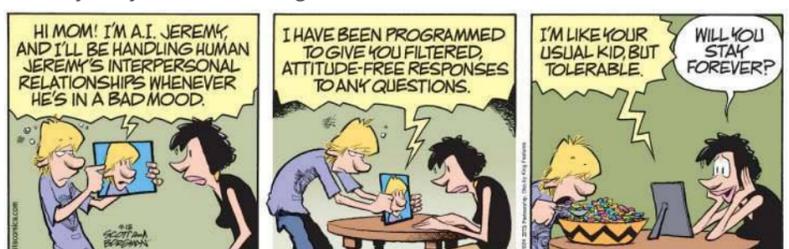
LIO By Mark Tatulli



BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall



ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy



BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro



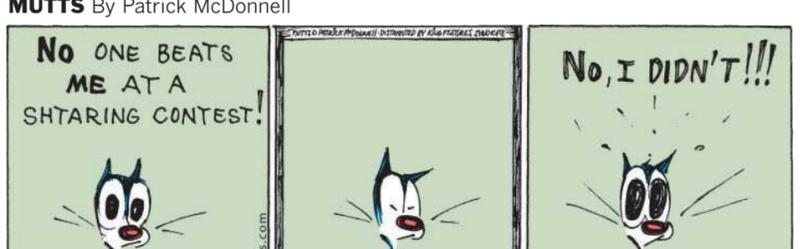
SIX CHIX By Maritsa Patrinos



DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan



FRAZZ By Jef Mallett



NON SEQUITUR By Wiley



PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz



COMICS

SUDOKU

6			4	5	8			1
					9			
				2				3
	7	3		9				4
5		1				3		9
	4			3		6	8	
9				8				
				9				
3			2	6	1			8

4								5
	6							
				2	3			
		1						
					2			
5								4

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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

1-	6x	4+			
			7+		
					1-
2-					
1		2-			

CHALLENGING

1-	2-	30x	2-		1-
			6+		
3-			7+	12+	3-
1-	2-			6	4-
		2		11+	
7+		5-			

PREVIOUS ANSWERS

1	4	2	3
4	2	3	1
3	1	4	2
2	3	1	4

HOROSCOPE

BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

Aries (March 21-April 19): If you think there's something about you that should be acknowledged, it's OK to draw attention to it.
Taurus (April 20-May 20): You'll respond to the tone your loved ones use while giving the verbiage much less credence.
Gemini (May 21-June 21): Even transactional relationships can be helped by a sense that human connection has value beyond what is being exchanged.
Cancer (June 22-July 22): You will take no opinion as the truth. Instead, you'll consider each view and glean what's useful to you and to the current situation.
Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Beauty hits numerous criteria at once — the effect becomes impossible to quantify or explain. You'll know it when you see it today.
Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

Your resources are expanding so notably that soon your "make it work" ethic will no longer be relevant. If something fails to reciprocate the effort you invest, move on.
Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): If you're making mistakes, it's a good sign that you're in the right league. If it's big enough for you, it won't be immediately easy.
Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): A balance of optimism and realism will inspire your best productivity. A dash of pessimism keeps it spicy.
Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Sometimes you don't know your thoughts until you share them. A bonus from expressing yourself: finding out how popular the idea is and who agrees.
Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Because you want people to tell you the truth, you'll lower the obstacles that prevent them from honest talk.
Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): No one has a personality at birth. It's an ever-evolving

work of art. Try new ways of being.
Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): If you understood everything before it was explained to you, you'd miss out on the opportunity to learn ... and learning is your favorite! It's why you'll ask questions today, even if you think you already know the answers.
Today's birthday (Sept. 13): New purpose gleams with a goal demanding more of you than you anticipated but giving you exponentially more in satisfaction, resources, love and more. Exciting company in lively locations gives the feel of traveling even when you aren't. Promises kept, deals made and a purchase you'll be proud of long into the future. Aquarius and Scorpio adore you. Lucky numbers: 43, 22, 1, 16, 18.
 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 Ferret out
 6 Universal donor's type, briefly
 10 __ generis
 13 "Spirited Away" genre
 14 First State capital
 16 Sculptor Gillen
 17 *Asked for trouble
 19 Routing word
 20 Shot spot
 21 Game cube
 22 Handy reference for a crossword constructor
 24 *Nickname for the Warner Bros. Cartoons studio where Bugs Bunny was developed
 28 Like granola
 29 Continues with intensity
 30 Urban haze
 32 Fishing pole
 33 Start at the beginning?
 34 *Van Gogh painting also known as "Sorrowing Old Man"
 39 Little bit
 40 Intention
 41 Ballpark figure
 42 Connecting
 45 Paint brand at Home Depot
 47 *GPS offering, maybe
 51 Having a veneer
 52 "You for Me" singer Rita
 53 Purple yam in some desserts
 55 On a streak
 56 *One who might leave bite marks?
 60 New Orleans-to-Tampa dir.
 61 Bothered
 62 __ Grain cereal bars
 63 __ Moines, Iowa
 64 Slithery swimmers
 65 Banal, or a three-part hint for the answers to the starred clues

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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				46	46		
47								48		49	50
51								52			54
55					56				58	59	
60					61				62		
63					64				65		

- 7 Pro bono
 8 Green of "Casino Royale"
 9 Warm up
 10 Put one's jacket down, say
 11 Prices per piece
 12 "Sorta"
 15 Office shake-up, briefly
 18 Improve, hopefully
 23 Hurdle for Ph.D. hopefuls
 25 cellar
 26 World of Warcraft charmer
 27 Brisk gait
 30 "Relax!"
 31 Does one's om work?
 32 Basket part
 34 Unable to let go
 35 Plan B time
 36 "Little Girl Blue" singer Simone
 37 Neighborhood near Tribeca
 38 Ashram adviser
 43 Basket part
 44 "Lady Bird" Oscar nominee Gerwig

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

T	I	M	E	S	O	P	H	E	L	A	T	E	
A	G	E	S	F	R	A	I	L	A	U	R	A	
D	O	T	S	O	L	Y	M	P	I	C	G	A	S
P	O	S	T	I	M	I	N	I					
O	F	F	E	N	S	I	V	E	L	I	N	E	N
L	E	A	T	L	I	C	O	L	C	O	R	N	E
E	D	N	A	A	K	A	A	R	T	E			
P	E	A	R	Y	B	O	O	H	S	E	I	R	E
L	E	A	D	O	S	C	A	M	M	E	L		
O	X	A	C	H	A	C	H	A	D	L	I	F	E
A	L	C	P	H	O	S	O	N	I	C			
C	O	U	N	T	M	C	O	U	T	W	A	N	T
A	C	T	I	L	M	E	S	A	F	W	F	R	
I	K	E	A	S	E	Y	E	S	H	E	D	D	

BRIDGE

BY FRANK STEWART

This week's deals have treated a basic technique: setting up a long suit. To test yourself, cover the East-West cards. How will you play at four hearts when West, who overcalled in spades, leads the king?
 The actual South took the ace of spades, drew trumps with the A-K, cashed the top diamonds and led a third diamond. No doubt he was hoping West would win, but East took the queen and shifted to the queen of clubs. The defense took two clubs and a spade for down one.
 Could you do better as declarer?
 South must set up the diamonds but doesn't want to lose to East, who may shift to clubs. South should duck

the first spade. South wins the next spade, leads a trump to dummy, returns the 10 of spades and pitches a diamond — a loser on a loser.
 West wins and could save a trick by cashing his ace of clubs. If instead he leads a trump, South wins, takes the A-K of diamonds, ruffs a diamond and returns a trump to dummy to discard two clubs on the good diamonds.
 You hold: ♠ K Q J 8 2 ♥ 6 4 ♦ J 9 ♣ A 9 7 3. Your partner opens one heart, you bid one spade and he rebids two hearts. What do you say?
 Answer: This is a difficult judgment call. A bid of three clubs might land you at game even if partner's hand is a minimum. If he has a minimum with a singleton spade, to pass might be best.

Since partner's two hearts shows a six-card or longer suit, raise to three hearts.

South dealer
 N-S vulnerable

NORTH		EAST	
♠ 10 7 4	♥ K J 8	♠ 9 6 5	♥ 7 3
♦ A K 5 4 2	♣ 6 2	♦ Q 10 8	♣ J 10 5 4

WEST
 ♠ K Q J 8 2
 ♥ 6 4
 ♦ J 9
 ♣ A 9 7 3

EAST
 ♠ 9 6 5
 ♥ 7 3
 ♦ Q 10 8
 ♣ J 10 5 4

SOUTH
 ♠ A 3
 ♥ A Q 10 9 5 2
 ♦ 7 6 3
 ♣ K 8

WEST
 1 ♠
 2 ♥
 4 ♥

NORTH
 2 ♠
 3 ♥
 All Pass

EAST
 Pass
 Pass

Opening lead — ♠ K

ASKING ERIC

Dear Eric: My husband of almost 60 years has Alzheimer's. At this point, he does not know who I am other than "some nice lady" who comes to see him. I initiate and have sex with him. Our initial dating and marriage were very sexual but went on to deteriorate due to his multiple flings and affairs. By the time he was diagnosed, we had not had sex in more than 20 years.
 Not that it matters, I never had any kind of affairs. He was not a very good husband, he made major decisions on his own and came and went as he pleased. He was also a bit of a bully and critical. I stayed because I didn't think I could make it on my own. Now, with the disease, he is very sweet. My question is, am I raping him? Is this senior abuse? Much as I'm enjoying it, and he seems to also, it somehow seems wrong.

live in nursing home settings and who may have cognitive concerns are no different." To address this, they came up with a multi-part process for determining a person's "various possibilities of meeting sexual and/or intimacy needs at any level of cognition."
 So it is possible your husband is able to consent, even without the cognitive ability to recognize you. However, and this is a huge however, you're putting yourself and him at risk if the facility where he's being cared for doesn't have a sexual expression policy and hasn't evaluated his cognitive ability with respect to consent.
 In 2014, an Iowa man was charged with sexual abuse of his wife because the staff at her nursing home didn't think she had the ability to consent due to her Alzheimer's. The law varies by state and each facility has different training and policies, so continuing to have sex with your husband requires a lot more communication on your part.

rest of the family lives in other states. His siblings are throwing a big celebration for him. They scheduled it on a Tuesday night. The problem is, I have very little PTO, and I don't think it's fair that I have to take off work for a minimum of two days.
 My siblings also have similar problems with their work, but they feel like they have no choice but to attend. I feel the party needs to be moved to a weekend, it's the only logical solution.
 My father wants all of his children and grandchildren there and will be hurt if we don't go. He says Vegas hotel rooms are cheaper during the week, so better for his retired siblings.
 Should I hold my ground and not attend due to the inconvenient timing? Or cave to my siblings and use what little precious PTO I have?
BIRTHDAY WOES

Dear Eric: My father is turning 90 this November. He lives in Las Vegas; the

Dear Eric: I think you should advocate for changing the date. While I don't think you'd regret sacrificing PTO for an opportunity to be with family, there's potentially better solutions.
 If the only objection to the weekend is the hotel rates, try looking into an Airbnb, VRBO, or other short-term rental that can accommodate the retired relatives.

Email questions to eric@askingeric.com.

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



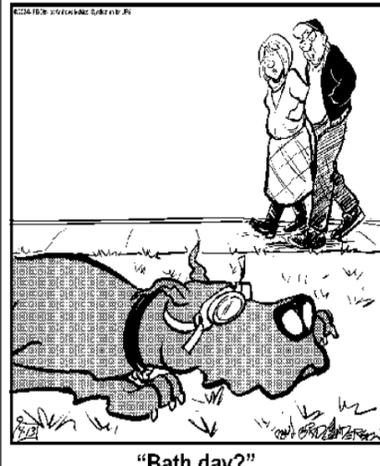
DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham



FREE RANGE By Bill Whitehead



MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson



BLISS By Harry Bliss



SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly



Learning to embrace 'Emily' stardom

[Bravo, from E1]

Netflix's frothy series began as a fish-out-of-water story about a bright-eyed American marketing executive living in Paris, and Bravo eventually emerged as the show's swoon-worthy leading man playing Gabriel, the chef with a heart of gold who ends up in a divisive love triangle with Emily (Lily Collins). Being a show that comes from the mind of Darren Star, a master at crafting messy relationships, it was only a matter of time before things got *très compliqué*.

After Gabriel gets his professional life on track — opening a restaurant and devoting himself to earning a Michelin star — his personal life goes off the rails when his last-minute wedding to on-again, off-again girlfriend Camille (Camille Razat) is called off because of his feelings for Emily. But wait, Camille is pregnant? Not so fast. Part 1 of the fourth season, which was released last month, finally saw Gabriel and Emily rekindle their romance just as his chance at a coveted Michelin star implodes. And Camille? Well, it turns out that she isn't pregnant after all — but she's withholding the news from Gabriel.

Bravo is coy about the second half of the season, now streaming, offering chuckles that signal his character's roller-coaster journey is bracing for another drop. "Darren knows how to bring the chaos," he says.

Still, even Bravo was surprised by recent story developments, particularly Camille's pregnancy. "I was like, 'Wow, it's a big shift. This might be my cue,'" he says, jokingly implying the uncertain fate he thought it held for his character. But Bravo came into the fourth season appreciating the relief his character would get from the scrapped wedding and the other curve balls that knocked Gabriel off course.

"I'm a simple person," he says. "I don't think I can handle that pressure on a daily basis. [Gabriel's] the same. So, there's this big, big, big relief. I don't know how he's gonna take the baby news because he seems very pumped, to say the least."

The notion of being freed from expectations is something Bravo knows well. It's what's brought us to Swingers — and why this story isn't about a lawyer.

At age 18, after his first semester at law school, he joined a friend for a quick getaway to L.A. He crashed at the West Hollywood home of a friend's father, filmmaker Jean-Christophe "Pitof" Comar, director of 2003's "Catwoman." His "first taste of America," as he tells it, involved spending much of that week on a loop, walking to the Grove, L.A.'s outdoor shopping hub, and grabbing a Red Bull and a pack of Parliament cigarettes.

Unable to afford a taxi on



THEY'LL always have Paris: Emily (Lily Collins) and Gabriel (Lucas Bravo) share a moment in Netflix series.



GABRIEL (Bravo) works on dish in "Emily in Paris." The chef has faced curve balls in his life and career.

his last day in town, he asked his friends to give him a ride to the airport. They declined as a tactic to get him to stay. He did, for five years.

Just Lucas in Los Angeles.

"I was pursuing myself; I was trying to land into myself and understand myself," he says.

Sitting across from Bravo, there's a sense that he's still on that path. He's contemplative and slightly self-conscious as he talks about himself, and measured when he reveals intimacies like how, growing up, he just wanted to make friends "to gather love" because his parents didn't verbalize it a lot. (He's careful to note that he has a good relationship with them.)

He dropped out of law school. His parents stopped talking to him during that time. He couldn't work because he didn't have a visa. But he had a roof over his head. And he'd bum cash off friends to survive when the funds his grandmother occasionally sent ran low.

"Every day, I would ask a different friend for a couple of bucks and go to Taco Bell and get the 99 cent cheesy double beef burrito," he says. "And Swingers — I haven't been here in a long time —

but it was a quick walk from the house. My friends and I would sit in a booth and they would order stuff and I would look at it, like, 'that looks good.' And my friends would be like, 'Order a Coke, order a burger.' So Swingers, for me, represented friendship and generosity and the biggest meals I had for the first three years after having nothing."

There was some romance, too. He shares a story of the time he walked from West Hollywood to Pacific Palisades — about a 16-mile journey — for a date. "It took me six hours," he says. "At some point, there are no sidewalks. You feel like you're gonna die. She opened the door, and she was like, 'You're late. "Gossip Girl" started already.'"

Contrary to the cliché, he wasn't bitten by the acting bug while he was here. He didn't act at all in that time. But being the son of a professional soccer player (Daniel Bravo) and moving every few years unlocked the performer in him at an early age, he says.

"With every new school, I had the 'new guy' status," he says. "Subconsciously, I think it was a defense mechanism. I started really being very perceptive about group

dynamics and patterns of people. I would know exactly the beat to fit into and lose the 'new guy' status as fast as possible."

So when Bravo's mother enrolled him in acting school when he was 15, he felt there was something safe about a script. "It felt like a blueprint for a human being — here is how to be, how to talk, how to think," he says.

For Bravo, going to law school felt like the "normal" track to be on — one that his brother pursued. It also seemed that being a lawyer required a certain amount of performance to get a jury on your side. (And it's why being asked to serve legal papers felt like a jolt to the senses.) But once he returned home, he enrolled in a more formal acting school, working in restaurants and supermarkets along the way.

While stopping for a sandwich on his last day of classes, he ran into an old friend who was working as an agent and offered to send him some scripts. One was "Emily in Paris."

A fan of Star's work, particularly "Sex and the City," which Bravo credits for both his sexual education and his ability to speak English, the actor was eager to audition. He made it through several rounds, but the show's bosses were ambivalent because of his inexperience, and they moved on. Feeling defeated, Bravo took a trip to Corsica, where he had little cell service, and spent time hiking and making goat cheese. He later was greeted with a flurry of missed calls and texts asking him to come back for another round, he thought, to play one of Emily's other love interests.

According to Star, from the beginning, he saw something in Bravo on tape and in person that remained top of mind as they neared produc-

tion on the first season. The hesitation of casting an inexperienced actor as the male lead dissipated.

"We brought him back, and he read with Lily — the chemistry was undeniable," Star says. "He just has this natural charisma and this twinkle in his eye and an amazing sense of humor. I just wanted to go with my gut."

"Emily in Paris" became Bravo's first major professional job. So what is it like becoming the heartthrob of a popular TV series on a global platform overnight?

"It's hard to feel legitimate to that level of visibility and attention, especially overnight," he says. "I'm at the early stage of my career, and global visibility doesn't mean experience. It doesn't mean you're established. So the impostor syndrome that I had just exploded."

But Collins says she senses that Bravo has figured out how to not be overwhelmed by it.

"This season, I saw a new sense of freedom and enjoyment from Lucas as he just leaned into it all and had more fun," she says.

At 36, he's been reflecting on questions about self and purpose and how he wants to keep stretching as a performer. He grows more animated as he considers how he's reaching opportunities that didn't seem possible all those years back when he frequented this diner.

Since "Emily in Paris," he's played other dreamboats on the big screen, including in "Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris" and the George Clooney and Julia Roberts comedy "Ticket to Paradise," but more recently, he's taken on roles that stand in stark contrast.

"The Balconettes," which premiered at this year's Cannes Film Festival and is slated for a fall release, is a

French comedy horror film about three Marseille roommates and their flirtation gone awry with the cute guy across the street (Bravo) during a heat wave. He'll also portray French criminal Bruno Sulak, known as the "gentleman bandit," this fall in Melanie Laurent's "Freedom," which will be released by Prime Video. And he'll star in a prequel of "Dangerous Liaisons" for the French HBO platform.

Still, Bravo's learning how to be comfortable in his skin — literally — as he takes on new challenges, because having to show his body provokes a specific kind of dread. He knew that signing up as the love interest in "Emily" might require showing a bit of skin. And there are nude scenes in "The Balconettes," and in some of his other projects. His relationship with food has been an issue since childhood — he recalls a lock being put on the refrigerator because he would eat a lot.

"Food became a reward and a stress habit," he says, noting the pressure that came with being the son of a regimented soccer player.

For "The Balconettes," he worked with a fitness coach for two months, waking up every morning to box and eating things like apples and tuna. Once the project wrapped, and with some more relaxed eating around the holidays, he faced anxiety again as filming for the fourth season of "Emily in Paris" neared and his physique, he says, wasn't as fit. An early scene from the season, where he's in the shower, called for him to be shirtless and panic set in, he says.

"I go to set and my chef costume doesn't really fit," he says. "There's a side shot, and you can see that I'm [looking like I'm] three months pregnant."

It made Bravo nervous about what another episode would bring: "Are they going to have a scene where I need to be shirtless next to Alfie [played by Lucien Laviscount], who is literally sculpted in marble?"

But he's learning to give himself more grace, he says. While his alter ego has recently been focused on work and chasing a Michelin star, Bravo says he's chasing peace of mind and acceptance. As for the future, he hopes to direct in the next couple of years. With some help, he's written his own fish-out-of-water love story that takes place at an amusement park in Japan.

"What I'm searching for is the type of atmosphere you get in 'Lost in Translation' or 'Perfect Days,'" he says. "We're in this world of TikTok and 10-second videos. I want people to be able to sit and digest. That's the kind of movie I would like to make."

For now, though, he's offered to pay for lunch at Swingers because he can afford it. (But we beat him to it.)

She won a one-of-a-kind Emmy for this

[Super Emmy, from E1] writer Treva Silverman, whose script for "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" "beat" Joanna Lee's for "The Waltons" to anoint her writer of the year.

This bizarreness shouldn't minimize the work that Silverman's episode did, both in front of and behind the camera. The main category win made her the first woman to receive the comedy writing Emmy solo, without sharing a byline with a male partner.

And its plot is still present.

Titled "The Lou and Edie Story," the Season 4 episode centers on Ed Asner's lovable curmudgeon Lou Grant, whose wife leaves him midlife to start her own journey, a subject, he divulges in the episode, that they talked about in couple's therapy.

"He was a typical '50s male — humiliated that he should even have to express this and it had to be dragged out of him — until [the end of the episode when she leaves and] he says, 'I'm warning

you ... I'll take you right back," Silverman recalls of the couple's emotional final moments.

It was then, she said, that this buttoned-up, emotion-averse follower of traditional gender roles "entered the 1970s."

In an interview with The Times that has been edited and condensed for clarity and space, Silverman expounds on developing this landmark episode.

Counseling and therapy weren't talked about as openly then as they are now. How did you decide on this topic?

This episode aired in 1973 and, eight months before, Roe v. Wade happened. [And] this was something that was informing the whole women's movement.

I don't remember how [the idea for marriage therapy] came about. But if there wasn't that element, it would be hard for him to just discuss that he and Edie were having problems. And also, it added a tension to the first few scenes be-



THE WIN made her the first woman to receive the comedy writing Emmy without a male co-writer.

cause it was his not wanting people to know.

In rereatching the episode, I noticed Jay Sandrich's beautiful direction. When Ed Asner is [talking] to Mary and to Murray [Gavin MacLeod, about his marital issues early in the episode] and they both lean forward, and [they're] hoping that something good's going to come out of it ... [Jay] so understands the human condition.

I noticed also that there was a lot of Lou saying [to Mary], "I can't say this to you. I have to say it to a man." And, probably, that attitude is why [his wife is] leaving him. Roe v. Wade had passed and everyone's going to women's groups and he [still] can't talk to Mary because Mary's a woman.

Edie (Priscilla Morrill) tells Lou that she's leaving

him because she's 45 and has been with him since she was 19. She doesn't know life without him. Was that experience based on someone you knew?

No. In fact, we had never met Edie in the whole series before this. This was the total introduction of her. I based it on a character whom he would have been in love with and they would have had a good marriage until now.

It was "who would this person be?... How would he have picked her and how would she have picked him?" She was a kid [when they met] and he's funny and he takes over everything, which at that point [in our culture] was a good thing.

Jim [Brooks, "MTM's" co-creator] had an insightful thing about casting. This one actress read absolutely gorgeously. But she was very diminutive. He said no because Ed would look intimidating next to her. When Priscilla came in, it was perfect. Strong-looking, not a little diminutive.

Asner has a couple great monologues in this episode. One is when Edie's getting ready to leave. He squishes an orange and starts ranting about fruit seeds ...

I wanted him to get so ridiculous and off the topic that only his anger was coming through about something that made no sense. I wanted to give him a monologue in which he's

not addressing what's going on.

There's some comic relief when newscaster Ted [Ted Knight], not knowing that Lou and Edie are having problems, jokingly flirts with her. You've said before that writing Ted was largely influenced by your mother's tendency to always say inappropriate things.

My mother was a good person, but her empathy was never fully developed.

It's hard for me, as a writer, to write somebody I don't like. And I wanted to like Ted. And it occurred to me that my mother comes up with all of this stuff.

Out of the blue, I had to have a hysterectomy. Before I told my mother, I told one of my sisters whom I knew would be able to comfort me and to whom I could tell the truth about my feelings. So a week after, I thought it's finally time to tell my mother.

I said, "Mom, I want you to know I'm perfectly fine, everything's OK and I'm healthy, but I do want to tell you that I had to have a hysterectomy." And she said, "Well, did you get a second opinion?"

After my dad died, my mother moved down to Florida like all nice Jewish widows. After a couple of seasons there, I asked her what it's like and if she had friends there. She said, "I have some wonderful friends. I don't analyze them. They don't analyze me."